



COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

- Patrick Folsom, Chairman (District 2)
- James Maxwell, Vice (District 5)
- Myra Exum (District 4)
- Willie Cody (District 3)
- Lee Larko (District 1)

COUNTY STAFF

- Patricia Williams, County Clerk
- Kim Daniels, Human Resources
- James Burchett/Jason Kemp, County Attorneys

**Brooks County Board of Commissioners
 Regular Monthly Meeting
 Tuesday, September 3, 2024 @ 5:00pm
 Brooks County Administration Building
 Commissioners Meeting Room
 610 South Highland Road
 Quitman, GA**

1. PUBLIC HEARING – NONE

2. CALL TO ORDER

Prayer & Pledge of Allegiance – Pastor Steve Shierling, Brooks County Ministerial Association

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| A. Regular Monthly Meeting | August 7, 2024 |
| B. Executive Session | August 7, 2024 |
| C. Public Hearing @ 11:00am | August 7, 2024 |
| D. Public Hearing @ 1:00pm | August 7, 2024 |
| E. Public Hearing | August 19, 2024 |
| F. Public Hearing/Special Called Meeting/Work Session | August 26, 2024 |

4. INVITED GUESTS – (5 MINUTES)

- A. Kenneth Lowery – Epidemiologist – GA Department of Public Health
- B. Honnie Korngold – Concerns – Development Authority – Industrial Park

5. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES & DEPARTMENTS -

- A. Brooks County 911/EMA Department Report – Director LaToya Hampton
- B. Brooks County Fire Department Report – Chief Weeks
- C. Brooks County Public Works Department Report – Project Manager, JWA – Kyle Christian
- D. Brooks County Facility Use Agreement - Attorney Jason Kemp

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- A.

7. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Adopt Fire Fee - Fire Fee Recalculations Review
- B. ARPA Funds Request
- C. Approve/Adopt FY2024-2025 Budget
- D. Surplus Declaration – Additional Vehicles/Equipment

8. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Tax Assessors – Board Appointment – Expiring December 31, 2024
- B. GDOT – Request for Comments on Bridge Replacements – CR79 Beasley Road over Carroll Creek Trib. and CR94 Liberty Church Road over Cat Creek Trib.
- C. SGRC – Authorizing Resolution – Brooks County Public Transit System
- D. Petition for Tax Refund – Wayne Waldron
- E. Briggs Special Fire District – Wayne Waldron

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS – (2 MINUTES)

- A. Fannie Gibbs – Macedonia Community – Preservation and Restoration of Cemeteries
- B. Christopher Godfrey – Driveway Easement
- C. Glen & Endia Gosier – Paving Hodges and Coleman Roads

10. ADMINISTRATION/ELECTED OFFICIALS UPDATES

- A. Administration Updates
- B. Commissioners Notes/Comments
 - Lee Larko (District 1)
 - Patrick Folsom, Chairman (District 2)
 - Willie Cody (District 3)
 - Myra Exum (District 4)
 - James Maxwell, Vice (District 5)

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. Litigation

12. ADJOURNMENT

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for its Regular Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, September 3, 2024, at 5:00 p.m., in the Commissioners Meeting Room, located at the Brooks County Administration Building, located at 610 South Highland Road, Quitman, GA. Commissioners present were: Mr. Patrick Folsom, Chairman, Mr. James Maxwell, Vice Chairman; Mrs. Myra Exum; Mr. Willie Cody; and Mr. Lee Larko. Others present were Mr. Randall Dowling, Interim County Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; Ms. Kim Daniels, Human Resources, Mr. Jason Kemp, County Attorney; and various residents.

1. PUBLIC HEARING – NONE

2. CALL TO ORDER – Chairman called the meeting to order.

Prayer & Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. Billy Thigpen led all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

Amend Agenda – The Board unanimously amended the agenda to add Personnel as Item B under Executive Session, delete Kenneth Lowery and Honnie Korngold under Invited Guests, and delete Fannie Gibbs and Christopher Godfrey under Public Comments, Mr. Larko made the motion, Mrs. Exum seconded.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Cody made the motion to approve the following minutes, seconded by Mr. Larko, the vote carried unanimously.

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|--|-----------------|
| A. Regular Monthly Meeting | August 7, 2024 |
| B. Executive Session | August 7, 2024 |
| C. Public Hearing @ 11:00am | August 7, 2024 |
| D. Public Hearing @ 1:30pm | August 7, 2024 |
| E. Public Hearing | August 19, 2024 |
| F. Public Hearing/Special Called/ Work Session | August 26, 2024 |

4. INVITED GUESTS – (5 MINUTES)

- A. Kenneth Lowery – Epidemiologist - Georgia Department of Public Health** – Mr. Lowery was not present.
- B. Honnie Korngold – Concerns – Development Authority – Industrial Park** – Ms. Korngold was not present.

5. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES & DEPARTMENTS – (5 MINUTES)

A. Brooks County 911/EMA Department Report – Director LaToya Hampton

Director Hampton updated the Board on the restoration of Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church providing a Proposal for Structural Assessment, Repair and Restoration Consulting Services from Terracon Consultants, Inc., located in Winter Park, FL. Terracon provides professional consulting services through their nationwide network of offices covering four related disciplines including environmental, facilities, geotechnical and

materials. Based on the review of the Request for Proposal, Terracon proposes the following phases of services: Structural Stabilization, Existing Conditions and Repair Recommendations Report, Design Phase Services, Permitting and Bidding Phase Services, Construction Administration Phase Services. The proposed fees for Terracon services total \$73,000.00. Of the total project cost for restoration, FEMA will provide 75%, GEMA 10%, and the County 15%.

911 – Received 1729 calls for July and 2035 calls for August.

- One fulltime Dispatcher went to part time, one full time Dispatcher hired. In the process of hiring two more full-time Dispatchers.

EMA – Attended active shooter training with the Brooks County School Board July 17 and 18, 2024, with Fire, EMS, Sheriff's Dept., Morven and Quitman Police Dept, for 8 hours each day.

- July – Served all Emergency Response Vehicles ERG: Emergency Response Guides so they can arrive on scene of an accident or hazmat spill.
- August 1, 2024 – attended meeting in Lowndes County with EMA of surrounding counties to form a COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster).
- August 5, 2024 – Big event with Hurricane Debby. Damages were deemed minor by FEMA.
- Conducted three weather briefings: One Saturday, August 3rd and two on Sunday, August 4, 2024, with Dept. Heads, Sheriff Dept., City of Quitman and Brooks County Fire Depts., Brooks County School Board, Brooks County Road Dept., City of Quitman Utility Dept., and the Mayors of Quitman and Morven. Chairman Folsom attended the meetings and assisted with preparation for the storm.
- Assisted citizens with sandbags before the storm, water and tarps after the storm. Local food banks were also available to assist if food was needed.
- Many citizens either never lost power or had power restored the same day in the city and county. By day three most citizens had power restored.
- Assisted a Crisis Hotline phone number from the State at no charge and assisted citizens with tree removal, tarps on homes and cleaning debris from August 9-23, 2024.
- A hot wash meeting will be scheduled later this month with Dept. heads that will help prepare for another disaster.
- Update on Bethlehem Primitive Church and provided Commissioners with the proposal from the Contractor, Terracon Consultants, Inc.
- Continue to have meetings with FEMA, GEMA and EHP to get the final cost so the Board can decide the next move. FEMA is 75%, GEMA is 10%, and Brooks County will be responsible for 15% of the final cost.

B. Brooks County Fire Department Report – Chief Weeks – Chief Weeks provided an update on activities for the Fire Department for August 2024:

- Responded to total of 96 calls for service.
- One structure fire, two vehicle fires, four brush fires, eight fire alarms, zero controlled burns, one electrical malfunction, two other calls.

- Responded to 27 medical calls, nine vehicle accidents, one extrication, 15 calls were cancelled, or nothing found, and 26 trees down.
- **Structure Fires:** Located at 1620 Adams Road, a total loss.
- **Training:** Firefighter 1 Training, Hazmat Training, and Driver Training.
- **Updates:** Morven – They are ready to go, just waiting on repairs on their pumper.
- **East Brooks** – Met with two members of the former East Brooks Volunteer Dept. at their request. Expressed the Brooks County Fire Department's willingness to welcome their volunteers on an individual basis. The members and their Board will meet this month to discuss.
- **Employee Update:** All three recruits have passed the Firefighter 1 test and skills. They started the Hazmat Awareness Class and will test next week. Will be NPQ Firefighter and be on shift.

C. Brooks County Public Works Department Report – Project Manager -Kyle Christian
 Kyle Christian, Project Manager, reported for August 2024:

- Received 147 work orders and completed over 112 work orders.
- **District 1:** Graded roads, added material where it was needed to fix washouts, cleaned ditches and culverts, installed driveway pipes, and installed new road signs. Major work on Kennedy Hill and added numerous loads of material to build the road up. Installed culverts and cross drains on Tallokas and Gardner Road.
- **District 2:** Built up roads, graded, cleaned ditches and culverts, installed cross drains. Performed various clean ups on roads and right of ways, entailed removal of trees, debris, and added materials as needed. Completed major work at the Farmers Market with installing pipes and adding materials.
- **District 3:** Built up roads, graded cleaned ditches and culverts. Hauled 6 loads of debris from Shiver and removed 5 loads of sand between Dry Lake Road and Price Road and used throughout the district to build up roads and fix slick spots.
- **District 4:** Continued to grade roads, clean ditches and culverts, and add materials where needed for washouts. Installed 5 new pipes for Jamar Subdivision for new houses to be built. Cleaned up Old Coffee Road by hauling numerous loads of debris. Cleaned all ditches and cross drains on Fodie Road and patched numerous potholes.
- **District 5:** It seemed that District 5 had the most problems with trees and debris. We were able to manage to grade roads, spread materials, and clean right of ways.

We had a good month and were able to get a lot of work done despite having to deal with the havoc Hurricane Debby caused. We will continue to keep Brooks County beautiful one road at a time.

C. Brooks County Facility Use Agreement – Attorney Jason Kemp – County Attorney, Jason Kemp, presented a copy of the Facility Use Agreement. He commented on the section for the Skillet Festival, pages 3 and 4. This item was tabled on the motion by Mrs. Exum and seconded by Mr. Larko.

6. CONSENT AGENDA - NONE

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Adopt Fire Fee – Chief Tax Appraiser, Mr. Wayne Waldron, provided the Board a draft of numbers for recalculating the Fire Fee using square footage and acreage. He advised the Board they need to decide on the restructuring of the fee. After discussion, the Board tabled until Thursday, September 5th at 2:00 pm. Mr. Maxwell made the motion, Mr. Larko seconded.

B. ARPA Fund Request – Interim Administrator, Mr. Randy Dowling, provided the list of projects for the ARPA funds included in the budget. The funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024, and completed by December 31, 2026. The amounts are not exact amounts due to no engineer specs for the projects. During the budget public hearing, Natalie Singletary, Family Connections, requested \$54,900.00 a year for two years for a food program. The Board approved to place it on the list, but the funds are not to be spent on a motion by Mr. Maxwell seconded by Mr. Larko. The vote was unanimously approved.

C. Approve/Adopt FY2024-2025 Budget – Interim Administrator, Mr. Dowling, informed the Board that \$18,000.00 was added to the budget for software for Victim Witness to use the Victim Witness Cares fund. He asked the Board to adopt the FY2024-2025 budget to the numbers as approved by the Board and with the few changes as discussed. Mr. Maxwell motioned to adopt the FY2024-2025 budget with changes to Victim Witness and ARPA, Mr. Cody seconded. Chairman called for the vote. Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Cody, Mrs. Exum, and Mr. Folsom voted yes. Mr. Larko opposed. The vote was 4 to 1. Mrs. Exum thanked Mr. Dowling for the budget presented, stating that this is the first one you can understand in five years, and know what we got.

D. Surplus Declaration – Additional Vehicles/Equipment – Interim Administrator, Mr. Dowling informed the Board of six (6) additional vehicles and equipment found to declare as surplus; and recommended the Board declare these six (6) items as surplus county property, authorize their disposal through an online auction conducted by Florida Auction Network, and authorize the Chairman, Interim County Administrator, and County Clerk to execute all related documents. Mr. Larko made the motion to declare the additional six vehicles and equipment as surplus county property, add to the online auction, and authorize execution of all related documents to the on, Mr. Cody seconded. The vote was unanimous.

E. Rumble Strips for Road Projects – The Board discussed adding Rumble Strips to the LMIG Projects for Branch Road, Hickory Head Road, and Quail Drive and have Jesse Bush, 12 Stones Engineering, look at the locations and decide. Mr. Larko made the motion for Speed strips on roads to be determined by the Engineer, add a Change Order to the 2023-2024 LMIG Project List, Mr. Maxwell seconded. Project Manager, Kyle Christian, requested the Board to allow him a month to get with his team for another solution and discuss at the work session.

Mr. Larko rescinded his motion, and Mr. Maxwell rescinded his second. The motion was carried to table this topic until the work session by Mr. Larko's motion and Mr. Maxwell's seconded.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Tax Assessors – Board Appointment – Expiring December 31, 2024 – Chief Tax Appraisal, Wayne Waldron, presented a letter advising the expiration of Board Member Brewer Bentley's term on December 31, 2024. Mr. Bentley is willing and eligible to accept another three-year term if appointed by the Board. This topic was tabled by Mrs. Exum and seconded by Mr. Cody. An ad will run in the Quitman Free Press to allow citizens interested an opportunity to apply for the position.

B. GDOT – Request for Comments on Bridge Replacements – CR79 Beasley Road over Carroll Creek Tributary and CR94 Liberty Church Road over Cat Creek Tributary – GDOT is requesting comments on Bridge Replacements for CR79 Beasley Road over Carroll Creek and CR94 Liberty Church Road over Cat Creek. County Attorney advised the Board that any time changes are made to bridges, GDOT will request comments. County Attorney stated that he would provide the comments to GDOT.

C. SGRC – Authorizing Resolution – Brooks County Public Transit System – Administration received notification from SGRC Regional Transit advising it is time to submit the FY2026 531 I Rural Transit grant. SGRC is working to prepare the FY26 transit services on behalf of counties. Unless the county plans to offer public transit services, SGRC needs a Resolution from the County. The grant application submission due date is September 30, 2024, therefore, SGRC is asking the Board to approve the Authorizing Resolution to support SGRC Regional Public Transit. The motion carried to approve the Authorizing Resolution for the FY26 531 I Rural Public Transit grant to be submitted by SGRC to GDOT, Mrs. Exum made the motion, Mr. Larko seconded.

D. Petition for Tax Refund – Wayne Waldron – County Attorney summarized the issue of Ms. Bishop's petition for tax refund. Ms. Bishop had homestead exemption, she moved to Tallahassee, FL, which triggered notice to the Tax Assessors, and she received a notice in the mail that the homestead exemption had been removed. The Board tabled this issue on a motion by Mrs. Exum to get the correct amount, County Attorney show proper tax levy, and gather information, Mr. Larko seconded.

F. Briggs Special Fire District – Wayne Waldron – Chief Tax Appraiser, Wayne Waldron stated that it shows 200 acres on the map, but is really 1,000 acres, and over 200 will not qualify for district. The Special Fire District was voted in by the people in the area and local legislation. It would have to be given to legislation to delegate during the session in January. After discussion, the Board agreed a work session would be scheduled to discuss.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS – (5 MINUTES)

A. Fannie Gibbs – Macedonia Community – Preservation and Restoration of Cemeteries – Ms. Gibbs was deleted from the agenda.

B. Christopher Godfrey – Driveway Easement – Mr. Godfrey was deleted from the agenda.

C. Glen & Endia Gosier – Paving Hodges and Coleman Road – This request to appear was to discuss paving Hodges and Coleman Road. Chairman advised Mr. Gosier that the roads are listed on the TIA list, and the projects would not begin until 2027.

10. ADMINISTRATION/ELECTED OFFICIALS UPDATES

A. County Administration Updates – Interim Administrator, Mr. Dowling, introduced the new Finance Director, Ms. Janice Jarvis.

B. Commissioners Notes/Comments

- **Lee Larko (District 1)** – Commented to remind everyone that school is in and to watch for kids.
- **Patrick Folsom, Chairman (District 2)** – Commented to everyone to drive home safe.
- **Willie Cody (District 3)** – No comment.
- **Myra Exum (District 4)** – No comment.
- **James Maxwell, Vice (District 5)** – No comment.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION – The Board closed the regular meeting to go into executive session at 7:00pm, on the motion by Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Larko seconded.

A. Litigation – County Attorney updated the Board on pending litigations.

B. Personnel – Discussed hiring of County Administration. The Board went out of executive session at 7:49pm, Mr. Maxwell motioned, and Mr. Larko seconded.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Exum moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:50 pm; Mr. Larko seconded.

Mr. Patrick Folsom, Chairman
Mr. Randall Dowling, Interim County Administrator
Patricia A. Williams, County Clerk