

County Meeting  
April 18, 2024 6:00pm  
Minutes  
Union County Courthouse

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Lamar Paris at 6:03 pm. The Commissioner welcomed everyone to the meeting. The invocation was then given by Chamber of Commerce President, Steve Rowe, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner, Lamar Paris. The minutes from the March 21, 2024 County Meeting and the April 3, 2024 Called Meeting were approved as presented, and attendees were provided copies.

Commissioner Paris had County Clerk/Executive Assistant, Jennifer Mahan, present the first five items on the agenda. Ms. Mahan stated that all five of the Proclamations had been presented at times prior to the meeting, so there was no one present at the meeting to actually receive the proclamations.

The first Proclamation established April 2024 as Child Abuse Prevention Month and reads as follows: Commissioner Paris proclaims April 2024 as Child Abuse Prevention Month. Children are the key to the future success, prosperity, and quality of life in Union County. They are our most valuable resource, but also our most vulnerable. Child abuse and neglect can be prevented by supporting and strengthening families, thus preventing the far-reaching effects of maltreatment. This provides the opportunity for children to develop healthy, trusting family bonds, and consequently, building the foundations of community. By providing a safe and nurturing environment for our children, free of violence, abuse and neglect, we can ensure that Union County's children will grow to their full potential. I urge families and communities to become involved in protecting Union County's and Georgia's children. Ms. Mahan stated that this Proclamation was signed in the Union County courthouse on March 26, 2024, with representatives from Enotah CASA, including Executive Director, Della Lago, Mayor Jim Conley and Commissioner Lamar Paris. Enotah CASA placed 208 blue pinwheels on the square representing the number of children who were served by Enotah CASA in 2023. Enotah CASA stands for Court Appointed Special Advocates and this organization operates on grants, donations and hosts fundraisers to provide each child in the court system with an advocate. This advocate looks out for the best interests of the child as they work through the family court system.

The second Proclamation established March 29, 2024 as National Vietnam War Veterans Day and reads as follows: Commissioner Paris established March 29, 2024 as National Vietnam War Veterans Day. The Vietnam War was fought in Vietnam from 1961 to 1975 and involved North Vietnam and the Viet Cong in conflict with the United States Armed Forces and South Vietnam. On March 30, 1973 the United States Armed Forces completed the withdrawal of combat troops from Vietnam. Approximately 1,584 members of the United States Armed Forces from the State of Georgia were killed in action; 8,500 suffered combat wounds; 21 were held as Prisoners of War; and 28 Georgians are still Missing in Action. The people of Union County realize that one of our most fundamental obligations is to show respect and dignity to all who have worn the uniform of the United States, and to honor their sacrifice by serving them as well as they served us. On Vietnam Veterans Day, with proud and grateful hearts, we remember and appreciate the patriotism, selflessness, battle courage, and personal sacrifice of the 202,654 Vietnam Veterans now living in Georgia, who answered the country's call to duty and risked their lives to fight for another nation's peace and democracy. This proclamation was presented on March 29<sup>th</sup> at the Vietnam Veterans Appreciation Luncheon.

The third proclamation established April 14<sup>th</sup> through April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 as National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week and reads as follows: Commissioner Paris established April 14<sup>th</sup> through April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 as National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week. Our dispatchers are the first and most critical contact our citizens have with emergency services. When an emergency occurs the prompt response of law enforcement officers, firefighters and paramedics is critical to the protection of life and the preservation of property. The Union County 911 Center has contributed substantially to these by exhibiting compassion, understanding and professionalism during the performance of their job. Public Safety Telecommunicators of Union County have contributed substantially to the apprehension of criminals, suppression of fire and the treatment of patients. Please join me in honoring the men and women whose diligence and professionalism keep our county and citizens safe. This Proclamation was presented to 911 dispatchers at their appreciation dinner on April 17, 2024.

The fourth proclamation established April 26, 2024 as Confederate Memorial Day and reads as follows: Commissioner Paris established April 26, 2024 as Confederate Memorial Day in Union County. The United Daughters of the Confederacy is an organization whose purposes include honoring the memory of its Confederate ancestors and honoring the service of veterans from all wars as well as active military personnel. Smith's Legion Chapter #2699 was chartered in January of 2014 to carry out the organization's purposes in Union County and the surrounding area. I encourage all citizens to participate in activities under the leadership of Smith's Legion Chapter #2699 that commemorate and honor our shared history and cultural inheritance. This proclamation was signed in the Commissioner's Office on March 22, 2024 with representatives from the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

The fifth proclamation established April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024 as Patriot's Day and reads as follows: The Commissioner established April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024 as Patriot's Day in Union County. April 19<sup>th</sup> marks the date in 1775 when the towns of Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts were marched upon by the British regulars in an effort to confiscate munitions of the local militia. This resulted in the "shot heard round the world" and the defeat of the redcoats is now celebrated at Patriots Day. Patriots Day serves to remind citizens of our Revolution and the sacrifices endured during the years of struggle for American independence by the patriots. The descendants of the soldiers who fought in the American Revolution encourage the community to proclaim April 19<sup>th</sup> of each year as Patriots Day in commemoration of the American Revolution and the struggle for American independence. I urge all Union County residents to become more knowledgeable of the role which the Revolutionary War played in establishing the United States of America. This proclamation was signed in the courthouse on April 11, 2024 with representatives from the Blue Ridge Mountain Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution and the Daughters of the American Revolution. On April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024 these organizations will be on the lawn of the Historic Courthouse from 10am to 12pm conducting informational demonstrations in honor of Patriots' Day.

Commissioner Paris approached the podium again and accepted an Agreement between Atlas Technical Consultants, LLC and Union County for a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment for the property located at 296 Shoe Factory Road, which is commonly referred to as the Old Shoe Factory. This agreement has an effective date of March 20, 2024, and the amount is \$3,700.00.

The Commissioner accepted an Agreement between Atlas Technical Consultants, LLC and Union County for a Pre-demolition ACM (asbestos-containing materials) and LBP (lead-based paint) survey for the property located at 296 Shoe Factory Road, which is commonly referred to as the Old Shoe Factory. This agreement has an effective date of April 12, 2024 and the amount is \$3,700.00. Both of these agreements with Atlas Technical Consultants are for testing necessary to safely demolish the old shoe factory and to also be able to put out an accurate RFP

for the project. For example, if asbestos is found during this survey, the Request for Proposal can advertise bid requests for asbestos remediation and removal also. If this is not included in the RFP, and if it is later found by the awardee of the contract during demolition, the contractor could potentially charge us whatever they felt necessary to safely remove the asbestos. Therefore, the safest option is to have the Environmental Site Assessment and the asbestos and lead based paint testing done prior to the RFP being published and advertised.

Commissioner Paris accepted an Agreement between Hussey Gay Bell and Union County for schematic designs, design development, construction documents, and construction administration for the new E911 Call Center in the amount of \$175,900.00. This contract has an effective date of April 12, 2024. For many years, the old nursing home has served as a location for county and community offices. It is a very old facility, and it is aging and going downhill. The first step was getting Elections out of the old nursing home, which is now complete. Then Union County was able to get Transportation out of the facility by combining it with the Union County Road Department. The timeframe for a new E911 Call Center had to be moved up a little in order to get 911 Dispatch in a more up to date facility. This new facility will be a two-story building with E-911 operations on the first floor of the building. The second floor will be 911 mapping and additional workspace. Records storage will also be moved into this secure location. This facility will be a total of 8,000 square feet and will be paid for with SPLOST funds. It will be located up near Fire Station 1. The Commissioner reiterated that this week is Dispatch Appreciation Week and Union County has a diligent and hardworking group of dispatchers that are most often never seen.

The Commissioner then accepted an agreement between Cummins Sales and Service and Union County for planned generator maintenance for the generator located at Fire Station 1. The service will include one inspection and one full service. The duration of this agreement is one year, with an effective date of March 20, 2024, and the amount is \$1,552.60.

Commissioner Paris accepted an agreement between S&L Integrated Systems, LLC and Union County for new and updated audio and visual equipment in all courtrooms, the Grand Jury Room, and the Jury Assembly Room in the Union County Courthouse in the amount of \$449,999.01. The funding for these upgrades will be provided through the Judicial ARPA Grant and Union County will be reimbursed 100% from this grant, as will the other three counties in the circuit. This grant was requested by the Judges of the Enotah Judicial Circuit, which includes Union, Towns, Lumpkin and White counties. Each courthouse within the circuit will be upgraded with the same equipment and will operate the same way from county to county. Each county will pay for the work done in their respective courthouse and then submit their reimbursement request to White County, who is the grant administrator. White County will then submit the request to the State for reimbursement from the grant. Since this grant will be reimbursed at 100%, all these upgrades will not cost Union County any money once all the work is done and all the reimbursements from the grant have been received.

The Commissioner accepted an agreement between Union County and the Blairsville/Union County Chamber of Commerce for the distribution of 70% of funds received from the Hotel-Motel Excise Tax. This agreement is effective from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024. This means that out of all the Hotel/Motel Tax received from short-term rentals Union County will retain 30% of these funds and the Chamber of Commerce will receive 70% of the funds. In the past, those numbers were 90% and 10%. Union County has had a higher than normal tax receipts from the Hotel/Motel Tax, but those numbers are going down. During COVID and right after that, no one wanted to get on a ship or go where there are crowds. Now people are traveling overseas again, and that means less people are traveling to Union County. Therefore,

the funds are a little bit lower. Union County is going to watch and make sure that the Chamber of Commerce is left with enough funds.

Everyone was provided a copy of the list of Business Licenses that were issued in Union County from March 11, 2024 to April 14, 2024 for the purpose of operating a short-term rental within Union County. The Commissioner approved all Business Licenses contained on the list provided, and the list will be made a part of the minutes.

Commissioner Paris turned the meeting over to Jennifer Mahan again to present agenda items 13 through 19.

Ms. Mahan stated that Commissioner Paris accepted the Notice of Award of Contract dated April 18, 2024 for asphalt resurfacing through the Georgia Department of Transportation's Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant, referred to as LMIG. It was awarded to Colditz Trucking, Inc. in the amount of \$2,276,384.65 for the 2024 LMIG roads. This includes \$378,868.15 for Cleveland Street Phase II. Last year, the first part of Cleveland Street was paved. This year they are going to finish the remainder. The cost for Cleveland Street paving will be reimbursed to Union County by the City of Blairsville - just as it was in the 2023 LMIG paving.

Ms. Mahan announced to attendees that the following agenda item was the most exciting thing on the agenda. She stated that the Commissioner accepted the Contract between Colditz Trucking, Inc. and Union County for asphalt resurfacing of multiple roads through the Georgia Department of Transportation's LMIG Grant in the amount of \$2,276,384.65 for 2024 LMIG Roads and \$378,868.15 for Cleveland Street with a contract effective date of April 18, 2024. As stated before, the cost for Cleveland Street paving will be reimbursed to Union County by the City of Blairsville. Three bids were received for this year's LMIG paving. One was from Colwell's Construction Company in the amount of \$2,495,920 for county roads and \$374,173 for Cleveland Street. The other one was from C.W. Matthews in the amount of \$2,784,175 for county roads and \$541,482 for Cleveland Street. This year was a really good year with regards to LMIG funding received from the state and how many miles of road Union County would be able to pave at total of 10.560 miles of roadway. Union County received the standard LMIG award in the amount of \$841,372.31 which requires a 30% match. This year, the state offered additional LMIG funding to Union County in the amount of \$1,042,069.64 requiring a 0% match from Union County. The total LMIG Funds received was \$1,883,441.95 and the total contract for paving was \$2,276,384.65. To get all that funding Union County will only be required to pay \$392,942.70, and that will be paid out of SPLOST Funds. This is a lot of paving for a small amount of money. This includes the 30% match for the standard LMIG funding and then some additional funding to get the roads complete that Union County wanted to pave this year. So, in summary Union County is getting 2.276 million dollars' worth of paving done and it will only cost \$392,942. All attendees were provided a list of the roads that would be paved as part of their agenda packet.

Ms. Mahan stated that items fifteen through eighteen on the agenda were all Options to Purchase Right-of-way related to the Fisher Field Bridge replacement. They were all in the same general area around the bridge and were small amounts of acreage. Jennifer then reads each Option to Purchase Right-of-way stating that Commissioner Paris and Union County were executing the option to purchase said right-of-way.

Commissioner Paris accepted the Option to Purchase Right-of-way from Paul Whitmire, Steven Bennett, Alan Scott Bennett, and Spencer Bennett located at 27 Cold Springs Lane, Blairsville, Georgia in the amount of \$1.00 for 0.015 acres. This Right-of-way will be utilized in the

replacement of the bridge on Fisher Field Road. Pursuant to the terms contained in this Option to Purchase Right-of-way, Union County is executing the option to purchase said Right-of-way.

Commissioner Paris accepted the Option to Purchase Right-of-way from Richard Glenn Sweitzer and Ashely B. Sweitzer located at 51 Fisher Field Road, Blairsville, Georgia in the amount of \$1.00 for 0.015 acres. This Right-of-way will be utilized in the replacement of the bridge on Fisher Field Road. Pursuant to the terms contained in this Option to Purchase Right-of-way, Union County is executing the option to purchase said Right-of-way.

Commissioner Paris accepted the Option to Purchase Right-of-way from Paul Fletcher Whitmire and Stacy Whitmire located on the west side of Cold Springs Lane at Fisher Field Road, Blairsville, Georgia in the amount of \$1.00 for 0.015 acres. This Right-of-way will be utilized in the replacement of the bridge on Fisher Field Road. Pursuant to the terms contained in this Option to Purchase Right-of-way, Union County is executing the option to purchase said Right-of-way.

Commissioner Paris accepted the Option to Purchase Right-of-way from Christopher A. Odom located on the west side of Fisher Field Road, adjacent to 78 Fisher Field Road, Blairsville, Georgia in the amount of \$1.00 for 0.002 acres. This Right-of-way will be utilized in the replacement of the bridge on Fisher Field Road. Pursuant to the terms contained in this Option to Purchase Right-of-way, Union County is executing the option to purchase said Right-of-way.

Ms. Mahan then advised attendees that the Commissioner accepted a Quitclaim Deed dated April 12, 2024 between Union County, Georgia Government and Union County, Georgia Government for all that tract of land lying and being situated on or near Fisher Field Road in Land Lot 110, 16<sup>th</sup> District, 1<sup>st</sup> Section, Union County, Georgia with said Tract being 0.014 acres. There are no funds associated with this Quitclaim Deed. Ms. Mahan went on to say that she understands this makes no sense with Union County giving land to Union County. Union County has been working with a company to obtain the right-of-way for this project. When they were acquiring the right-of-way it was discovered that this 0.014 acres was basically a no man's land and there was no owner of record for this area. The company then required Union County to quitclaim this 0.014 acres from Union County to Union County so there was a start of a paper trail for this small area.

Commissioner Paris then approached the podium and provided a few comments regarding projects in Union County. He said that there are a lot of things going on in Union County. It is difficult to keep up with it all, but he is happy everything is working as it is.

The Litter Clean Up Contest is this coming weekend, and there is still time to sign up. Citizens can win money for picking up the most litter along the county roads. To sign up, go to the Chamber of Commerce's Facebook page. Commissioner Paris then expressed his appreciation to all the people who were willing to give easements for the Fisher Field Bridge Project. Union County had a bridge out there that was not in good condition. A company came and looked at the bridge to see if they could repair it but were not able to. So, a temporary bridge was being installed so the public out there could get in and out. The existing bridge is going to be removed this week and the area prepared for the delivery of the new bridge. The Fire Station applied for and received a grant for a new generator for the Sports Center. This grant was awarded in the amount of \$51,000. The Commissioner said that he is pleased that the economy is still working good for Union County. The auditors were up here for the last two weeks and are gone now, but they are working on finishing the audit with our bookkeepers. Once the audit is complete, they will come and give a presentation at a County Meeting. The concrete was poured this week for the Appalachian Memorial Park that the veterans are building in Meeks Park. The concrete was

poured in the image of a compass rose. Weaver Road is the road that goes from 515 over to the hospital and the Transfer Station. It was blocked off for three days this past week to replace a culvert. For the first time, Union County used a square culvert. The culvert comes in square pieces. The creek bottom is made perfectly level and then the culvert pieces are placed along the bottom. These pieces are then strapped together to make a concrete culvert that should be good forever. Sometime this summer the entire road will be resurfaced.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jennifer Mahan  
Jennifer Mahan, County Clerk

Approved this 16<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2024

Lamar Paris  
Lamar Paris, Commissioner



## Union County Short-term Rental Licensees

March 11, 2024 – April 14, 2024

ALTMAN, JONI  
868 Johnny Gap Road  
SUCHES, GA 30572

DICKENS, JUSTIN AND STEWART,  
LEEROY  
438 Ridge Rd  
Blairsville, GA 30512

HAFELE JOY MELISSA  
100 Boundless Trail  
Morganton, GA 30560

PHILLIPS JEFFREY W & KELLI  
37 Cherokee View  
Young Harris, GA 30582

RYAN ANDREW W & VERONICA A  
540 Nolla Vista 2  
Blairsville, GA 30512

WALKER JASON & STEPHANIE  
18 Lynnmarie Drive  
Blairsville, GA 30512

BIANCO, VANESSA AND BIANCO,  
FRANCESCO  
360 Wild ridge Rd.  
Blairsville, GA 30512

FREDERICK, PAMELA  
317 Kings Rd  
Blairsville, GA 30512

MENDEZ JORGE LUIS & JANETTE  
ELIZABETH  
54 Daybreak LN  
Morganton, GA 30560

ROLAN CLAUDIA M & GUILLERMO  
FEDERICO  
478 Canal Lake Rd  
Blairsville, GA 30512

SAUERS, HARRY AND SAUERS, AMY  
173 Moss Cove Rd  
Blairsville, GA 30512