COLUMBIA COUNTY
GEORGIA

# Columbia County Board of Commissioners Meeting
# Minutes of Tuesday, December 17, 2024 at 6:00 PM
# Evans Government Center Auditorium, Evans, Georgia

Present at the meeting included:
Chairman Douglas R. Duncan, Jr.
Vice Chairman Connie M. Melear
Commissioner Donald Skinner, Sr.
Commissioner Michael W. Carraway
Commissioner Alison G. Couch
County Manager Scott Johnson
Deputy County Manager Matt Schlachter
Deputy County Manager Glenn Kennedy
County Clerk Patrice R. Crawley

Division Directors:
Scott Sterling – Planning Services
Kyle Titus - Engineering Services
John Luton - Community Services
Chief Jeremy Wallen - Fire Services
Michael Blanchard - Technology Services

County Staff
Members of the Media and Public

**A. CALL TO ORDER**
*Chairman Duncan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.*

**B. INVOCATION**
*Chairman Duncan gave the invocation.*

**C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
*County Manager Johnson led the pledge to the American Flag.*

**D. ROLL CALL / QUORUM**
*Chairman Duncan declared a quorum with five Commissioners present.*

**E. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**(E1) December 03, 2024**
*Vice Chair Melear made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 03, 2024 Board of Commissioners meeting as presented. Commissioner Couch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**F. PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**
*Chairman Duncan presented the agenda.*

**G. SPECIAL RECOGNITION, PRESENTATION, AND / OR DECLARATION**

**(G1) Presentation**

**(G1a) Bill Jackson Jr. and Donna Anderson with Save the Columns Fund to present a donation for the Columbia County Museum.**
*Mr. Jackson and Mrs. Anderson gave the background on the funds that were collected for Save the Columns then presented their remaining funds to Columbia County for the museum.*

**H. CONSENT AGENDA**
*In accordance with Columbia County Code of Ordinance Section 2-81(6), the following items were voted on collectively. Vice Chair Melear made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Commissioner Couch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**(H1) Community and Emergency Services Committee**

**(H1a) Independent Contractor Agreement with Bliss Products and Services, Inc. for the Replacement Shelters at Memorial Park**
*Approved an Independent Contractor Agreement with Bliss Products and Services, Inc. for the replacement of the shelters at Memorial Park.*

**(H1b) Evans Market Vendor Rules and Regulations**

*Approved the Evans Market Vendor Rules and Regulations to go into effect December 18, 2024.*

**(H2) Management and Internal Services Committee**

**(H2a) Reappointment of Wes Fuller to serve on the Board of Tax Assessors**
*Approved the reappointment of Wes Fuller to the Board of Tax Assessors for a 4-year term ending December 31, 2028.*

**(H2b) Resolution Number 24-46 Authorizing Participation in the ACCG - Interlocal Risk Management Agency Supplemental Medical, Accident, and Disability Fund: First Responder PTSD Program**
*Approved Resolution Number 24-46 Authorizing Participation in the ACCG - Interlocal Risk Management Agency supplemental medical, accident and disability fund for First Responder PTSD Program.*

**(H2c) Master Lease Agreement with State Properties Commission for Department of Revenue**
*Approved the Master Lease Agreement with State Properties Commission for the Department of Revenue.*

**(H2d) Sub-Contract Agreement with Deanna Specialty Transportation for the DHS Coordinated Transportation Services**
*Approved the Sub-Contract Agreement with Deanna Specialty Transportation for the DHS Coordinated Transportation Services.*

**(H2e) Clariti Permitting and Licensing Solution Annual Maintenance Payment**
*Approved the Clariti permitting and licensing solution annual maintenance payment in the amount of $214,246.10.*

**(H2f) Upgrade of Sheriff's Office Email from On-Premise to Exchange Online**
*Approved the upgrade of the Sheriff's Office email from on-premise to exchange online in the amount of $51,365.*

**(H2g) Intergovernmental Agreement with the Columbia County Sheriff's Office for Microsoft 365**
*Approved an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Columbia County Sheriff's Office for Microsoft 365.*

**(H2h) Acceptance and Grant Agreement with GEMA and Homeland Security Agency for the Fiscal Year 2022 State and Local Government Cybersecurity Grant Program**
*Approved acceptance and grant agreement with GEMA and Homeland Security Agency for the Fiscal Year 2022 State and Local Government Cybersecurity grant program.*

**(H2i) Annual Payment to Ciena Network Equipment and Services**
*Approved the annual payment to Ciena Network Equipment and Services in the amount of $100,888.81; 5515530.533035.*

**(H3) Development and Planning Services Committee**

**(H3a) Alcoholic Beverage License, Towne Center Tavern LLC**
*Approved the Alcoholic Beverage License for Towne Center Tavern LLC to be effective January 01, 2025.*

**(H3b) Alcoholic Beverage License, Guru Darshan LLC dba Super Express 4**
*Approved the Alcoholic Beverage License for Guru Darshan LLC dba Super Express 4 to be effective January 01, 2025.*

**(H3c) Acceptance of a Donation from Save the Columns Fund**
*Approved the acceptance of a donation of $7,522.65 from Save the Columns fund with the intent of the funds to go to the Columbia County Museum; 5810801.477003.58110.*

**(H3d) Resolution 24-47 Dissolving the Greenspace Advisory Board**
*Approved Resolution Number 24-47 Dissolving the Greenspace Advisory Board effective January 01, 2025.*

**(H3e) Vision 2035 Comprehensive Plan Five Year Update Steering Committee Appointments**
*Approved the appointment of Russell Wilder and Joe Edlemon by Chairman Duncan, Jim Cox and Bryce*

*Melear by Vice Chair Melear, Carroll Proctor and Troy Akers by Commissioner Skinner, Ken Richards and Tiffany Heitzman by Commissioner Carraway, Sarah McDonald and Chris Hermann by Commissioner Couch, Russell Lahodny, Cheney Eldridge, Steven Flynt, Jonathan Crawford and Keith Lawrence to the Vision 2035 Comprehensive Plan five year update with the appointment to be dissolved after the plan has been approved.*

**(H4) Public Works and Engineering Services Committee**

**(H4a) Professional Services Contract with Goodwyn Mills Cawood (GMC) for the design of Riverwood Park**
*Approved the Professional Services Contract with Goodwyn Mills Cawood for the design of Riverwood Park in the amount of $650,900; 28155.38.010.*

**(H4b) Professional Services Contract with Booker + Vick Architects for the design of the renovation to Savannah Rapids Pavilion**
*Approved the Professional Services Contract with Booker + Vick Architects for the design of the renovation to Savannah Rapids Pavilion in the amount of $670,300; 24190.34.010.*

**(H4c) Change Order #6 with Continental Construction for Repairs to Patriots Park Tennis Courts due to Hurricane Helene**
*Approved Change Order Number 6 with Continental Construction for repairs to Patriots Park Tennis Courts due to Hurricane Helene in the amount of $33,734.*

**(H4d) Bluewater Proposal for Engineering Services to design front enclosure on the Laydown Yard Building**
*Approved the Proposal for Engineering Services with Bluewater for the design of the front enclosure on the laydown yard building in the amount of $9,400; 57037.25.015.593.*

**(H4e) Change Order # 3 with Harris Utilities for the Cayenta Project Extension and Bill Print Rework**
*Approved Change Order Number 3 with Harris Utilities for Cayenta project extension and bill print rework in the amount of $98,550; 511.5100.601090.*

**(H4f) Award BID # 2024027-BID5100 and Contract to Strack, Inc. for the Harlem Euchee Creek Interceptor Sewer Project**
*Approved to award the bid and contract to Strack, Inc. for the Harlem Euchee Creek Interceptor Sewer project in the amount of $22,954,001; 57037.25.015.687.*

**(H4g) Purchase of a Case CX75C Excavator from G, J&L Inc. for Stormwater Utility**
*Approved the purchase of a Case CX75C Excavator from G, J&L Inc. for Stormwater Utility in the amount of $123,366; 5215200.601082.*

**(H4h) Purchase of an Envirosight Sewer Inspection Camera & Equipment from Environmental Products Group**
*Approved the purchase of an Envirosight sewer inspection camera and equipment from Environmental Products in the amount of $122,360; 5215200.601082.*

**(H4i) Change Order No. 1 with Reeves Construction for The Pass Culvert Replacement**
*Approved change order number 1 with Reeves Construction for The Pass Culvert replacement project in the amount of $45,630.*

**(H4j) Independent Contractor Agreement with Goodwyn Mills Cawood (GMC) for Engineering Services on the Reed Creek Streambank Stabilization Project**
*Approved an Independent Contractor Agreement with Goodwyn Mills Cawood for engineering services on the Reed Creek Streambank Stabilization project in the amount of $88,250; 28750.35.010.*

**(H4k) Supplemental Agreement No. 1 with GDOT for TIA 2 Group 4 Resurfacing**
*Approved Supplemental Agreement number 1 with Georgia Department of Transportation for TIA 2 Group 4 resurfacing.*

**(H4l) Change Order No. 1 with Reeves Construction for TIA 2 Group 4**
*Approved change order number 1 with Reeves Construction for TIA 2 group 4 in the amount of*

*$606,803.75.*

**(H4m) Change Order No. 3 with ER Snell for Horizon South Pkwy Widening Project**
*Approved change order number 3 with ER Snell for Horizon South Parkway widening project in the amount of $58,649.69; 91312.24.015.*

**(H4n) Permanent Drainage & Utility Easements along Smith Crawford Rd**
*Approved the acceptance of permanent drainage and utility easements from Jason & Lillian Brewer tax map 009020L and Kristen & Marc Falk tax map 009020K for the Smith Crawford Road project.*

**I. DEBATE AGENDA**

**(I1) New Business**

**(I1a) Community and Emergency Services Committee**

**(I1a1) Senior Center Donation**
*Commissioner Couch made a motion to accept the donation in the amount of $2,700 for the Senior Center Holiday Social. Commissioner Skinner seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**(I1a2) Resolution 24-48 Evans Market Vendor Fees - *First Reading***
*Commissioner Couch motion to approve the First Reading of Resolution 24-48 Evans Market Vendor Fees. Vice Chair Melear seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**(I1b) Management and Internal Services Committee**

**(I1b1) Independent Contractor Agreement with Laura Moore as Accountability Court Judicial Assistant**
*Vice Chair Melear made a motion to approve the Independent Contractor Agreement with Laura Moore as Accountability Court Judicial Assistant. Commissioner Skinner seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**(I1b2) Purchase of Vehicles for the Sheriff's Office**
*Vice Chair Melear made a motion to approve the purchase of 5 Ford Explorers from Gerald Jones Ford at a cost of $209,960. Commissioner Skinner seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**(I1c) Development and Planning Services Committee**

**(I1c1) RZ24-12-01, Rezoning from C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial) to C-2 (General Commercial), 4687 Washington Road, Tax Map 071A Parcel 047, 3.92 +/- acres and currently zoned C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial).**
*Commissioner Skinner made a motion to approve the request for the rezoning from C-1 to C-2 for a proposed outdoor retail supply store for property located at tax map 071A parcel 047. Vice Chair Melear seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**(I1c2) RZ24-12-03, Rezoning from R-2 (Single Family Residential) to R-1 (Single Family Residential), 3530 Evans to Locks Road, Tax Map 081B Parcel 370, 1.14 +/- acres and currently zoned R-2 (Single Family Residential).**
*Brooks Blumenthal with West Lake Property Owners Associations, Inc. stated they were not in favor of the rezoning. David Huguenin, attorney for the applicant, explained why the rezoning should be approved. Commissioner Skinner made a motion to deny the request for the rezoning from R-2 to R-1 for property located at tax map 081B parcel 370. Vice Chair Melear seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**(I1c3) RZ24-12-04, Major PUD (Planned Unit Development) Revision, 205 New Petersburg Drive, Tax Map 082D Parcel 068, 0.39 +/- acres and currently zoned PUD (Planned Unit Development).**
*Commissioner Skinner made a motion to approve the request for the Major PUD Revision for massage for property located at tax map 082D parcel 068. Commissioner Couch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**(I1c4) VA24-12-01, Variance to Section 90-135 *Signs*, 3508 Washington Road, Tax Map 082D Parcel 039, 3.63 +/- acres, and currently zoned C-2 (General Commercial).**
*Commissioner Skinner made a motion to approve the request for the variance to section 90-135 for*

*property located at tax map 082D parcel 039 to increase the miscellaneous wall sign allowance to 134 square feet. Chairman Duncan seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**(I1c5) VA24-12-02, Variance to Section 90-53 *List of Lot & structure requirements*, 5438 Tubman Road, Tax Map 058 Parcel 022, 8.64 +/- acres, and currently zoned R-A (Residential Agricultural).**
*Commissioner Skinner made a motion to approve the request for a variance to section 90-53 for property located at tax map 058 parcel 022 to decrease the rear setback subject to the following condition:*
*Building Standards:*
*The northern property line must be demarcated adjacent to the addition prior to the footing or foundation inspection.*
*Commissioner Couch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**(I1c6) VA24-12-03, Variance to Section 90-53 *List of lot & structure requirements*, 4605 Holly Hill Rd, Tax Map 072D Parcel 019, 0.434 +/- acres and currently zoned R-1 (Single Family Residential).**
*Commissioner Skinner made a motion to approve the request for a variance to section 90-53 for property located at tax map 072D parcel 019 to reduce the front building setback to 40 feet from the centerline of Holly Hill Road. Commissioner Carraway seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**(I2) Items Added at the Meeting**

**J. LEGAL MATTERS**

**K. REQUESTS FOR REVIEW BY COMMITTEE**

**L. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PARTICIPATION**

**(L1) Chairman Duncan gave a statement regarding incorporation and consolidation.**

**(L2) Blane Carter thanked the Commissioners for holding off on the incorporation and consolidation.**

**(L3) Marlena Bergeron spoke concerning sunsetting the Greenspace Advisory Board and the library guidelines.**

**M. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**(M1) Personnel**

**(M1a) Employee agreement with Harold Sparrow, Michael Murphey, Shelly Blackburn, Ashley Swain, Cheney Eldridge, Anita Patel, Stuart Hilsman, Linda Peplau, Steven Prather, Ashlyn Bedgood, Zachary Allen and Cameron Day.**
*Vice Chair Melear made a motion to approve the employee agreements with Harold Sparrow, Michael Murphey, Shelly Blackburn, Ashley Swain, Cheney Eldridge, Anita Patel, Stuart Hilsman, Linda Peplau, Steven Prather, Ashlyn Bedgood, Zachary Allen and Cameron Day. Commissioner Skinner seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**(M1b) Approve moving position number 219 and position number 9833 to the General Fund to have an effective pay period ending December 28, 2024.**
*Vice Chair Melear made a motion to approve moving position number 219 and position number 9833 to the General Fund to be effective pay period beginning December 29, 2024. Commissioner Skinner seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**(M2) Property**

**(M2a) Steven Day parcel 073002K, Sami & Ines Hourani parcel 072250 and Steven Houston parcel 072236 to obtain right of way and/or easements for the Hereford Farm Road widening project.**
*Commissioner Carraway made a motion to approve $25,500 to Steven Day parcel 073002K, $25,100 to Sami & Ines Hourani parcel 072250 and $9,100 to Steven Houston parcel 072236 to obtain right of way and/or easements for the Hereford Farm Road widening project. Commissioner Couch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**(M2b) Settlement agreement with David Biggs parcel072A057 for the Hereford Farm Road widening project.**
*Commissioner Carraway made a motion to approve a settlement agreement with David Biggs parcel*

*072A057 for the Hereford Farm Road widening project. Commissioner Couch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**N. ADJOURNMENT**

*Chairman Duncan presented Commissioner Skinner with a small token of appreciation for his dedication and service to Columbia County over the past four years.*

*Commissioner Skinner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m. Commissioner Couch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Douglas R. Duncan, Jr., Chairman

Patrice R. Crawley, County Clerk