

**GORDON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 2, 2021**

The Gordon County Board of Commissioners held their Regular Meeting on November 2, 2021, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Main Courtroom of the Gordon County Courthouse.

MEMBERS PRESENT

**BECKY HOOD, CHAIRMAN
CHAD STEWARD, VICE CHAIRMAN
M. L. BUD OWENS, COMMISSIONER
KEVIN CUNNINGHAM, COMMISSIONER
BRUCE POTTS, COMMISSIONER**

OTHERS PRESENT

**JIM LEDBETTER, ADMINISTRATOR
ANNETTE BERRY, COUNTY CLERK
MEDIA
APPROXIMATELY 65 GUESTS**

Chairman Hood called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Invocation was led by Commissioner Potts. Chairman Hood led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – Employees with Anniversary Hire Dates in November

Commissioner Steward read the list of Employees with anniversary hire dates in November. Commissioner Cunningham drew the name of Emily Kirby with the Sheriff's Department as Employee for the Month for November.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Hood asked if there are any additions, omissions, or deletions to the Minutes for the Work Session and Regular Meeting of October 19, 2021. Commissioner Potts made a motion to approve the Minutes. Commissioner Owens seconded the motion and Commissioners Owens, Potts, Steward, and Cunningham voted aye. Motion passed.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Ledbetter read the report. (copy attached).

COMMISSIONERS' REPORT

Commissioner Owens commented that he had numerous calls regarding various projects that we are working on in the county, he attended the Development Authority meeting, attended an Appalachian Regional Commission webinar, a meeting with the GDOG regarding the Hwy 53 potential development, and attended the Georgia Region One Council meeting. Commissioner Potts commented that he attended the 36th annual Legislation Appreciation dinner, attended a meeting with GDOT with Commissioner Owens and the developers, attended a Zoom Juvenile Court meeting, responded to quite a few phone calls and messages, then Commissioner Potts showed some photos from the Public Works Department and added that this department has completed the LMIG projects for the 2021 calendar year.

Commissioner Potts made a motion to open the Public Hearing for Zoning. Commissioner Cunningham seconded the motion and all voted aye. Motion passed.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR ZONING

Appl. #Z21-23 Darryl Edwards' Request to Rezone from A-1 to R-4 High Density Residential

Administrator Ledbetter advised that this is Darryl Edwards' request to rezone from A-1 to R-4

high density. The Board had tabled this rezoning application to look into comments from GDOT and from the school system. Commissioners Potts, Owens and I met with GDOT and the developers last Thursday out at the location and GDOT satisfied the questions that we had, about whether the developers would be able to modify Hwy 53 and put in a left turn, also a turn that would be heading out of the subdivision. so our concerns were put aside with that meeting. We have a number of people signed up to speak.

Attorney Terry Brumlow spoke to the Board on behalf of the applicant. There was a meeting with GDOT and I understand that they will approve the installation of left turn lanes. We would, at this time, like to respond if any other questions come up. We have stated everything that I feel needs to be stated but we would like to reserve the right to respond after hearing from the other people.

Administrator Ledbetter advised that the Board had asked for Dr. Kim Franker to come talk to us. We have the County School Superintendent herself and the School Board Chair Mr. Walraven here to speak about the impact this might have on the Gordon County school district.

Dr. Kim Fraker, Gordon County School Board Superintendent, spoke to give the Board a report. She stated that she will be basically sticking to the facts, as a school system they are not here to roadblock anything or proactively support something. We were asked as a school system what the impact would be with this development. Our school system exists to serve the community and our children with a high quality education. We welcome future growth and plan for the growth in our county with the expansion of industry. All three of the schools that are in the feeder pattern for this subdivision are at are over capacity. Sonoraville Elementary, according to the State, still has room for up to 100 kids, I think that would be very tight. Redbud Middle capacity was 800 and we are currently at 868, at Sonoraville High we do have a little bit of space that we could use, we are currently at 1,147. Other comments from Dr. Fraker were that at least three new buses and three new drivers would be needed at the very least, also would need added educators and potential building projects to accommodate the growth. Tax revenue from the development would not come close to covering the costs associated with the amount of students that would be at Red Bud Elementary, Sonoraville Middle or Sonoraville High.

School Board Chairman Charlie Walraven spoke to the Board and said they would adapt to whatever situation was put before them and would educate every kid that comes through their doors.

Mr. Bill Thompson spoke to the Board in opposition to the rezoning application. He stated that the Board is going to see other projects like this again, are you going to follow the ULDC or not. He asked the Board to deny the application.

Mrs. Faye Prather came before the Board in opposition to the rezoning application. She lives adjacent to the subject property. Her concerns are about the size of the subdivision. All of our neighbors are concerned about this; the character of the community will change and destroy the lives we have built. If you approve this project, you cannot say that you were not told the adverse effect this will mean to our community and Gordon County.

Mr. Gerry Weaver came before the Board in opposition to the rezoning application. He gave the Board some pictures of high density subdivisions showing the closeness of the houses. This project has about 25 chicken houses near this project. You get 500 families living in this area, how many lawsuits do you think you are going to get. We need to make up our minds, do we want to be agricultural or a high density. If you get a fire out there, it's going to take the fire department 20 or 30 minutes to get there, three or four other houses will be on fire by the time they get there.

Mrs. Jennifer Burchett came before the Board in opposition to the rezoning application and stated that this property backs up to my property. There will be a line of over 500 houses that I will sit here and stare at if you approve this, just off my back porch. What happens when these 500 families decide they don't like the smell of the chicken houses out there and I'm going to go

to the County and get them closed down. You just closed down this man's livelihood, because 300 of the 500 don't like the smell. We are zoned agriculture; we are zoned agriculture for a reason. What happens when the housing market crashes again and the subdivision is only half way finished and there are vacant houses backed up to my property and vagrants come and do drug deals back there. Market crashes can happen again. Sonoraville is an agricultural based community.

Mr. Melvin Burchett came before the Board in opposition to the rezoning application and stated that his property backs up to the adjacent property to the North and to this development. I know we need housing but do we need this magnitude of housing. This builder is also out of State, where does Gordon County get the benefits from this many houses. If you do approve this, I would like it added that there be a 200 ft. natural buffer left around the entire property. This affects several other adjacent homeowners.

Mr. Darin Hardin came before the Board and said that everything would be built to the building code and there will be setbacks with fire walls that are required. Everything will be built to development standards which allow buses and emergency vehicles to come in. The plans that are currently in process are 70% complete right now. You will be looking at approximately 15 months before the first house is completed. The zoning is R-4 but it's because of the town houses, this averages out at only four units per acre.

Mr. Brumlow came back before the Board and said, we need this kind of development and we ask that this Board approve the zoning. We are here and willing to listen if there is anything else you need to talk about. We do ask that you approve this application for rezoning.

Mr. Edwards came before the Board and advised that they may possibly be acquiring additional property that will give us everything we need plus some. That would be for two entrances off 53 Hwy. The buffers meet the County specs and those will be in place. The plan drawings have not changed since the last meeting. Chairman Hood advised that if there are no changes, then the Board would have to vote on what is currently presented.

Commissioner Steward made a motion to deny the rezoning application. No one seconded the motion and motion dies due to lack of a second. Commissioner Potts made a motion to table the application. No one seconded the motion and motion dies due to lack of a second.

Mr. Darin Hardin came back before the Board to advise that Mr. Edwards wants to withdraw the application and submit again at a later date.

Commissioner Potts made a motion to close the Public Hearing for Zoning. Commissioner Owens seconded the motion and all voted aye. Motion passed.

CONSIDERATION OF UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$32,585 TO PURCHASE WORK DETAIL TRUCK

Administrator Ledbetter advised that this is a budget amendment for the Sheriff's Department for \$32,585 to purchase a work detail truck for litter pickup. They had requested this in this years' budget and at that time were not doing litter pickup due to Covid, so it was left out of the budget and we are now adding that back in on their request.

Commissioner Potts made a motion to approve the Budget Amendment for the Sheriff's Department to purchase a Work Detail Truck. Commissioner Cunningham seconded the motion and Commissioners Steward, Cunningham, Potts and Owens voted aye. Motion passed.

ACCEPTANCE OF STATE LMIG GRANT FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO TRIMBLE HOLLOW ROAD AND AUTHORIZE THE ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE THE APPLICATION

Administrator Ledbetter advised that this is acceptance of the LMIG grant for improvements to Trimble Hollow Road and to authorize the administrator to sign the application. This is to receive up to \$315,000 towards improvements. The actual improvements will be made by OWR, LLC as a condition of their rezoning and they are responsible for the other amount that is not being paid by this LMIG grant.

Commissioner Cunningham made a motion to approve acceptance of the State LMIG Grant and to authorize the Administrator to execute the application. Commissioner Owens seconded the motion and Commissioners Owens, Steward, Cunningham, and Potts voted aye. Motion passed.

FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE AMENDMENT FOR CHANGES TO THE UNIFIED LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE 4.03.02(K) DRY LITTER POULTRY OPERATIONS

Administrator Ledbetter advised that this is the first reading of the ordinance to change ULDC Code section 4.03.02(K) regarding dry litter poultry operations. You have a draft ordinance for your inspection and for public inspection; then we will receive comments on this at the next Board meeting. That Board meeting will have the second reading of the amendment on November 16th and hold a Public Hearing for comments from the Public. Administrator Ledbetter read the specific changes to the ordinance.

RESOLUTION TO NOT REQUIRE THE ISSUANCE OF MOBILE HOME DECALS

Administrator Ledbetter advised that this is a resolution to not require the issuance of mobile home decals. Basically this will save the County money. This will not forgive paying taxes on a mobile home but just means that we won't have to go out and verify whether or not they have a decal. Dana Burch explained that this will save time from her department or the Code Enforcement going out and checking for the decal and the actual cost of purchasing the decal and mailing out to the tax payer. Administrator read the Resolution (copy attached).

Commissioner Steward made a motion to approve the Resolution approving not to require issuance of mobile home decals in Gordon County. Commissioner Potts seconded the motion and Commissioners Potts, Owens, Cunningham, and Steward voted aye. Motion passed.

AJOURNMENT

Commissioner Cunningham made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting. Commissioner Potts seconded the motion and all voted aye.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Annette Berry, County Clerk

Becky Hood, Chairman