



**BALDWIN COUNTY  
WORK SESSION**  
May 23, 2024  
1601 N Columbia St, Suite 240  
1:00 PM

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**MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Emily Davis  
John Westmoreland  
Kendrick Butts  
Sammy Hall  
Henry Craig

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Laura Mathis  
Brandon Palmer  
Carlos Tobar  
Dawn Hudson  
Cindy Cunningham

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair John Westmoreland called the Work Session to order at 1:00 p.m. He welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Commissioner Henry Craig to make opening remarks.

**OPENING REMARKS**

Commissioner Henry Craig stated that during his term as President of ACCG when he traveled across the State he compared everyone against Baldwin County. He said most counties used shorter strategic planning cycles. He thinks Baldwin County's strategic plan is too broad and should be narrowed to focus on a shorter time period with more emphasis on certain areas.

**ADMINISTRATIVE / FISCAL MATTERS**

**Terms Of Engagement For Work Session**

Ms. Laura Mathis, Executive Director of the Middle Georgia Regional Commission stated the comprehensive plan is a great foundation for planning for counties. She stated she would like to discuss an overview of the comprehensive plan; strategies to utilize the plan and Commissioners' priorities for 2024.

**Overview of Comprehensive Plan**

Ms. Mathis discussed the regulations and mandated components of the comprehensive plan as outlined in the Georgia Planning Act. She stated each county must have an approved comprehensive plan in order to be a Qualified Local Government which enables the county to receive federal and state funding.

Ms. Mathis stated the plan is a joint plan with the City of Milledgeville. She discussed the vision statement of the Plan and each component of the Community Work Program, their goals and needs / opportunities. She stated components are Economic Development; Housing; Natural and Cultural Resources; Community Facilities and Services; Land Use; Transportation and Broadband Services.

Commissioners discussed Housing component activities and Plan First designation which allows counties to apply each year for CDBG grants. Commissioners asked if Plan First designation requires zoning. Ms. Mathis responded that Baldwin County Land Use Codes currently in place are acceptable to the State; however, Plan First must have zoning.

Ms. Mathis reported the Comprehensive Plan can be amended at any time. The plan can be reviewed to eliminate activities or add activities that may not have been considered when the plan was developed. Commissioners stated they felt the plan's work activities should be reviewed periodically and activities prioritized to address what they feel is most important at that period in time.

Commissioners said there are many grant opportunities available to counties; however, all grants should not be pursued. They stated Commissioners need to agree on what grants should be applied for, whether the county has a project to utilize grant funds and whether the county has required matching funds. Ms. Mathis stated that everything the county does should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

She stated strategic plans address a shorter time frame and are very focused on what the government is going to do in a specific period of time. Activities should be prioritized. Regular reviews of the work program, SPLOST projects, T-SPLOST projects and grants should be held to be certain of funding and sources of that funding.

Ms. Mathis asked each participant to go through the 2023 – 2028 Community Work Program and designate whether they felt time should be spent on an activity or not or if an activity should be eliminated or put on hold for later consideration. Once completed, each person reported on activities they felt should be a priority.

Commissioner Hall discussed the need to update the Land Use Codes to make them more stringent. Commissioner Craig stated he felt the Land Use Codes do not provide what the county needs. He stated as long as a development meets setbacks, you can put anything anywhere. Mr. Tobar stated work has been done on district-based development; however, work has been paused on this project. Commissioners stated they want to see the language / descriptions that goes with the map before further consideration.

Everyone stated what they felt their main priority is at this time. These included land use updates, millage rate, budgeting, more attention to services provided by the county; real time crime center, technology, Central State Hospital buildings, grant strategy and matching requirements, education of community regarding tax assessment, elimination of TAN, essential personnel and costs associated with extra personnel. In conclusion, the major focus at this time is providing documentation for district-based land use code.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to adjourn the Work Session at 4:50 p.m. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

  
John H. Westmoreland  
Chairman

  
Cynthia K. Cunningham  
County Clerk