



**BALDWIN COUNTY
REGULAR MEETING
December 17, 2024
1601 N Columbia St, Suite 220
6:00 PM**

MINUTES

PRESENT

John Westmoreland, Chair
Kendrick Butts
Sammy Hall
Emily Davis
Henry Craig

OTHERS PRESENT

Carlos Tobar
Andy Welch
Brandon Palmer
Dawn Hudson
Cindy Cunningham
Bo Danuser

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Rev. Kenny Walker.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Deputy Sheriff Capt. Lee Williamson.

PRESENTATIONS

Emergency Management Director Wayne Johnson was presented with a Certificate of Recognition for the help the Baldwin County EMA provided surrounding counties during Hurricane Helene. A letter of acknowledgement from the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency was read.

Dr. Jim Wolfgang and Bruce Hood gave an airport update. Mr. Hood gave flight statistics including flights for emergency management, transit, training, medivac, law enforcement and military. Mr. Hood discussed the use of the airport in providing support after Hurricane Helene. Dr. Wolfgang discussed efforts to educate youth and the community about the airport, including offering flying lessons, regional outreach with EEA chapters, creating a newsletter, offering a free flight for youth, workshops, and through the high school aviation and drone program. Dr. Wolfgang recognized Roberto Hornug, the EAA's Young Eagles Coordinator and instructor at Baldwin High School, for receiving an Award of Distinction from the Baldwin County Board of Education. Dr. Wolfgang reported the west ramp was almost done. Dr. Wolfgang and Mr. Hood discussed the use of the airport as a hub in transporting goods to hurricane hit areas, staff manning the airport for 24 hours a day during the storm and in the aftermath, providing jet fuel, and issuing Star Link satellite systems. Dr. Wolfgang thanked the airport committee members, Commissioner Henry Craig, county staff, GDOT, and others.

Vice Chairman Kendrick Butts made a motion to amend the agenda to recognize Commissioner Westmoreland and Commissioner Craig. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Vice Chairman Butts presented Commissioners Craig and Westmoreland with a crystal award in recognition of their years of service as county commissioners.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to adopt the December 3, 2024 regular meeting minutes and executive session minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kendrick Butts and the motion passed unanimously.

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to amend the agenda to remove the County Manager Employment Agreement from the agenda and to possibly place it back on the agenda after the executive session. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the agenda was amended.

Commissioner Kendrick Butts made a motion to amend the agenda to add item 16 for a Windstream Field Agreement Amendment Number 1; add item 17 to authorize the EMT Director to apply for a FEMA Public Assistance Grant; and add item 18 to authorize submission of a Firefighters Assistance Grant.

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to amend the agenda to add item 19 to modify the county fee schedule for short term vacation rental certificates.

Commissioner Emily Davis seconded all motions to amend the agenda and the motion passed unanimously.

ADMINISTRATIVE/FISCAL MATTERS

Qualite Ballfield Lighting Contract

County Manager Carlos Tobar presented an agreement with Qualite for the ballfield lighting. He stated they had presented their certificates of insurance, were the low bidder and the funds were provided by a state recreation grant.

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to authorize an agreement with Qualite Sports Lighting, LLC. Commissioner Kendrick Butts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Nicolas' Catering and Concessions Contract

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to table the approval of an agreement with Nicolas, to provide concessions at the Recreation Department because the company had not met all of the qualifications. Commissioner Henry Craig seconded the motion.

County Manager Carlos Tobar reported that the owner was coming to file state registration paperwork but the state recommended she wait until January 2nd to save the \$300 fee for the two-week period; he was hoping the commissioners would approve the agreement pending registration with the Secretary of State; she was supposed to start January 4th.

Chairman Westmoreland called for the vote.

Commissioners Sammy Hall, John Westmoreland and Henry Craig voted aye to table the agreement. Commissioners Kendrick Butts and Emily Davis vote no to table the agreement. The motion carried and the agreement with Nicolas' Catering and Concessions was tabled.

Victims of Crime Acts Assistance Grant

Deputy County Manager Dawn Hudson presented an application for a Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Victims of Crime Acts Assistance Grant for the PORCH program, no matching funds were required and the grant would run from October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2025.

Commissioner John Westmoreland made a motion to accept the grant and authorize the chair to execute the documents. Commissioner Kendrick Butts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

GEFA Loan

Deputy County Manager Dawn Hudson presented a Georgia Environmental Finance Authority Loan to perform an EPD required evaluation for lead lines in the water and sewer service areas. The county

previously received a grant to do the inventory of those lines. This grant was a \$700,000 loan with 100% principal forgiveness.

Commissioner Hall asked if the water lines would have to be replaced to the house. City Manager Tobar responded that he had asked but had not been given an answer. There was a discussion about removing galvanized lines as well as pipes with lead joints.

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to approve a GEFA loan. Commissioner Craig seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

GDOT Airport Drainage Study

County Manager Carlos Tobar presented an agreement with the Georgia Department of Transportation to conduct a drainage study to evaluate the existing drainage network, stormwater trouble areas around the airport, and potential increases in runoff due to future development.

Chairman Westmoreland recognized Melinda Brewer for comment regarding the airport. Ms. Brewer declined to speak.

Commissioner Kendrick Butts made a motion to approve the agreement with the Georgia Department of Transportation. Commissioner Henry Craig seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Development Authority Appointments

County Manager Carlos Tobar presented a request from the Development Board to reappoint Mac Patel, Ed Walker, and Derek William to the Board of Directors.

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to approve the recommended reappointments to the Development Authority Board of Directors. Commissioner Henry Craig seconded the motion and the appointments were approved unanimously.

Georgia Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act - Adult Workforce Program

Assistant County Manager Dawn Hudson presented a WIOA grant award for the Adult Workforce Program for the period of October 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026.

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to accept the grant and authorize the chair to execute the documents. Commissioner Butts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

WIOA Dislocated Workers Program

Assistant County Manager Dawn Hudson presented a WIOA grant award for the Dislocated Worker Program for the period of October 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026.

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to accept the grant and authorize the chair to execute the documents. Commissioner Butts seconded the motion.

Commissioner Craig commented on the WIOA grants stating the federal grant assisted workers with work issues and training issues. Baldwin County was the fiscal agent for that program and it was a worthwhile program.

Chairman Westmoreland called for the vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Property Purchase

County Attorney Brandon Palmer presented a resolution to authorize the sell property located at 136 Felton Drive to highest bidder at \$1,300. The transaction should be completed by the end of January and the purchaser would pay closing costs.

Commissioner Westmoreland made a motion to approve the resolution to sell 136 Felton Road to the highest bidder. Commissioner Craig seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Moratorium for Subdivision and Commercial Development

County Manger Carlos Tobar reported that there needed to be one more work session on the Land Development Code that include the new commissioners so the moratorium for subdivision and commercial development needed to be extended.

Commissioner Sammy Hall made a motion to approve the moratorium. Commissioner Butts seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

RAISE Grant

County Manager Carlos Tobar presented a Federal Highway Administration Rebuilding Americas' Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant for approval. Mr. Tobar stated there was no match. The RAISE grant would replace three bridges in the Oconee Heights neighborhood and would create one-way streets, shared use paths, solar street lights, road resurfacing and stormwater improvements.

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to approve the RAISE Grant. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Build Agreement with Windstream

County Manger Carlos Tobar reported the one-page document was required by the State to amend the broadband grant agreement with Windstream to state the State of Georgia was giving Windstream a fixed amount.

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to accept the grant amendment with Windstream. Commissioner Sammy Hall seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

FEMA Grant

County Manager Carlos Tobar presented a FEMA public assistance Grant application and recognized EMA Director Wayne Johnson. Mr. Johnson stated the grant pursued reimbursement for monies expended during the hurricane.

Commissioner Hall made a motion to approve the FEMA grant. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Assistance for Firefighters Grant

County Manager Tobar stated Grant Coordinator Haly Hicks would submit an application for an Assistance for Firefighters grant to purchase breathing apparatus for Fire and Rescue; the grant would require a 10% match.

Commissioner Craig made a motion to approve the Assistance for Firefighters grant application. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Short Term Vacation Rentals

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to amend the county fee schedule to increase the short-term rental certificates to \$500. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion.

There was a discussion about increasing the fee to cover the personnel, equipment, vehicle, and fuel costs of maintaining the policy.

Chairman Westmoreland called for the vote.

The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Commission Vice Chairman Kendrick Butts asked for an update on the stripping on Forrest Hill Road. Mr. Tobar responded that the road had to cure for about 2 to 4 weeks.

Commissioner Davis asked if they were going back to Emmanuel Harris Road. Mr. Tobar responded that was not one of the roads on the list for repairs. Commissioner Davis asked if the edges on Emmanuel Harris were repaired. Mr. Tobar responded that the county had to do that on all the roads that were resurfaced.

Commissioner Westmoreland asked for an update on the Water Park. Mr. Tobar responded they were 65% to 70% done.

Commissioner Westmoreland asked for an update on the pickleball courts. Mr. Tobar responded the grading was being finished and concrete work would begin in the next week or two.

Commissioner Westmoreland asked for an update on a drain that was washing out under the parking lot at the recreation department. Mr. Tobar stated that it was on the to do list.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Davis reported that December 1 was World Aids Day and the anniversary of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which made Rosa Parks famous.

Commissioner Westmoreland reported that the shoulders along Parham Road needed grading.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager Carlos Tobar reported on the kickoff meeting for the Collins P. Lee Memorial Library; the Smith-Sibley sewer extension would begin soon; the airport consultant selection would be issued by December 27th – the contract expires in March; Harrisburg Park renovations would begin the second week in January, the park would have to be closed during the renovations; the playground equipment had been ordered with an 8-week lead time.

Commissioner Westmoreland reported that broadband service was not completed on Regina Drive.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Commissioner Craig stated that he had been honored by representing District 4 and the entire community for the past 12 years; the work commissioners did was for the entire county and he had enjoyed it. Commissioner Craig recounted people he had worked with and the accomplishments they achieved, including the projects that had been done with grand funds.

Commissioners Hall, Davis and Butts commended Commissioners Craig and Westmoreland's service to Baldwin County.

Commissioner Westmoreland stated that they were a team for 12 years, they had worked hard and made a good county better. This board had done an excellent job over the past 12 years. He thanked Carlos Tobar, Cindy Cunningham and Dawn Hudson.

Commissioner Elect Andrew Strickland was recognized to address commissioners Westmoreland and Craig. Mr. Strickland thank Commissioners Westmoreland and Craig, reflecting on the service they provided to the citizens of Baldwin County. He stated that both sought to serve the citizens of Baldwin County and make a difference in this community and in this country. They were both fair and exercised reason and the County was better off now than when they took office. Mr. Strickland extended his deepest gratitude for the service they gave and wished them both a happy retirement from the commission.

Melinda Brewer of 237 Lakeshore Circle was recognized to speak but declined to do so.

County Attorney Andy Welch addressed Commissioners Westmoreland and Craig to express his gratitude. Mr. Welch stated that he had served with them in the trenches and found they were an embodiment of two ancient souls. Mr. Welch quoted from the book of Micah stating a leader was to love mercy, do justice, and walk humbly with our God; they had both done that. They had not let the things of this world lead to their exaltment but looked after the community and those in the community. Mr. Welch quoted Aristotle stating leadership was best characterized by embodying the virtues of wisdom, courage, justice and acting as a moral exemplar to strive to create an environment in which everyone could reach their full potential and express their ideas and be able to come before this

body to express those opinions. They had prioritized the people over their own personal gain and self-interest, and in doing so, been leaders for this community and in the state. Mr. Welch thanked Commissioners Westmoreland and Craig for their service.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Emily Davis made a motion to go into an executive session to discuss a personnel matter. Commissioner Butts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

The Commissioners moved into executive session at 7:15 PM.

RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to return to open session. Commissioner Sammy Hall seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

The Commissioners returned to open session at 8:16 PM.

Commissioner Emily Davis made a motion to amend the agenda to add the appointment of the County Clerk and the County Manager's Employment Contract. Commissioner Sammy Hall seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously. The agenda was amended.

County Attorney Brandon Palmer presented the employment contract that was negotiated with the County Manager, the term of the agreement was for one-year beginning January 1, 2025 and running through December 31, 2025.

Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to approve the contract with Carlos Tobar. Commissioner Sammy Hall seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner Emily Davis made a motion to appoint Bo Danuser as the County Clerk effective January 1, 2025. Commissioner Kendrick Butts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

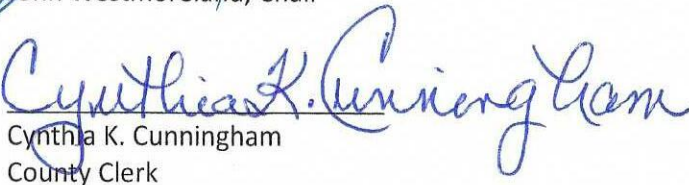
Commissioner Henry Craig made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 PM. Commissioner Emily Davis seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 PM.

Respectfully submitted



John Westmoreland, Chair



Cynthia K. Cunningham
County Clerk