

County Meeting
May 17, 2018
Minutes
Union County Courthouse

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Paris at 6:00 pm. The invocation was given by Carol McKechnie and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bill Walker. The minutes from the April 19, 2018 County Meeting were approved as read.

Commissioner Paris asked Joe Boone with National Trails Day to come to the front and he proclaimed June 2, 2018 as National Trails Day in Union County. Interest in outdoor recreational opportunities is on the rise with Union County residents and visitors to our area. Trails in Union County enhance the quality of life for our citizens, increase tourist activity in the county and provide alternative transportation routes for non-motorized vehicles. National Trails Day is an opportunity to increase public awareness of Union County's trail opportunities and diverse outdoor recreation activities and promote the importance of a local and national network of trails and greenways. Citizens are encouraged to participate in the National Trails Day activities scheduled in Union County and the region to strengthen their commitment to preserving the natural, scenic, and recreation qualities of trails in Union County. Joe Boone then spoke briefly regarding the trails in Union County including the portion of the Appalachian Trail. He then invited everyone to participate in the National Trails Day activities that will be taking place at Vogel State Park on June 2nd. Later in the meeting he also announced that there would be a celebration on top of Brasstown Bald for Appalachian Trail Day on June 23rd.

The Commissioner accepted the award of the Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant through Georgia Forestry for the Union County Fire Department in the amount of \$5,000.00. This grant has a 50% match and will be used to purchase wildland gear which will include 50 helmets, 40 jumpsuits, and 40 pairs of gloves for fighting wildfires.

Commissioner Paris approved an Engagement to Represent between the law firm Levin, Papantonio, Thomas, Mitchell, Rafferty & Proctor, PA and Union County for representation to pursue all civil remedies against those in the chain of distribution of prescription opiates responsible for the opioid epidemic which is plaguing Union County, the State of Georgia and the entire nation. Various firms have gotten together to represent numerous counties and municipalities across Georgia and are working on litigation regarding the opioid epidemic. This engagement to represent does not cost the county anything but will allow the county to receive any monies that may be awarded in the future. The firm will only receive compensation in the event monies are awarded to the plaintiffs. The Commissioner stated this is a long shot, but several different firms are in the process of filing these law suits and even if the counties never receive any funds as a result of these suits, it should serve as a wakeup call to all drug companies that if they are going to produce and market drugs for pain or other conditions that are highly addictive, without warning doctors and patients, there will be future consequences.

The Commissioner accepted an Agreement between Rushton and Company and Union County to perform the 2017 Audit of the Union County Financial Statements. The cost will not exceed \$46,000.00. This company is based in Gainesville, Georgia and has completed our audit for the past couple of years.

Commissioner Paris approved a Commitment Letter between Union County and Legacy Link for the required local share during FY-2019 in the amount of \$10,450.00. There was no increase from FY-2018 and these funds are used by Legacy Link as matches for federal funds for the Union County Senior Center.

The Commissioner said he was thankful for the change in weather and temperatures since the last County Meeting. While it seems we went from Winter to Summer and mostly missed the Spring, we can still be thankful. Because of this weather change the county has been working wide open on many fronts. They are already preparing some gravel roads for paving and patching others in anticipation of resurfacing several county roads this year.

Commissioner Paris said there is a lot of fill dirt being hauled along Highway 515 near Wendy's. This is mostly from the Jenkins family filling in their property for a future commercial lot to sell. The county has begun the process of building the new access road from the Farmers Market to the Glenn Gooch Bypass. There are many other projects either in the engineering process or planning stages.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:40.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jennifer Queen, County Clerk

Approved this _____ day of _____, _____

Lamar Paris, Commissioner