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**FRANKLIN COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
September 14, 2020  
6:00 P.M.**

Present: Commission Chairman Thomas Bridges  
District 1 Commissioner Robert Franklin  
District 2 Commissioner Dr. Jason Macomson via Zoom  
District 3 Commissioner Ryan Swails  
District 4 Commissioner Eddie Wester

Media: Shane Scoggins, Franklin County Citizen  
MJ Kneiser, *WLHR*

Staff: County Manager, Beth Thomas  
Planning Director, Scott DeLozier  
County Clerk, Kayla Finger

Guest: County Attorney, Bubba Samuels via Zoom

**Item 1: Call Meeting to Order** – Chairman Bridges called the September Regular Business Meeting to order at 6:00 pm and welcomed everyone.

Commissioner Macomson asked to amend the agenda removing item \* *F. Mask Mandate for Visitors to Government Buildings*\*. Commissioner Wester made the motion to strike item F. Mask Mandate for Visitors to Government Buildings. Commissioner Macomson seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. All were in favor, 5-0.

**Item 2: Invocation, and Pledge of Allegiance** - Chairman Bridges asked Commissioner Franklin to lead the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

**Item 3: Approval of Minutes:**

August 3, 2020 Public Hearing  
August 3, 2020 Regular Board Meeting  
August 10, 2020 Special Called Meeting  
August 11, 2020 Special Called Meeting  
August 25, 2020 Work Session

Commissioner Franklin made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Commissioner Swails seconded the motion. All were in favor, 5-0.



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**Item 4: Public Comment** – There were no public comments.

**Item 5: Items for discussion**

- a. Rezoning Permit Request- Mr. Roger Dale Bruce, 220 Stone Rd, Carnesville, GA has filed an application to rezone from AI Agriculture Intensive to CG Commercial General on a 15.206-acre tract to build a 60' x 100' shop for his heating and air business. The property is located on Highway 145 and is further identified as Tax Parcel 046-006A. Director DeLozier addressed the board stating that the planning commission recommends approval of Mr. Bruce's request with the condition that any property line boundary that had any existing vegetative growth be left for at least a twenty-foot buffer. Commissioner Swails made a motion to accept the rezoning from Agriculture Intensive to Commercial General with the conditions recommended by the planning commission. Commissioner Wester seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor, 5-0.
- b. Road Approval- Benefield Road: Manager Thomas reviewed the item as it was previously presented in the work session August 25, 2020. Ms. Beverly Folsom and her community have done the work to satisfy all requirements and have submitted all required documents for acceptance of Benefield Road, P.J.'s Inlet, & Soares Drive as county-maintained roads. Commissioner Wester motioned to accept Benefield Road, P.J.'s Inlet, & Soares Drive as county-maintained roads. Commissioner Franklin seconded the motion. No additional discussion. All were in favor, 5-0.
- c. Airport Authority- Chairman Bridges reviewed that Commissioner Wester had explained to the board that they could have Representative Allen Powell reach out on behalf of the board of commissioners to obtain financial audits. Commissioner Wester noted that Hart County was in agreement and Representative Allen Powell could perform a forensic audit that would obtain financial audits from the airport authority's inception to current time. Chairman Bridges stated Hart County had verbally agreed to share any associated costs. Manager Thomas stated she had spoken to Rushton & Associates and noted the years of audits that had been processed by Rushton & Associates: 1997, 1998, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, & 2013. Rushton & Associates had been given the information for 2014-2018 but they were pulled



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off of that project. Manager Thomas also noted differences in the accounting policy footnotes in different years. Commissioner Wester motioned to request Representative Allen Powell to solicit the forensic audit from the airport authority on behalf of the Franklin County Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Swails seconded the motion. There were no further comments. All were in favor, 5-0.

- d. Letter to the District Attorney's Office- Chairman Bridges wanted to update the board and asked County Clerk Kayla Finger to read the letter sent to District Attorney Parks on August 28, 2020. Clerk Finger read the document to the board and attendees. Chairman Bridges stated the board had not received written response, but he had personally spoken to District Attorney Parks earlier today around 11:45 AM (September 14, 2020). DA Parks stated he could not release his findings on the case, as it is on the docket for the grand jury.
- e. Occupational Tax Ordinance Amendment – Manager Thomas reviewed that the Occupational Tax had not changed since its adoption in the year 2000 with an effective date of January 1, 2001. Currently the rate is thirty-five dollars and that breaks down to a ten-dollar administrative fee and a twenty-five-dollar tax. The proposed increase to fifty dollars would keep the administrative fee at ten dollars, and would increase the amount to the general fund by fifteen dollars. Commissioner Swails made a motion to accept the proposed Occupational Tax Ordinance Amendment increase from thirty-five dollars to fifty dollars. Commissioner Franklin seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor, 5-0.
- f. \*\*\* Mask Mandate for Visitors to Government Buildings: Struck from the agenda \*\*\*
- g. Request for Proposal- County Attorney: Chairman Bridges explained to the public that every so often it was necessary to re-bid out positions to ensure good stewardship of the tax payer's dollars. Manager Thomas stated the last RFP for this position was in the Fall of 2015. Per the board's request the original RFP used then has been updated for current use. The last schedule used had the RFP issued in late October, which allowed time to receive results and make a decision for the new year. Manager Thomas asked the board to let her know what schedule they would like to proceed with, suggesting sending out the RFP as early as the upcoming Friday, September 19,



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2020. Manager Thomas also asked that a subcommittee be formed to review and select finalists. Commissioner Wester motioned to begin the RFP process for the County Attorney position with the September 19, 2020 date mentioned by Manager Thomas. Commissioner Macomson seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor, 5-0.

Chairman Bridges requested that two commissioners consider volunteering to be on the subcommittee. He also suggested employees: Scott DeLozier, John Phillips, & Beth Thomas as potential members. Manager Thomas stated the RFP will be sent out this Friday as discussed.

- h. Executive Session – Land Acquisition: Chairman Bridges asked non-privy attendees to excuse themselves from the room for the purpose of executive session. Commissioner Swails motioned to adjourn into executive session. Commissioner Wester seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor, 5-0.

Commissioner Wester motioned to close out of executive session and resume the public meeting. Commissioner Franklin seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor, 5-0. The public were allowed back into the room and Zoom was opened back up to the public.

Commissioner Swails made a motion to create a land acquisition subcommittee consisting of Dr. Macomson, and himself (Commissioner Swails), to work alongside County Attorney Bubba Samuels and District Attorney Parks to discuss airport authority property acquisition issues. Commissioner Franklin seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor, 5-0.

**Item 6: Announcements** - Commissioner Wester thanked all county employees working so hard during the pandemic. Chairman Bridges reminded everyone to complete their census and thanked those who have worked so hard to raise awareness. Manager Thomas thanked Clerk Finger and Assistant Ashley-Rose Dodd for their work on the county Facebook page with the census coloring competition. Clerk Finger encouraged everyone to like and follow the page to stay up to date with Franklin County.

**Item 8: Adjourn** - Chairman Bridges thanked everyone for attending & called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Wester motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Swails seconded the motion. All were in favor, 5-0.



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Signed on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020

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Chairman J. Thomas Bridges

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Robert L. Franklin, District 1 Commissioner

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Dr. Jason Macomson, District 2 Commissioner

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Ryan Swails, District 3 Commissioner

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Eddie Wester, District 4 Commissioner

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Kayla Finger, Clerk