



Jackson County Board of Commissioners

August 21, 2023 at 6:00 PM
Jury Assembly Room - County Courthouse

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order - Chairman Tom Crow**

Chairman Tom Crow called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Chairman Tom Crow
Commissioner Jim Hix, District 1
Commissioner Chas Hardy, District 2
Commissioner Chad Bingham, District 3
Commissioner Marty Seagraves, District 4
Commissioner Marty Clark, District 5

Staff Present: Chip Ferguson, County Attorney
Kevin Poe, County Manager
Gina Roy, Assistant County Manager
Jamie Dove, Public Development Manager
Ericka Johnson, Deputy Clerk

Press: Mike Buffigton, Jackson Herald/Mainstreet News

2. **Invocation - Kevin Poe, County Manager**

Kevin Poe, County Manager, gave the invocation.

3. **Pledge of Allegiance - Commissioner Marty Seagraves**

Commissioner Marty Clark led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

A. August 7, 2023 Draft Minutes

To approve the minutes for August 7, 2023

Commissioner Bingham moved to approve the minutes for August 7, 2023.

Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. (Vote 6 – 0)

5. **Citizen Input**

Each speaker is provided up to four (4) minutes to address the board on any item that is not listed on this agenda.

There were no comments.

6. Reports

From Commissioner Bingham:

- Thanked Gina Roy, Assistant County Manager, and the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce for their help with the Governmental Roundtable and bringing all local leaders together.
- Was pleased to announce the District 3 Coalition, to help with senior tax exemptions, was voted and approved by the Jackson County Board of Education. Subsequently, it will be sent to the state.

From Gina Roy, Assistant County Manager:

- Announced the Radio 1st Call Ceremony will be held tomorrow, August 22, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. at the Agricultural Facility. The public is invited to attend.

7. Consent Agenda

Chairman Crow moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner Hix seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. (Vote 6 – 0)

- A. Award bid for reroofing the Commerce Service Center
To award bid to install new roof on the Commerce Service Center
- B. Adjust rates for Ambulance Services
To consider increasing rates for ambulance services
- C. Intergovernmental Agreement with City of Commerce for inmate detail
to approve IGA with Commerce for inmate detail

8. New Business

- A. Creation of a Street Light Special Tax District for Lake Preserve at Jackson Trail Subdivision

To authorize the Chairperson to establish a special tax district for street lights for Lake Preserve at Jackson Trail. An application has been submitted by Chandler Bragg as authorized representative

Jamie Dove, Public Development Director, reported the final plat for the subdivision, Lake Preserve at Jackson Trail, was almost final. At completion, there will be 239 lots with a total of 83 street lights. Chip Ferguson, County Attorney, opened the public hearing for comment. There were none.

Commissioner Bingham moved to approve the creation of a Street Light Special Tax District for Lake Preserve at Jackson Trail Subdivision. Commissioner Seagraves seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. (Vote 6 – 0)

B. Appeal the 2022 Sales Ratio Study

To authorize administration to act in coordination with the three local school systems, the City of Commerce, and the City of Jefferson to appeal the 2022 Sales Ratio Study from the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts received on August 9, 2023

Gina Roy, Assistant County Manager, advised on August 9, 2023, the County had received notice from the State Department of Audits that the county's assessments were out of ratio. The Jackson County Tax Assessor's Office had 39%, which would meet the ratio in-house. However, the State Audit Department had the county at 31%. Ms. Roy acknowledged there was an appeal period of thirty (30) days from receipt of notice of the non-compliance. Representatives from the three (3) public school systems, along with their governing authorities, as well as Jackson County held a meeting and all entities wanted to attempt an appeal.

Commerce School Superintendent Joy Tolbert was leading the appeal. Mrs. Tolbert contacted Kelly McCormack with McCormack Solutions, because they had assisted Floyd and Bartow Counties with appeals last year. The cost of the appeal was estimated at \$2,500; however, it will be divided among the six (6) entities. Ms. Roy also noted that after the appeal, the state will set a hearing date and meet with witnesses to include the Chief Tax Assessor. Chairman Crow moved to approve filing an appeal of the 2022 Sales Ratio Study. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. (Vote 6 – 0)

C. Georgia Public Defender Council contract

To approve annual contract with Georgia Public Defenders Council for indigent defense services

Kevin Poe, County Manager, reported that each year, the board considers a contract with the Georgia Public Defender Council for indigent defense services. The contract covered Barrow and Jackson Counties within the Piedmont Judicial Circuit. Banks County was not included because they did not provide the level of service compared to Barrow and Jackson. The contract required Barrow County to commit to 52% and Jackson County to 48%.

The term of the contract was January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024. The cost of the annual contract for Jackson County was \$727,871. This was a \$90,767 (14%) increase over the prior year. The major increase in cost was attributed to personnel. Chairman Crow moved to approve the Georgia Public Defender Council contract. Commissioner Hardy seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. (Vote 6 – 0)

D. Select engineer for airport sewer extension project

To select a firm to provide engineering services for the proposed airport sewer line extension project

Kevin Poe, County Manager, reported the county was considering extending a

Jefferson sewer line to the airport property. He said plans were to apply for an Appalachian Regional Grant. To obtain the grant, a Request for Qualification (RFQ) for engineering services. This would cover the preliminary engineering report as well as construction plans and administration. Two proposals were received and reviewed by staff. Goodwin Mills Kaywood received the highest score, so staff recommended the board select Goodwin Mills Kaywood to provide engineering for the sewer line extension to the airport.

The estimated cost for the preliminary engineering report was \$7,500. Mr. Poe further explained if it goes into construction, then there will be a \$160,000 (8%) engineering fee, for example, if the project was \$2 million dollars. Moreover, if it goes into construction, the county would pay approximately \$25,000 for construction administration. Chairman Crow moved to approve the selection of Goodwin Mills Kaywood as engineer for the airport sewer extension project. Commissioner Hix seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. (Vote 6 – 0)

9. Zoning Related Business

A. New Business

1. SU-23-0053 - Bobby Joe Stapp, Jr, 1090 Blacks Creek Church Road, Commerce; 18.77 acres (Map 010/Parcel 030A) Request for a Special Use to expand an existing event/wedding venue

Jamie Dove, Public Development Director, presented the staff report for SU-23-0053. She reported the applicant requested approval of a special use permit to add to an existing event/wedding venue. Staff recommended approval with three (3) conditions.

- 1) There shall be no more than 225 guests on the property for an event.
- 2) Only one event shall be in operation at any given time.
- 3) Hours of operation shall be Sunday through Thursday, no earlier than 9 a.m. and no later than 9 p.m.; Friday and Saturday no earlier than 9 a.m. and no later than 10:30 p.m.

The Planning Commission recommended approval with the same three (3) conditions. Chip Ferguson, County Attorney, opened the public hearing for comment. There were no comments made by the applicant. There was no opposition and the public hearing was closed. Commissioner Hardy moved to approve SU-23-0053 with three (3) conditions as recommended by staff.

Commissioner Hix seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. (Vote 6 – 0)

2. **RZ-23-0186 - Chris Worley, 6602 Jackson Trail Road, Hoschton; 3.07 acres (Map 106/Parcel 013C)**
Request to Rezone from A-2 (Agricultural Rural Farm District) to MH (Manufactured Housing) in order to subdivide into 2 tracts

Jamie Dove, Public Development Director, presented the staff report for RZ-23-0186. She explained the applicant requested approval of a rezoning from A-2 to M-H in order to divide it into two (2) tracts.

The Planning Staff recommended approval. The Planning Commission recommended approval with one (1) condition.

1. If the County requirements on driveway separation cannot be met, a shared driveway must be utilized.

Chip Ferguson, County Attorney, opened the public hearing for comment. Chris Worley, 2700 Hwy. 60, Pendergrass, GA spoke in support of the application. He did not have anything to add. There was no opposition to the request and the public hearing was closed. Commissioner Bingham moved to approve RZ-23-0186 with one (1) condition.

1. If the County requirements on driveway separation cannot be met, a shared driveway must be utilized.

Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. (Vote 6 – 0)

3. **RZ-23-0187 - David Elder, 2277 Brock Road, Athens; 8 acres (Map 043/Parcel 015)**
Request to Rezone from A-2 (Agricultural Rural Farm District) to CRC (Community Retail Commercial) in order to be combined with an adjacent commercially zoned parcel

Jamie Dove, Public Development Director, presented the staff report for RZ-23-0187. The applicant requested approval of a rezoning of eight (8) acres from A-2 (Agricultural Rural Farm District) to CRC (Community Retail Commercial) in order to combine it with an adjacent commercially zoned parcel. She reported public water was available; however, sewer was not. Staff recommended approval w/ 1 condition and the Planning Commission agreed.

1. Due to lack of road frontage, this subject parcel must be combined with adjacent Map/Parcel 043 019 before land disturbance permit is issued.

Chip Ferguson, County Attorney, opened the public hearing for comment. Dave Elder, 123 Bear Creek Lane, addressed the board in support of the application. There was no opposition and the public hearing was closed. Commissioner Seagraves moved to approve RZ-23-0187 with the one (1) recommended condition. Commissioner Bingham seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. (Vote 6 – 0)

4. **RZ-23-0188 - Justin Crighton, 831 U.S. Highway 441 South, Commerce; 7.9 acres (Map 011/Parcel 016)**
Request to Rezone from A-2 (Agricultural Rural Farm District) to CRC (Community Retail Commercial) in order to have a self-service storage facility

Jamie Dove, Public Development Director, presented the staff report for RZ-23-0188. The applicant requested approval of a rezoning from A-2 (Agricultural Rural Farm District) to CRC (Community Retail Commercial) in order to have a self-service storage facility. The Planning Staff and Planning Commission recommended approval of the request.

Chip Ferguson, County Attorney, opened the public hearing for comment. Justin Crighton, of W & A Engineering, Athens, GA addressed the board in support of the application. There was no opposition to the request and the public hearing was closed. Commissioner Hardy moved to approve RZ-23-0188 as recommended by staff and the Planning Commission. Commissioner Hix seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. (Vote 6 – 0)

10. **Adjournment**

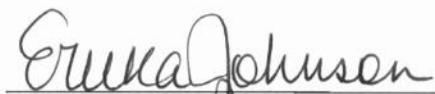
Chairman Crow declared the meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Minutes Approved: Monday, September 18, 2023

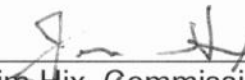
Jackson County Board of Commissioners

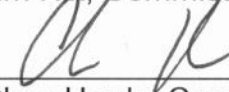


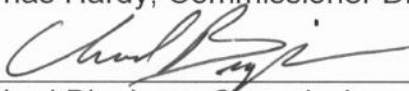
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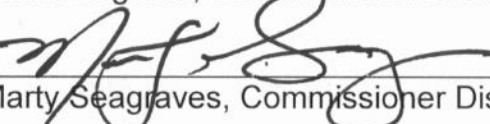

Ericka Johnson, Deputy Clerk


Tom Crow, Chairman


Jim Hix, Commissioner District 1


Chas Hardy, Commissioner District 2


Chad Bingham, Commissioner District 3


Marty Seagraves, Commissioner District 4


Marty Clark, Commissioner District 5