

**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING  
PIKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

The Pike County Board of Commissioners held its Regular Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Courthouse, Main Courtroom, at 16001 Barnesville Street, Zebulon. Chairman Briar Johnson convened the meeting and Commissioners Tim Daniel, Tim Guy, Jason Proctor and James Jenkins attended. County Manager Brandon Rogers, County Attorney Rob Morton and County Clerk Angela Blount were also present. (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1(e) (2)).

- 1. CALL TO ORDER ..... Chairman J. Briar Johnson**
- 2. INVOCATION.....Keith Ford**
- 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE..... Chairman J. Briar Johnson**
- 4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA - (O.C.G A. § 50-14-1 (e) (1))**

Commissioner Jenkins asked to amend the agenda to add a Public Hearing to agenda item f. Discussion of speed bumps in Ranchland Estates. Several citizens are in attendance and would like to speak about the speed bumps.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Jenkins/Guy to approve the amended agenda, adding a Public Hearing to Agenda Item f. under New Business, motion carried 5-0.**

- 5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1(e) (2))**
  - a. Minutes of the February 27, 2024, Regular Monthly Meeting.
  - b. Minutes of the February 27, 2024, Executive Session.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Proctor/Guy to approve the minutes of the February 27, 2024 Regular Monthly Meeting, and the minutes of the February 27, 2024 Executive Session, motion carried 5-0.**

- 6. INVITED GUEST**
  - a. Employee Recognition for service to Pike County.
    - Wesley Berryman – Sheriff’s Department

Sheriff Jimmy Thomas stated that Wesley Berryman was not present, he was at a mandated training. Mr. Berryman will be recognized for his years of service at the April 10, 2024 regular monthly meeting.

**7. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONS, DEPARTMENTS, COMMITTEES, AUTHORITIES**

- a. Monthly Reports submitted from County Departments and County Authorities, including a Revenue/Expenditure Statement for all departments and a summary check register.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Proctor to accept reports, motion carried 5-0.**

- b. County Manager Report

Update on County finances for the following funds/accounts:

General Fund .....	\$1,846,373.59
Fire Dept. Donations.....	\$9,845.95
Cash Reserve Account.....	\$74,094.09
Jail Fund .....	\$28,356.17
E-911 Fund .....	\$161,139.77
DATE Fund .....	\$36,126.01
Juvenile Court Fund.....	\$13,982.78
Residential Impact Fee .....	\$780,599.30
Commercial Impact Fees .....	\$185,501.69
C.A.I.P FUND .....	\$22,551.23
General Obligation SPLOST 2022-2028.....	\$1,317,076.87
L.M.I.G. Grant (DOT).....	\$3,860.41

- c. County Manager Comment – No comment.
- d. Commissioner Reports
  - District 1 – Commissioner Daniel - No report.
  - District 2 – Commissioner Guy – No report.
  - District 3 – Commissioner Proctor – No report.
  - District 4 – Commissioner Jenkins - No report.

At Large Chairman Briar Johnson thanked Todd Goolsby and Public Works for clearing the trees that were down across the roads Saturday morning.

- e. County Attorney Report to Commissioners
  - No report.

## 8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Consider one appointment to the Pike County Board of Tax Assessors to fill an unexpired six-year term, set to expire August 31, 2029. *Applicant has met criteria.*

The applicant is Parrish Swift of Molena, GA. County Manager Brandon Rogers recommends approval of Mr. Swift to the Tax Assessors Board.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Guy/Daniel to appoint Parrish Swift to the Pike County Board of Tax Assessors, motion carried 5-0.**

## 9. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Consider use of Courthouse Grounds from Charles Steck with Life Line Ministry for Statewide Bible Reading on Sunday, July 14, 2024 at 7:14 a.m.

County Manager Brandon Rogers recommends approval of this annual event.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Proctor/Guy to approve use of Courthouse Grounds, motion carried 5-0.**

- b. Discussion of Employee Appreciation Day.

County Manager Brandon Rogers stated the county is limited on days and as of now June 21, 2024 is the day if it works out for the Commissioners. The event worked out well last year at the Parks and Recreation Community Center and would like to have the Employee Appreciation Day there again if it is available. Last year, the Commissioners grilled hamburgers and hotdogs for the employees. CM Rogers noted he has reached out to the Cattleman's Association to see if they could do something, and he has not heard back from them. Some other options will be to do a food truck like has been done in the past or the Commissioners can grill. Commissioner Daniel stated he likes it when Commissioner Jenkins grills. Commissioner Jenkins stated whatever will save the county money. The Board all agreed that the date June 21, 2024, will work and the least expensive option will be with Commissioners grilling. Commissioner Jenkins asked what the cost was last year, CM Rogers replied around \$8-\$9 a person.

**Discussion only, no motion entertained.**

- c. Approve/deny use of Impact Fees for Impact Fee Study.

County Manager Brandon Rogers requested the use of Admin and CIE Prep Impact Fees to cover the cost for the Impact Fee Study that is being performed by Ross and Associates. The amounts would be \$24,000 from Admin and \$51,000 from CIE Prep. This will leave the Board of Commissioners only needing to budget \$20,200 to complete the study. Ross and Associates was awarded the contract on February 14, 2024 in the amount of \$95,200.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Proctor/Daniel to approve use of \$24,000 in Impact Fees from Admin and \$51,000 in Impact Fees from CIE Prep for the Impact Fee Study that is being performed by Ross and Associates, motion carried 5-0.**

- d. Discussion of Pike County Parks and Recreation Board.

County Manager Brandon Rogers stated the county has been made aware by the Parks and Recreation Authority that their board member, Jason Leatherman, is currently serving on two boards, the Planning and Zoning Board and the Parks and Recreation Authority. According to the Parks and Recreation Authority enacting legislation no member of the authority shall hold any appointed or elected local, state, or federal public office. The enacting legislation also states a member of the authority may be removed by the Board of Commissioners of Pike County for cause but only after a hearing has afforded to such a member. CM Rogers recommendation is the Board of Commissioners to hold a hearing prior to the next Board of Commissioners regular monthly meeting or during the meeting. Chairman Briar Johnson stated that Jason Leatherman does a great job on both boards, and it is disappointing he can only serve on one. Chairman Johnson asked if Mr. Leatherman could waive the hearing if he wanted to. CM Rogers replied he could that Mr. Leatherman always has that option or resign. Mr. Leatherman does not wish to resign. Commissioner Guy stated he would be in favor of having the hearing before the next regular monthly meeting on March 26, 2024. County Attorney Rob Morton noted the notice for the meeting should be for the consideration of the removal of an authority member because that is the way it is worded in the enacting legislation. County Attorney Rob Morton noted if Mr. Leatherman wanted to waive the hearing he could.

**Discussion only, no motion entertained.**

- e. Approve/deny right-of-way acquisition of Tanyard Road.

County Manager Brandon Rogers stated that Mark Whitley and Christopher were present from Whitley Engineering. The Board has been provided with right-of-way plats for Tanyard Road. On the plats, the Board will be able to see where the centerline is and what kind of rights-of-way will need to be obtained. Most of the rights-of-way are a tenth or a hundredth of an acre. There are some that are more because the centerline has been changed trying to straighten out some of the curve that is dangerous. CM Rogers noted the very minimum was done. If the Board is happy with the plans they have in front of them, CM Rogers stated they would like to proceed in acquiring the rights-of-way from the individuals. Chairman Johnson stated from his understanding under the CDBG grant that was awarded for Tanyard Road, the county is not allowed to change the design of the road. CM Rogers stated they are not talking about the grant; this is completely right-of-way acquisition for Tanyard Road that has nothing to do with the CDBG grant. CM Rogers stated the grant is specifically for drainage and street repairs. What is on the agenda today being discussed is a separate project from the grant. Chairman Johnson asked if the county

should be talking to the Grant Administrator for any thing that is done on Tanyard Road. CM Rogers stated there are two separate projects going on with Tanyard Road, the CDBG grant project and one is the right-of-way for expanding and widening Tanyard Road which is the second project and is being discussed today. Chairman Johnson asked if these acquisitions would take several years. CM Rogers replied no, they hope the acquisitions will only take several months. Chairman Johnson asked the County Manager if the Board approves the right-of way acquisition, if he was 100% sure that it will not affect the CDBG grant in any way, can he guarantee the Board it will not affect that grant in any way. CM Rogers replied this is a separate project that has nothing to do with the CDBG grant. Chairman Johnson asked the County Manager, are you saying it will not affect the grant if the Board approves the right-of-way acquisition. CM Rogers replied he cannot speak of what might or might not happen in the future, so he does not want to say a 100% guarantee. CM Rogers addressed the Chairman stating that he or anyone in the room would not want to guarantee something 100% and this right-of-way acquisition is not meant to affect the CDBG grant. Chairman Johnson asked the Board to consider postponing this agenda item until the next regular monthly meeting of the Board of Commissioners because the information he has received is not in line with the information that is being heard now. It has nothing to do with the County Manager, Chairman Johnson wants to make sure that the grant will not be in jeopardy by approving the right-of-way acquisition. CM Rogers asked Chairman Johnson where he is hearing this information from. Chairman Johnson replied that is neither here nor there, the fact is he wants to make sure the county is making the right move. CM Rogers stated if it is a legitimate source they need to look into it but if it is not then it needs to be addressed. Chairman Briar Johnson stated he would like to have the engineer on record for the CDBG grant and the Grant Administrator in this meeting, so everyone is on the same page. Chairman Johnson noted this was suggested at another meeting and a meeting took place with the engineer of record, the Grant Administrator, a Commissioner the County Manager and Whitley Engineering thinking it would take care of the problem and it did not. Chairman Johnson noted that the County Manager even stated himself the meeting was a waste, and nothing was decided. Chairman Johnson stated he does not see why waiting two weeks will hurt anything and have everyone that is involved on Tanyard Road be at the next meeting. County Manager Rogers stated the Chairman is talking about two different things, the preliminary design of the road that was discussed in that meeting and the right-of-way acquisition that is being talked about today. CM Rogers noted this is not apples to apples, what is being discussed is apples to oranges. Chairman Johnson asked if there was a problem of playing it safe and waiting two weeks to have everyone at the meeting and if he is wrong, then he is wrong, but he wants to make sure he is not doing anything to jeopardize the million-dollar grant. CM Rogers stated there is nothing wrong with it but the longer the county waits because it was supposed to be discussed at previous meetings and now wanting to postpone it, it puts the project further and further down the road and nothing is getting accomplished. Commissioner Guy asked the County Attorney if he had any insight or if he could clean up any of this. County Attorney Rob Morton stated there has been conversations about this in a different form. The issue is there are two separate projects as indicated by the County Manager. The first CDBG project on Tanyard Road was denied and the Board approved to move forward with the Tanyard Road right-of-way acquisition. Part of the right-of-acquisition was consideration of the approving the design of the road because of the way it was paved previously and the related drainage. The issues have been somewhat clouded because of misunderstandings at state level and other situations. The county has a Grant Administrator and an approved engineering firm for the CDBG project. The discussions that have taken place with the Board of Commissioners previously are whether the design work done by Whitley Engineering could be utilized in connection with the second CDBG grant that the county was awarded on Tanyard Road or not. County Attorney Rob Morton stated it was his understanding that the CDBG people and the Grant Administrator said no they cannot do that, the preliminary design has to be done by the engineering firm that went through the procurement process. County Attorney Morton stated the question being asked today, was whether the approval of the right of way design was going to impact the CDBG grant, and he thinks the County Manager is accurate in his response that the county cannot foresee what the CDBG and Grant Administrators will do with that information. They are two separate projects, and the state has been notified that they are two separate projects. The county has not received a response from the state. County Attorney Rob Morton noted it was his understanding that the County Manager sent a follow up email to the state and has had no response to his email. Commissioner Guy stated it sounds like the County Manager has done his job. Chairman Johnson asked the Board to consider postponing the agenda item for two more weeks and he must act on information he has received. Commissioner Guy stated he does not have a problem with postponing it for two weeks, but he does not want to override something that the County Manager has taken care of. Chairman Johnson noted there has been attempts by the Grant Administrator to discuss this with the County Manager since February 28, 2024 and he has not discussed this with the County Manager yet but based on his phone call late last night, there has been no contact from the County Manager from the email sent. Chairman Johnson noted Commissioner Proctor was copied on the email sent on February 28, 2024 and there has been no contact with the Grant Administrator. Commissioner Guy asked the County Manager if two weeks was going to hold the county up. County Manager Brandon Rogers replied yes, it will hold the county up, but it is not the end of the world. Commissioner Proctor stated he will contact the Grant Administrator himself if it makes the Chairman feel better and he will give 100% guarantee after he talks to the Grant Administrator, Carol. Chairman Johnson stated it is not about his feelings but doing what is right for the county. County Manager Brandon Rogers stated for discussion that the comment made by Chairman Johnson about him not having contact with the Grant Administrator is not true. Chairman Johnson replied that is why he would like for the Grant Administrator to be here because he hears two different sides.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Proctor/Guy to postpone until the March 26, 2024, regular monthly meeting, motion carried 5-0.**

- f. Discussion of speed bumps in Ranchland Estates Williamson, GA.

(The agenda was amended to allow a Public Hearing for this agenda item, 3 minutes per person)

<u>In Favor</u>	<u>Opposition</u>	<u>Neutral</u>
John Yates	Lil Carpenter	Bill Curtis
	George Granade	Donnie King
	Steven Collins	
	Scott Chesney	
	Adam Scranage	
	Sally Keane	
	Randy Valenzuela	
	Janice Huff	
	Tim Dye	

Commissioner Jenkins noted he has spoken with the Sheriff several times and a ticket cannot be written on the dam of the subdivision; it is a private road. Once the vehicle comes off the dam, it is a different story. Commissioner Jenkins stated the gentleman that owns the dam and lot at the lake wants to be a good steward to the neighbors, that is Mr. Mark Whitley, and he is present. Commissioner Jenkins noted a gate has been discussed at the dam and preliminary talk of a three way stop sign that has not been discussed with the Board. Commissioner Jenkins noted he has spent a lot of time with the residents of Ranchland rather it be in person, on the phone or by text. Commissioner Jenkins stated the majority does not want speed bumps and he would like to rescind the vote that approved the installation of speed bumps. Commissioner Jenkins thanked everyone for coming out and speed bumps will not be going in Ranchland Estates. Chairman Johnson noted several years ago a gate was discussed being put up on the dam. Commissioner Jenkins stated they were put up a couple of times but dismantled, ran over. County Attorney Rob Morton clarified that the Board of Commissioners previously approved a property transaction involving the dam area and the last lot at Ranchland Estates. Survey work was done over a year ago. There has been an area identified that includes the cul-de-sac on the survey as well as the right of way easement that has been recorded. Three plats were recorded yesterday. A cul-de-sac will go in on the Ranchland Estates side of the dam. Commissioner Daniel asked about the cul-de-sac on the north side of the dam. County Manager Brandon Rogers stated he has that listed under agenda item for Discussion of the Road Projects.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Jenkins/Guy to rescind the vote from meeting on January 10, 2024 approving the installation of speed bumps, motion carried 5-0.**

g. Discussion of Road Projects.

County Manager Brandon Rogers noted since the plats have been recorded for Ranchland Estates, does the Board want to pick up that project and start with the cul-de sacs. The cul-de-sacs would be for the north and south sides of the dam. CM Rogers has spoken with Public Works Director, Todd Goolsby, and to continue with the asphalt 1,000 feet on the north side, installing the cul-de-sacs on the north and south sides of the dam would cost \$94,000. Once completed, then it would be up to the property owner to put up a gate up on the dam. CM Rogers recommends moving forward with this project.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Jenkins/Daniel to approve the cul-de-sac on the north side of the pond and the continuation of the road of 1,000 feet, motion carried 5-0.**

County Manager Brandon Rogers noted the road list for paving was done when John Hanson was County Manager. CM Rogers stated last year the county was able to get GTIB funding and additional LMIG funding. With the additional funding sources, it has accelerated the paving schedule by years. Sandefur Road was not on the list to be resurfaced until year 2030, six years from now. Does Sandefur Road need to be resurfaced now; that is what will be discussed. The SPLOST funding road projects cannot be removed, that is what the citizens voted on.

Commissioner Jenkins noted that Blanton Mill Road shows 4.242 miles on the road list and the only discussion that he is aware of is from Ward Road to Beeks Road due to a wash board effect. CM Rogers replied that Blanton Mill Road was discussed between Ward Road and Beeks Road prior to the SPLOST. Once SPLOST came out that is when it was discussed expanding it to the entire road in which was done from Highway 362 to the county line. The new cost is \$1,083,508.61. CM Rogers recommendation is to attempt to acquire limited right-of-way around the UGA Station to straighten the intersection at Bledsoe Farm Road and curves located near that intersection, attempt to acquire limited right-of-way in the area of 3326 Blanton Mill Road to straighten the curve, pave remaining roadway with current right-of-way 19' minimum width and limiting the need for survey and additional right-of-way should save an estimated \$688,492 on this project. Commissioner Jenkins noted paving the entire road has not been communicated to him, it was always from Ward Road to Beeks Road. Commissioner Jenkins stated the whole road was not in the original plan. Public Works Director, Todd Goolsby, addressed the Board stating that the original plan on Blanton Mill Road was from Ward Road to Beeks Road. Once the SPLOST passed, it was decided to do the whole road at one time, and it is his recommendation to do the whole road. Chairman Johnson asked Todd Goolsby if the county paves from Highway 362 to county line what is his recommendation. Todd Goolsby replied pave the whole road, 22' wide and shoulder, signage, and no trees on right-of way. Todd Goolsby stated the county paved Hughley Road, and it was done right.

County Manager Brandon Rogers stated Woodcreek Road is a SPLOST project, and the cost is \$2,500,000. CM Rogers does not expect any change and Woodcreek Road is a highly trafficked road and recommends acquiring the right -of-way to pave a minimum of 20' in the entire roadway. It will take approximately two years to build out the road. Commissioner Daniel stated the county borrowed the money to get the projects going and needed to get it going. CM Rogers replied that the projects have started.

County Manager Brandon Rogers stated Roberts Quarters Road is a SPLOST project, and the cost is \$2,500,000 for 0.923 miles. CM Rogers recommendation is to limit the need for a survey and additional right-of-way, pave the road as is it should save an estimated \$754,243. Mark Whitley has done a preliminary design on this road. CM Rogers believes the county can use the 19' width and pave what is there.

County Manager Brandon Rogers stated McKinley Road is a SPLOST project, and the cost is \$968,000 to pave from Highway 19 to Williamson Zebulon Road. CM Rogers recommendation is no change from what is being done now, rights-of-way and 20' width.

County Manager Brandon Rogers stated 2<sup>nd</sup> District is a SPLOST project, and the cost is \$157,085.76 for 0.615 miles. CM Rogers recommendation is to limit the need for survey and additional right-of-way, pave the road as is it should save an estimated \$603,015. CM Rogers stated it was paved to Fox Tails Subdivision, just need to connect the two paved areas from Williamson to Fox Tails. Commissioner Jenkins asked about the sharp curve at the arena. CM Rogers replied it will be very costly to try to straighten out the curve.

County Manager Brandon Rogers stated Old Zebulon Road is a SPLOST project, and the cost is \$2,750,000. CM Rogers stated this road will become a highly trafficked road over the next few years. This road needs to be full width.

County Manager Brandon Rogers stated Hill Street at Highway 18 Realignment is a SPLOST project, and the cost is \$50,000. This road is a part of the SPLOST V. CM Rogers recommendation is not to make any changes.

The Board of Commissioners all agreed with the road project list that was presented by the County Manager. All the SPLOST funding roads have been discussed and the rest of the road project list will be discussed at the next regular monthly meeting.

## 10. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Keith Ford to address the Board in response to the February 27, 2024 agenda item on the discussion of year 2023 property tax on 2.29 acres on Highway 19 in the name of The Estate of Jerry Colwell.

Keith Ford, with Christ Chapel, addressed the Board stating he believes Christ Chapel was not represented in a correct way at the last Board of Commissioners meeting. Christ Chapel never asked for a break on property taxes. When Christ Chapel was gifted the property at the corner on Highway 19 and Old Zebulon Road, they received the tax record in the mail, and it was beyond the date to file an exemption. Mr. Ford noted he was not aware he had to file an exemption for a church, he thought it was automatic. Mr. Ford was instructed by the Tax Assessors office that Christ Chapel did have to file an exemption and was asked at that time if Christ Chapel maintained the property for years in which they have. The Tax Assessors office told Mr. Ford to give them a couple of weeks and maybe they could waive the taxes that are due on the property. Christ Chapel helps support the community any way they can. At the last meeting, when the Chief Tax Assessor was asked what his recommendation was and he stated if this wasn't a church, we would not be having this conversation. Mr. Ford stated they followed the recommendation of the Tax Assessors office, and he went back a couple of weeks later to see if he needed to pay the tax and was told to wait because that decision cannot be made by the Tax Assessors Board but the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Ford stated he offered to pay the money several times and was told to wait because it was going to be their recommendation that the money be waived for the church to put it back into the community. The church would put the money back into the community rather it was waived or not. Mr. Ford stated he just followed the recommendation that was given from the Tax Assessors office. Mr. Ford noted the taxes were paid the day after the meeting. It was also stated that someone from that church, if they are concerned about this, should come to the Tax Assessors office, and file the paperwork for an exemption. Mr. Ford noted he tried to file the paperwork a couple of times when he was told to hold off until the taxes were settled. For the record, Christ Chapel has never asked for a break they followed the recommendation of the Tax Assessors office. The exemption and taxes have been paid. Christ Chapel loves this community.

- b. John Yates to address the Board in regard to speed bumps in Ranchland Estates Williamson, GA.

Mr. John Yates left the meeting prior to this agenda item. .

## 11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

**County Attorney Rob Morton withdrew Executive Session.**

- a. County Attorney Rob Morton requests an Executive Session for consultation with the county attorney, or other legal counsel, to discuss pending or potential litigation, settlement, claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions brought or to be brought by or against the county or any officer or employee or in which the county or any officer or employee may be directly involved as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(1), germane to pending or potential litigation.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Jenkins/Proctor to postpone until the March 26, 2024 regular monthly meeting, motion carried 5-0.**

## 12. ADJOURNMENT

**Motion/second by Commissioners Guy/Daniel to adjourn at 10:49 a.m., motion carried 5-0.**

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J. Briar Johnson, Chairman

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Angela Blount, County Clerk