



MINUTES  
JANUARY 24, 2023  
5:30 P.M.

**STEPHENS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING WAS HELD AT  
THE STEPHENS COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE**

**PRESENT FOR MEETING:** Chairman Dennis Bell, Vice-Chairman Tara Simmons, Commissioners Chris Rickman, Chuck Wright and Debbie Whitlock; County Administrator Christian Hamilton; County Clerk Samantha Turner; County Attorney Brian Ranck

**PLEASE SILENCE YOUR CELL PHONES**

**LAND USE PUBLIC HEARING**

1. **Rezoning Request from Ray Hopkins, 713 Freeman Creek Road, Eastanollee. Parcel 034 055.** Property is currently zoned as residential single. The proposed action to be taken is to rezone 4.55 acres to agricultural residential to allow for personal agricultural use.

The recommendation from the Planning Commission is to approve as requested. Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of the request. No one spoke in favor. Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition of the request. No one spoke in opposition. Mr. Hamilton closed the public hearing.

2. **Rezoning Request from Ray Hopkins, 31 Freeman Creek Circle, Eastanollee. Parcel 034 056.** Property is currently zoned as residential single. The proposed action to be taken is to rezone 3.17 acres to agricultural residential to allow for personal agricultural use.

The recommendation from the Planning Commission is to approve as requested. Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of the request. No one spoke in favor. Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition of the request. No one spoke in opposition. Mr. Hamilton closed the public hearing.

3. **Conditional Use Request from Hugh Champion, 4522 GA 17 Alternate, Eastanollee. Parcel 043 145.** Property is currently zoned as commercial general. The proposed action to be taken is to utilize the existing space as an event venue.

The recommendation from the Planning Commission is to approve as requested. Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of the request. No one spoke in favor. Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone

wished to speak in opposition of the request. No one spoke in opposition. Mr. Hamilton closed the public hearing.

4. **Variance Request from Todd Rohrer, 2760 Gumlog Road, Martin. Parcel 068B 079.** Property is currently zoned as residential single. The proposed action to be taken is to grant a variance for a second residence on the property.

The recommendation from the Planning Commission is to approve as requested. Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of the request. No one spoke in favor. Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition of the request. No one spoke in opposition. Mr. Hamilton closed the public hearing.

## **STEPHENS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WILL WAIVE THEIR WORK SESSION**

### **REGULAR MEETING**

Vice-Chairman Simmons called the regular meeting to order and welcomed those present. Mr. Teasley gave the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **I. APPROVE AGENDA**

A motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Commissioner Rickman, to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion carried unanimously.**

#### **II. APPROVE MINUTES**

##### **1. JANUARY 10, 2023 – PUBLIC HEARING, LAND USE AND REGULAR MEETING**

A motion was made by Commissioner Rickman, seconded by Commissioner Wright, to approve the minutes. **Motion carried unanimously.**

#### **III. OLD BUSINESS**

1. **Board to Consider Motion to Approve or Deny** request from the Toccoa-Stephens County Humane Shelter for \$25,000 in supplemental funding.

Jeff Roberts, Judith Golden, and Angie Garland shared their concerns for the needs of the Shelter.

Chairman Bell, Commissioners Rickman and Whitlock voted in favor to postpone the item and re-visit at the annual retreat on Friday, January 27, 2023. Vice-Chairman Simmons and Commissioner Wright opposed. **The motion carried.**

#### **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Rezoning Request from Ray Hopkins, 713 Freeman Creek Road, Eastanollee. Parcel 034 055.** Property is currently zoned as residential single. The proposed action to be taken is to rezone 4.55 acres to agricultural residential to allow for personal agricultural use.

A motion was made by Commissioner Whitlock, seconded by Vice-Chairman Simmons, to approve the Rezoning Request. **Motion carried unanimously.**

2. **Rezoning Request from Ray Hopkins, 31 Freeman Creek Circle, Eastanollee. Parcel 034 056.** Property is currently zoned as residential single. The proposed action to be taken is to rezone 3.17 acres to agricultural residential to allow for personal agricultural use.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Commissioner Rickman, to approve the Rezoning Request. **Motion carried unanimously.**

3. **Conditional Use Request from Hugh Champion, 4522 GA 17 Alternate, Eastanollee. Parcel 043 145.** Property is currently zoned as commercial general. The proposed action to be taken is to utilize the existing space as an event venue.

A motion was made by Commissioner Whitlock, seconded by Vice-Chairman Simmons, to approve the Conditional Use Request. **Motion carried unanimously.**

4. **Variance Request from Todd Rohrer, 2760 Gumlog Road, Martin. Parcel 068B 079.** Property is currently zoned as residential single. The proposed action to be taken is to grant a variance for a second residence on the property.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wright, seconded by Vice-Chairman Simmons, to approve the Variance Request. **Motion carried unanimously.**

5. **Board to consider Motion to Enter into Agreement** with Georgia Department of Transportation and Co-Sponsors Toccoa-Stephens County Airport Authority and City of Toccoa for Airport Engineering Design and Planning Assistance.

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Simmons, seconded by Commissioner Whitlock, to enter into Agreement with Georgia Department of Transportation and Co-Sponsors Toccoa-Stephens County Airport Authority and City of Toccoa for Airport Engineering Design and Planning Assistance. **Motion carried unanimously.**

6. **Board to consider motion to Enter into Agreement** with gWorks for Public Works System Software and Authorize County Administrator to Sign Agreement.

A motion was made by Commissioner Whitlock, seconded by Vice-Chairman Simmons, to enter into Agreement with gWorks for Public Works System Software and Authorize County Administrator to Sign Agreement, contingent upon approval of Brian Ranck's revised agreement. **Motion carried unanimously.**

7. **Board to consider motion to set time and place for work sessions and regular meeting,** and regular meetings to continue on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month, the first meeting work session to begin at 6:00 p.m with the regular meeting to follow; the second meeting work session to begin at 6:00 p.m. with

the regular meeting to follow; in exception to this, the second meeting in February 2023 will begin with a work session at 5:30 p.m. with the regular meeting to follow. One meeting to be held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday in December at 6:00 p.m. and authorize Chairman to sign resolution.

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Simmons, seconded by Commissioner Rickman, to set time and place for work sessions and regular meeting, and regular meetings to continue on 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month, the first meeting work session to begin at 6:00 p.m with the regular meeting to follow; the second meeting work session to begin at 6:00 p.m. with the regular meeting to follow; in exception to this, the second meeting in February 2023 will begin with a work session at 5:30 p.m. with the regular meeting to follow. One meeting to be held the 2nd Tuesday in December at 6:00 p.m. and authorize Chairman to sign resolution. **Motion carried unanimously.**

#### V. INVOICES/REQUISITIONS OVER \$5,000

1. Bennet Fire Products - \$10,900.00
2. Patrol Upfitters - \$30,122.51 (SPLOST VI)
3. Jasper Engine Exchange, Inc. - \$13,016.00 (SPLOST VII)
4. ChemPro Services - \$28,500.00
5. NAPA Auto Parts - \$17,248.89
6. Acree Oil Co. - \$9,106.06
7. Krown Sports - \$6,440.00
8. Eagle Advantage Solutions, LLC. - \$8,157.99
9. MHC Kenworth - \$12,476.76

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Simmons, seconded by Commissioner Whitlock, to pay the invoices. **Motion carried unanimously.**

#### VI. MATTERS FROM DEPARTMENTS

1. Administrator / Finance Report
2. Department Report
3. Commissioners Report – Chairman Bell shared in remembrance of Chandler Lecroy and expressed his condolences.

#### VII. MATTERS FROM CITIZENS – TIME LIMIT OF THREE (3) MINUTES

Scott Brennan of Toccoa shared about the new elections building that was recently purchased. He would like to see that all phone calls are recorded for the safety of the elections team.

#### VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### IX. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Simmons, seconded by Commissioner Wright, to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:13 p.m.

Approved this 14<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2023.

  
Dennis Bell, Chairman

Attest: Samantha Turner  
Samantha Turner, County Clerk