

Minutes of the
Board of Commissioners of Worth County
Regular Meeting
March 21, 2024 starting at 7:00 p.m.

The Board of Commissioners of Worth County convened in a Regular Meeting on Thursday, March 21, 2024, at 7:00 p.m., in the Commission Board Room at 201 N. Main Street, Sylvester, Georgia.

- I. Call to Order:** Chairman Dent called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- II. Preliminary Matters:** With a quorum and accommodations met, Commissioner Willis gave the invocation followed by the pledge to the flag.
Commissioners Present: Chairman Fred Dent, Commissioner Joe Gaines, Commissioner E. Dice Roberts, and Commissioner Kemp Willis
Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Ken Hall
Also Present: County Attorney Ralph Powell, County Administrator Carl Rowland and County Clerk Angela Harrah

III. Welcome: Chairman Dent welcomed everyone to the meeting.

IV. Agenda: Consider approval of Agenda

Commissioner Gaines moved, seconded by Commissioner Willis, and carried 3-0, to approve the agenda as presented.

- V. Minutes:** Consider approval of previous meeting minutes from:
A. March 5, 2024 Workshop
B. March 5, 2024 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Roberts moved, seconded by Commissioner Gaines, and carried 3-0, to approve the March 5, 2024 workshop and March 5, 2024 regular meeting minutes.

VI. Reports:

Ralph Powell, County Attorney – Attorney reported receiving questions concerning the status of the tax commissioner’s office since Tabetha Dupriest, the current Tax Commissioner, had announced her retirement effective March 31, 2024, nine months before her current term expired.

Attorney said that Georgia Law requires a special election to fill the unexpired term if there are six months or more left until the election for the position. With eight months remaining until the November election, a special election is required.

Attorney explained that an interim tax commissioner had been appointed to serve starting April 1st until the special election takes place. He added that the election for the new term starting January 1, 2025 for the tax commissioner had already been included and scheduled for the general election in November, 2024.

Attorney said that he asked Brandy Bowles, Supervisor of Elections, to provide additional information and help explain the convoluted election laws. He added that he wanted to point out that, Ms. DuPriest was still the Tax Commissioner and would be until March 31st. Therefore, the Elections Office would not be able to issue a call for a special election until the position was vacant.

Mrs. Bowles addressed the Board and explained the dates and deadlines associated with special elections. The special election could be held at the same time as the general election or in May; but, if held in May, they would have tight deadlines to meet the requirements of the law.

She said that she had an estimate for the cost difference associated with having the special election at the same time as the general election verses having it in May. When asked, Mrs. Bowles said her estimate for having the special election at the same time as the general election would save taxpayers about \$12,000.

Mrs. Bowles said that if the special election was at the same time as the general election the call would need to be made at least 90 days prior to the election, or by August 7, 2024.

Mrs. Bowles said that the Board of Elections felt it would be best to wait until November to hold the special election based on the costs, timeframe, and available resources.

Attorney reminded the Board that the members of the Board of Elections were not employees of the Board. The Board's control over the Board of Elections was limited. The Board appointed the members of the Board of Elections and set their budget.

Chairman Fred Dent – No report.

Commissioner Joe Gaines, District 1 – No report.

Commissioner Ken Hall, District 2 – Not present.

Commissioner Dice Roberts, District 3 – Commissioner Roberts asked what equipment, if any, did the County furnish at the Country Club. Administrator said he would review the agreement and get back with Commissioner Roberts.

Commissioner Roberts also said that it seemed like the County was having to repair the same potholes over and over. Commissioner Roberts commended Public Works for their response to filling the holes when called; however, he wondered if the County might need to find a different method or material for filling the holes.

Administrator said he agreed with Commissioner Roberts, and he was considering additional training. Administrator added that he was impressed with the pothole

repairs while visiting Callaway Gardens and was considering having a representative from the Callaway company provide training to the Worth County employees.

Commissioner Kemp Willis, District 4 – Commissioner Willis said he not only noticed the frequency of which the potholes needed to be repaired, but also that the size of the potholes seemed to be growing larger. Commissioner Willis asked if this could be contributed to rainy weather and Administrator said that could be a possible reason; however, he felt the main contributor was the increased weight size allowed on county roads.

A discussion ensued regarding the positive correlation between the weight of the trucks and the number of potholes. Chairman Dent said he believed some trucks exceeded the weight limit and Commissioner Roberts concurred.

Carl Rowland, County Administrator – Administrator said that the State announced it had additional LMIG funds and the applications would be due in June. Administrator added that the County would also receive funds for striping through the Safety Action funds.

Administrator then gave an update on the current road projects.

Finance Director, Roland McCarthy, reported that John NeSmith, CPA with Hudson & NeSmith would be presenting his audit report at the April 2nd meeting. Mr. McCarthy distributed the audited “Financial Statements and Supplemental Information” report so Commissioners could review prior to the meeting.

VII. Action Items:

A. Appoint new Worth County voting delegate for consideration of three Georgia Opioid Settlement Advisory Commission (GOSAC) members and Regional Advisory Council (RAC) members.

Commissioner Roberts moved, seconded by Commissioner Gaines, and carried 3-0, to appoint County Administrator, Carl Rowland as Worth County’s voting delegate for consideration of three GOSAC members and RAC members.

B. Consider approval of a statewide mutual aid and assistance agreement.

Commissioner Willis moved, seconded by Commissioner Gaines, and carried 3-0, to approve the statewide mutual aid and assistance agreement.

C. Consider approval of repairs to John Deere 624J loader.

Administrator said the County received four (4) quotes for the repairs needed on the loader at the Worth County Landfill. Perry Brothers Equipment Company submitted the lowest quote at \$10,000.00.

Administrator said the cost for these repairs would be taken from the landfill budget.

Commissioner Roberts moved, seconded by Commissioner Willis, and carried 3-0, to accept the \$10,000 quote from Perry Brothers for the repairs to the loader.

D. Consider purchase of three fire trucks.

Ray Salter, Fire Chief, EMS Director, and EMA Director, addressed the Board. Chief Salter reported that as of January 1st of 2025, the fire trucks at the Doles, Gordy, and Worthy Manor stations would no longer be recognized which would cause them to lose their ISO rating.

Chief Salter said the cost of a new truck would be about \$550,000 each; however, he found three used trucks with an asking price of \$358,000 for all three. He said these trucks had been pump tested already; however, Chief Salter had not personally seen the trucks. After Chief Salter described the three trucks, Board members expressed reservations about the truck with the Max Force engine.

After further discussion, Chief Salter suggested going and inspecting the trucks first. He would see if another used truck was available in place of the one with the Max Force engine. With the Board's permission, the Administrator would then negotiate the price.

Chairman Dent acknowledged that used fire trucks might be for sale one day and sold the next so he thought that might be a prudent plan of action.

Commissioner Willis moved, seconded by Commissioner Gaines, and carried 3-0, to allow Chief Salter to find three (3) used fire trucks with the required specifications and instruct the Administrator to negotiate the price of all three up to \$330,000 with this expense being paid from SPLOST 6 and/or SPLOST 7 funds.

E. Consider approval to open a public funds, interest bearing, bank account in the name of Worth County BOC, Worth County Tax Commissioner, Property Account, for the tax commissioner's office under the County's Employer Identification Number (EIN) / Tax Identification Number (TIN) with LaKeysia McGill, Tax Commissioner, as the authorized signer.

Commissioner Gaines moved, seconded by Commissioner Roberts, and carried 3-0, to open a public funds, interest bearing, bank account in the name of Worth County BOC, Worth County Tax Commissioner, Property Account, for the tax commissioner's office under the County's EIN / TIN with LaKeysia McGill, Tax Commissioner, as the authorized signer.

- F. Consider approval to open a public funds, interest bearing, bank account in the name of Worth County BOC, Worth County Tax Commissioner, Dealer ACH Account, for the tax commissioner's office under the County's Employer Identification Number (EIN) / Tax Identification Number (TIN) with LaKeysia McGill, Tax Commissioner, as the authorized signer.**

Commissioner Willis moved, seconded by Commissioner Gaines, and carried 3-0, to open a public funds, interest bearing, bank account in the name of Worth County BOC, Worth County Tax Commissioner, Dealer ACH Account, for the tax commissioner's office under the County's EIN / TIN with LaKeysia McGill, Tax Commissioner, as the authorized signer.

- G. Consider approval to open a public funds, interest bearing, bank account in the name of Worth County BOC, Worth County Tax Commissioner, MVD Account, for the tax commissioner's office under the County's Employer Identification Number (EIN) / Tax Identification Number (TIN) with LaKeysia McGill, Tax Commissioner, as the authorized signer.**

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- H. Consider approval to open a public funds, interest bearing, bank account in the name of Worth County BOC, Worth County Tax Commissioner, Excess Funds Account, for the tax commissioner's office under the County's Employer Identification Number (EIN) / Tax Identification Number (TIN) with LaKeysia McGill, Tax Commissioner, as the authorized signer.**

Commissioner Gaines moved, seconded by Commissioner Roberts, and carried 3-0, to open a public funds, interest bearing, bank account in the name of Worth County BOC, Worth County Tax Commissioner, Excess Funds Account, for the tax commissioner's office under the County's EIN / TIN with LaKeysia McGill, Tax Commissioner, as the authorized signer.

VIII. Executive Session

There was no executive session.

IX. Announcements

- A.** There will be a workshop followed by a regular meeting on Tuesday, April 2, 2024 starting at 7:00 p.m.

X. Adjournment

Commissioner Roberts moved, seconded by Commissioner Gaines, and carried 3-0, to adjourn.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF WORTH COUNTY, GEORGIA

Fred Dent, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Angela Harrah, County Clerk