

WHITE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF THE CALLED MEETING HELD

THURSDAY, MAY 17, 2018 AT 8:00 A.M.

The White County Board of Commissioners held a Called Meeting on Thursday, May 17, 2018 at 8:00 a.m. in the Board Room at the White County Administration Building. Present for the meeting were: Chairman Travis Turner, Commissioner Terry Goodger, Commissioner Lyn Holcomb, Commissioner Edwin Nix, Commissioner Craig Bryant, County Manager Michael Melton, Finance Director Jodi Ligon, and County Clerk Shanda Murphy.

Chairman Turner called the meeting to order.

Chairman Turner stated that Shepherd Drive was utilized extensively during the construction of the Appalachian Parkway and had become a cut through from the Appalachian Parkway to Claude Sims Road; therefore the county would be working with the state in order to make this an appropriate roadway for the cut through traffic.

Mr. Melton stated that all necessary easements had been obtained for Shepherd Drive.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Goodger, seconded by Commissioner Nix there was a unanimous vote for the county to accept Shepherd Drive (.178 miles from intersection of Appalachian Parkway to Claude Sims Road) onto the county road maintenance inventory.

Chairman Turner stated that Senator Steve Gooch had requested a joint resolution from Lumpkin and White Counties regarding the extension of Georgia 400 along Long Branch Road and the Hwy 115 corridor, as the state recognized the issues with traffic congestion within this area.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Holcomb, seconded by Commissioner Bryant there was a unanimous vote to adopt County Resolution No. 2018-09 as a Joint Resolution:

**A RESOLUTION OF
THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF LUMPKIN COUNTY, GEORGIA
AND THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF WHITE COUNTY, GEORGIA**

WHITE COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 2018-09

WHEREAS, Lumpkin and White Counties are located at the northeastern edge of the economic growth pattern that is making its way into the Northeast Georgia Mountains Region; and

WHEREAS, GA 400 has been a catalyst for commercial, industrial and residential economic growth in the counties it currently runs through including Fulton, Forsyth, Dawson and Lumpkin Counties; and

WHEREAS, continuing GA 400 another 16.2 miles with improvements to GA Highway 115 from the intersection of Highway 60 and Highway 400 to the intersection of the new

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Appalachian Parkway in White County would provide a valuable East-West connection opportunity for the Georgia Department of Transportation; and

WHEREAS, Lumpkin and White Counties currently host about 1.2 million tourists who visit Dahlonega, Cleveland and the Alpine Village of Helen each year. Tourism continues to be one of the top industries in both counties and will grow if better transportation options, such as a major four lane divided highway, were available for tourists to access the region; and

WHEREAS, Lumpkin and White Counties are also home to higher education institutions in the state with the University of North Georgia and Truett-McConnell University located in the region. Improved transportation would help these thriving universities continue to grow and educate our workforce of the future; and

WHEREAS, Lumpkin and White Counties have proven their willingness to support Georgia Department of Transportation projects with local matching funds to include the extension of GA 400 into Lumpkin County and the Appalachian Parkway project that has improved transportation in White County.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Boards of Commissioners of Lumpkin and White Counties ask the State of Georgia and the Department of Transportation to make extending GA 400 by 16.2 miles a priority in their transportation plans and designate funds accordingly for the project.

SO RESOLVED, in session for official purposes, this 15 day of May, 2018 by the Lumpkin County Board of Commissioners and this 17th day of May, 2018 by the White County Board of Commissioners.

LUMPKIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

By: s/Chris Dockery
Chris Dockery, Chairman
By Resolution No. 2018-33

Attest: s/Melissa Witcher
Melissa Witcher, County Clerk

WHITE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

By: s/Travis C. Turner
Travis Turner, Chairman
White County Board of Commissioners
By Resolution No. 2018-09

Attest: s/Shanda Murphy
Shanda Murphy, County Clerk

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Goodger there was a unanimous vote to approve the contracts associated with the 2018-2019 Employee Benefits Renewal. These contracts reflected no change in the medical insurance (cost or design), changing

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dental insurance from Blue Cross Blue Shield to Aetna which included a 10% cost reduction, suspending offer of the Allstate Cancer Plan to new enrollees and replacing with a Metlife Critical Illness Policy - with all other benefits remaining unchanged.

Chairman Turner stated that in considering the proposed 2020 SPLOST distributions to the City of Cleveland and the City of Helen – both municipalities had very strong project lists which would enhance the community.

Commissioner Bryant stated that he believed that 2020 SPLOST revenues had been underestimated thus far in discussions. He felt that \$28,000,000.00 was a more realistic revenue projection for the 6 year SPLOST (compared to the \$24,000,000.00 previously discussed). He also stated that he supported the distribution of 60% County / 20% City / 20% City for the proposed 2020 SPLOST.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Holcomb there was a vote to increase the proposed 2020 SPLOST revenue projections to \$28,000,000.00 over the 6 years / 72 months and to distribute 2020 SPLOST proceeds 60% County / 20% City / 20% City. Commissioner Goodger voted in favor of the motion. Chairman Turner and Commissioner Nix opposed the motion. Motion passed by a 3-2 vote.

Chairman Turner stated that the approved distribution would not give the county any leeway with their projects. Commissioner Bryant stated that road paving would not be as aggressive in the 2020 SPLOST as it has been in the 2014 SPLOST. Chairman Turner stated that Chief Judge Miller would be providing the county with a list of needed improvements to the courthouse prior to his retirement - as there are currently issues with keeping the jury and parties of the cases segregated.

Commissioner Bryant asked for information regarding the preliminary tax digest and actual revenue collected from digest related revenues in the past.

Mr. Melton stated that he was still awaiting a status update on the Yonah Preserve trailhead building project.

There were brief discussions regarding the Yonah Preserve Trails and the dam, specifically a breakaway chain length fence being installed at the top of the spillway, as well as any other items that need to be completed prior to the opening of the trail.

Jeff Ash, City of Helen Mayor, expressed his appreciation to the Board for their support of the cities in the proposed 2020 SPLOST negotiations.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Nix, seconded by Commissioner Holcomb there was a unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting.

The minutes of the May 17, 2018 Work Session and Called Meeting are hereby approved as stated this 21st day of May, 2018.

WHITE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

s/Travis C. Turner
Travis C. Turner, Chairman

s/Terry D. Goodger
Terry D. Goodger, District 1

s/Lyn Holcomb
Lyn Holcomb, District 2

s/Edwin Nix
Edwin Nix, District 3

s/Craig Bryant
Craig Bryant, District 4

s/Shanda Murphy
Shanda Murphy, County Clerk