

County Meeting
July 18, 2017
Minutes
Union County Courthouse

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Paris at 6:00 pm. The invocation was given by Bill Honaker and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bill Royse. The minutes from the June 15, 2017 County Meeting and the June 27, 2017 Called Meeting were approved as read.

Weldon Reece was born on December 25, 1928 and Naomi Reece was born on March 6, 1929, both in Union County, Georgia. They were married in 1952 and had four children. Weldon was in the United States Army where he served in Korea, Germany, Hawaii, and Georgia, and he worked at Bennett Gas Company from 1972 until 2002. Naomi worked in restaurants, a carpet mill in Dalton, and was the master seamstress at Homestead Drapery Company, all the while working as a seamstress from her home. Weldon and Naomi were lifelong residents of Union County and lifelong members of Shady Grove United Methodist Church. Their service to the church through their attendance, dedication, serving in various leadership positions within the church, and consistent financial support deserves special recognition for the community that Shady Grove United Methodist Church Serves. The Commissioner proclaimed July 9, 2017 as 'Weldon and Naomi Reece Day' for their service to the community through their church.

Commissioner Paris accepted the Accountability Courts Grant for the Juvenile Justice Incentive Grant in the amount of \$115,765.00. These are funds from the State Legislature that continue to help fund the accountability and drug court system. Which in turn helps keep our jail population down by working to rehabilitate many of these people.

The Commissioner approved a Preventive Maintenance Service Agreement between Union County and Mallory and Evans Service Company, Inc. for preventive maintenance of the Union County Community Center heating and air conditioning units in the amount of \$8,472.00 for the first two years and \$8,988.00 for the third year. This agreement will automatically renew each year.

Commissioner Paris accepted a Warranty Deed between Union County and HH Acquisitions, LLC for the tract of land lying in Land Lot 138, 9th District, 1st Section of Union County, Georgia containing 3.67 acres. This land was donated to the county and is located on the Murphy Highway. This land will be used for another volunteer fire station and possibly for a convenience center. The property is at the entrance of Hidden Harbor subdivision.

Union County does not have any type of Defined Benefit Retirement Plan. In other words, the county has no future liability to pay a retirement for the employees. Their retirement, if any, is a combination of a percentage of wage contribution by the employee (457 Plan) and a match by the county (401A Plan). Currently, and for the past several years, the county has provided an equal match of up to 6%. So, if an employee contributes 3% the county matches 3%. If the employee contributes 6%, the county will match 6%. These funds are then invested with ACCG retirement funds and are available for employees in the future as they retire or when they leave their employment. The good part of this for the county is that there is no future financial liability other than what is in the budget each year. The down side is that the employee does not have a guaranteed income in the future, but must rely on their contributions, the county contributions and the value of future investments.

So, to assist employees during such a low unemployment time in history, the county is going to amend their plan to the following. If an employee only puts in 1% or 2% of their pay, the county will match it with the same amount. If the employee puts in 3%, the county will match with 5%.

If an employee puts in 4% or 5% the county will match an additional percentage for each. However, if an employee will put in 6% the county will match that amount with an 8% match. There will also be a Senior Management Plan available.

Commissioner Paris said the reason for this increase is that the county is in a good economic climate and they do not want to continue to lose employees and want to encourage current employees to remain employed with the County. The second reason for the increase is that currently 40% of employees DO NOT contribute anything to the retirement plan, and hopefully this will encourage all to participate. There will be a budget cost to the county, but it will not be significant and it will be more than compensated for if the county can continue to keep a well-trained and qualified work force. Every time an employee leaves, it is a tremendous cost to train and even more difficult if a public safety personnel is involved.

The Commissioner accepted a Settlement Statement and Warranty Deed between Union County and Barbara T. Davenport, Sydney C. Vandiver, Laurie L. Shelnut, and Kenneth Matthew Chambers for the purchase of 13.080 acres, more or less, totaling \$678,500, or \$51,873.08 per acre. The details of this transaction was discussed in detail at a previous county meeting.

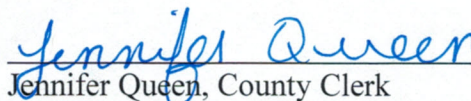
Commissioner Pairs said the county employees are extremely busy this time of year. They are paving several roads in the county and should have a complete list at the August County meeting. Nearly a million dollars of SPLOST funds have already been spent on new equipment, gravel and resurfacing. The County is also trying to make plans for the future use of the Davenport Property and working on additional plans for Meeks Park. The Commissioner is negotiating on a couple other small parcels that are adjacent to county property and has no idea if he will be successful. If so, a contract will be presented at a future county meeting.

The pool and splash pad have been crammed all season. The golf course is having an excellent year. The campgrounds are busy and, as we all know, the highways are also very busy. The Commissioner had a meeting with the Chamber of Commerce today and they are very positive and excited at the response to their advertising and programs. SPLOST proceeds continue to be very good, as well as hotel/motel tax collections. Commissioner Paris hoped everyone was able to attend the fireworks put on by the chamber, which was an outstanding show. Probably the best there has been yet. Also, Woody Gap had their usual outstanding fireworks show.

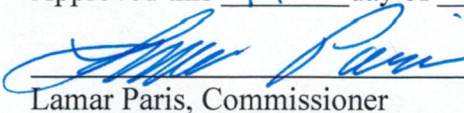
The 2016 Audit will be presented at the next county meeting and the county is very busy preparing for the 2018 County Budget. The Commissioner also stated that he appreciates the work of the Tax Appraisers in trying to keep our values close to market value. It is a tough job to do.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:28.

Respectfully submitted by:


Jennifer Queen, County Clerk

Approved this 17th day of August, 2017


Lamar Paris, Commissioner