

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

The Pike County Board of Commissioners held its Regular Monthly Meeting on Tuesday, February 27, 2024, at 6:30 p.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**.....**Ricky Shepherd**
- 3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**..... **Chairman J. Briar Johnson**
- 4. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA - (O.C.G A. § 50-14-1 (e) (1))**

County Manager Brandon Rogers requested the agenda to be amended to add an Executive Session for discussion of the future acquisition of real estate.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Proctor/Daniel to approve the amended agenda, adding Executive Session for discussion of the future acquisition of real estate, motion carried 5-0.**

- 5. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1(e) (2))**

- a. Minutes of the February 14, 2024, Regular Monthly Meeting.
  - b. Minutes of the February 14, 2024, Executive Session.
- Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Guy to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2024 Regular Monthly Meeting, and the minutes of the February 14, 2024 Executive Session, motion carried 5-0.**

- 6. **INVITED GUEST - NONE**
- 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. *There are no Department reports as they will be provided during the first Board meeting of March. Revenue/Expenditure Statement and Detail Check Register is included.*

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

- b. County Manager Report
  - Update on County finances for the following funds/accounts:

General Fund .....	\$4,434,399.84
Fire Dept. Donations.....	\$9,845.95
Cash Reserve Account.....	\$36,799.24
Jail Fund .....	\$27,474.70
E-911 Fund .....	\$167,156.54
DATE Fund .....	\$35,639.49
Juvenile Court Fund.....	\$13,982.78
Residential Impact Fee .....	\$760,271.33
Commercial Impact Fees .....	\$185,501.69
C.A.I.P FUND .....	\$27,461.23
General Obligation SPLOST 2022-2028.....	\$1,317,076.87
L.M.I.G. Grant (DOT).....	\$6,256.72

- c. County Manager Comment

County Manager Brandon Rogers reminded everyone that Elections Qualifying is next week March 4 – 8, 2024.

Budgets are due from the Departments this Friday, March 1, 2024. The budget workshop with the Departments will be Wednesday, March 13, 2024 after the Board of Commissioners regular monthly meeting. The workshop will be held in the Main Courtroom.

The submissions for the Request for Qualifications, RFQ, for the Master Plan and Engineering Services for the property the county purchased are due by Friday, March 1, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. The submittals will be reviewed in-house and presented to the Board of Commissioners at their next meeting on March 13, 2024. Firms submitting a response to the RFQ will have the opportunity to present a brief presentation at the March 13, 2024 Board of Commissioners meeting.

The County Manager stated he received a request from Public Works Director, Todd Goolsby, asking for approval of funds from Public Works Impact Fees to purchase a paving roller. The county has currently been renting a paving roller for \$6,000 a month. Mr. Goolsby found a used roller that is currently in Corpus Christi, TX in which the company is relocating the roller here to be checked out to see if it is the roller for Public Works. There is no obligation to purchase the roller. The cost of the roller is \$48,050. The County Manager stated this is something that is needed. Commissioner Proctor asked how much the cost of a new paving roller is. CM Rogers replied that they are well over \$200,000 brand new. Chairman Johnson asked how old the roller is they are looking at. CM Rogers replied it is a 2014 Hamm HD+90iVV Ride-On Roller with only 1500 hours on it. County Manager Rogers

recommends approval to use funds to purchase the roller after Todd Goolsby inspects the roller and says it is a worthy piece of equipment. Commissioner Proctor noted that Public Works has \$188,214.13 in Impact Fees.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Proctor/Daniel to approve the purchase of a 2014 Ride On Roller from Public Works Impact Fees in the amount of \$48,050 once it has been inspected, motion carried 5-0.**

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 stated he would like to discuss Watering Hole Pass. Jenkins stated he has spent the past two days in Watering Hole Pass going door to door regarding the speed bumps and he would like to postpone the installation of speed bumps until he finishes talking with each household. There has been no one yet that Commissioner Jenkins has spoken to that wants the speed bumps. Several signed a petition that they were misled on. Commissioner Jenkins stated he would like to have the rest of this week to finish going door to door and then he will bring it back to the Board at the March 13, 2024 meeting to decide if they would like to rescind the vote to install speed bumps. Commissioner Jenkins noted that no one was at the last meeting to speak in opposition, and he assumed the neighborhood wanted speed bumps installed when the signed petition was submitted to the county requesting speed bumps. Now, he has been contacted by several that were misled when the petition was brought to them, they thought it was for one speed bump. Commissioner Jenkins stated he would have gone door to door sooner if he had known then what he knows now. Commissioner Jenkins noted he spoke with an engineer discussing the traffic coming across the dam and Google Maps is taking traffic from Highway 362 across the dam and the engineer stated that GIS can reach out to Google and have that removed. Commissioner Jenkins stated this needs to be done. County Manager Brandon Rogers replied that the Board approved a land swap to do a cul-de-sac at the dam where the tennis courts are. Planning and Development Director, Jeremy Gilbert, just received the plans today and is getting ready to record the deeds. County Manager Brandon Rogers stated he would like to see the Board go in and fix the cul-de-sac where the buses can turn around on both sides of the dam and then GIS can go in and do a no thru road/private road. If the owner wants to put up gates to block the traffic over the dam, then they can. Commissioner Jenkins noted he spoke with the Sheriff this morning due to the concerns of the neighborhood residents, the traffic coming across the dam at increased speeds is usually between 7:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. in the morning and between 4:00p.m. – 6:00 p.m. in the afternoon. The Sheriff is aware of the problem and is going to see what he can do to help. There is a 25-mph speed limit sign at the entrance on Reidsboro Road and it is hard to see if looking ahead. Commissioner Jenkins requested more speed limit signs be placed in the subdivision. County Manager Brandon Rogers stated more speed limit signs will be placed in both directions.

Commissioner Jenkins mentioned the road projects that were on SPLOST, and with it getting close to springtime, where does the county stand on these projects. Commissioner Jenkins stated he believed the county was going to start on Wood Creek Road, McKinley Road, Ward Road, and Beeks Road in District 4. There has been no update. County Manager Brandon Rogers stated the engineering work has started on Tanyard Road and McKinley Road. After those roads are completed then the county will move to Roberts Quarters Road and Wood Creek Road. There has been discussion on Blanton Mill Road. It has not been removed from the list, there is no order the work will be done. Tanyard Road is about 100% complete with engineering, McKinley Road is 80%-90% complete with engineering. Roberts Quarters Road is about 60%-70% complete on parts of the road, the right of way is taking longer. Old Zebulon Road is on the list but no order of when the county will get to it. CM Rogers stated Wood Creek Road has not been started at all.

At Large Chairman Briar Johnson – No report.

e. County Attorney Report to Commissioners

County Attorney Rob Morton stated the notice of appeal has been filed on behalf of the Board of Assessors and the Board of Commissioners was copied on it. It was sent out on February 20, 2024. Additional title work has been done on Tanyard Road related to right-of-way issues. Mr. Morton stated he has addressed several open records requests including the Board of Elections and Registrar, and the Sheriff's Department and records dealing with administration. The County Attorney noted additional Opioid Settlement Documents have been signed.

**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 June 30, 2027. *Applicant has met criteria.*

County Manager Brandon Rogers stated he spoke with the applicant Christopher Tea before the meeting, and he is very well deserving of the position but the audit from the Department of Revenue will be taking place next week and he would recommend waiting to appoint someone to the Board until the review committee has completed their audit. Christopher Tea expressed to the County Manager that he wanted to be able to express his past experiences of serving on the Tax Assessors Board to the review committee. CM Rogers stated he does not have an issue with Christopher Tea speaking with the committee, but he does not recommend appointing Mr. Tea to the Board until after the audit is completed. Chairman Briar Johnson stated he does not agree with the County Manager's recommendation. He believes by appointing someone on the Board and allowing them to go through the audit process they will know what is going on and Mr. Tea can provide information to the committee

from him serving on the Board in the past and he is experienced. Commissioner Guy noted he would like to see Mr. Tea back on the Board. The Board of Tax Assessors still has another opening outside of this appointment.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Guy/Jenkins to appoint Christopher Tea to the Board of Tax Assessors, motion carried 5-0.**

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Appoint County Voting Delegate for Consideration of Three Statewide Opioid Settlement Advisory Commission Members (GOSAC) and Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Members.

County Manager Brandon Rogers stated he and the Clerk sat through a ZOOM call regarding the Opioid Settlement and the county will receive one vote as part of the process and it will be held at the Association County Commissioners of Georgia, ACCG regional, in-person meetings, and the voting delegate must be present to cast his vote on behalf of the Participating Local Government. The regional meeting for Pike County's region will be held at the Harris County Library on March 27, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. Commissioner Proctor asked if a voting delegate is not appointed will the county stop receiving money pertaining to the Opioid Settlement. County Manager Brandon Rogers stated no, the county has local funds that the Board sees on their financials at each meeting, these are for the regional and state funds. CM Rogers noted if Pike County does not have a voting delegate present, chances of getting to use additional funds are slim.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Guy/Proctor to appoint Chairman Briar Johnson as the county voting delegate, motion carried 4-1, with Chairman Johnson abstained.**

- b. Consider Tax Refund Application from Harold White in the amount of \$346.71.

Chief Appraiser, Greg Hobbs, addressed the Board stating that Mr. Harold White of 765 Wildwood Road Zebulon, GA is asking for a refund in the amount of \$346.71. Mr. Harold White's property consist of 12.60 acres with his primary residence with a garage. In 2008, it was listed as a garage with a finished area above the garage. When tax notices went out for the year 2023, Mr. White brought it to the attention of the Tax Assessors office that they have never had a finished area over their garage. Mr. Hobbs stated it was corrected for the year 2023 and he is eligible for a refund for the years 2022, 2021 and 2020 in the amount of \$346.71.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Guy/Daniel to approve to refund Harold White \$346.71, motion carried 5-0.**

- c. Discussion of year 2023 property tax on 2.29 acres on Highway 19 in the name of The Estate of Jerry Colwell.

Chief Appraiser, Greg Hobbs, addressed the Board stating the subject property belonged to The Estate of Jerry Colwell and is located behind Dr. Kirby's office at Highway 19 and Old Zebulon Road. A taxpayer asked the Chief Appraiser if a church was taking care of the property, would they be exempt from taxes. The short answer is no. The property did not belong to Christ Chapel as of January 1, 2023. The property was in the name of The Estate of Jerry Colwell. There is a quick claim deed that was filed in February 2023 where the co-executors of The Estate of Jerry Colwell quit claimed the property over to Christ Chapel Community Church of Pike County. Mr. Hobbs stated the Board of Assessors does not have an issue because it should have been taxed. It is up to the Board of Commissioners if they want to waive the tax due for 2023. Mr. Hobbs recommends not to waive the tax due. Greg Hobbs noted that Christ Chapel does own the property as of January 1, 2024 and they need to file an exemption with the Tax Assessors office. County Manager Brandon Rogers recommendation is to go with Mr. Hobbs recommendation. Whoever owns the property as of January 1 is responsible for the taxes.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Guy/Jenkins to deny the request, motion carried 4-1, with Commissioner Proctor opposed.**

## **10. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- a. Becky Watts with Pike County Times to address the Board regarding the County Manager's performance and his secret evaluation.

Becky Watts addressed the Board stating that on March 28, 2023, she brought concerns to this Board about the County Manager's lack of communication, poor leadership, and blatant lack of respect for county employees, the public, and members of this Board. Mrs. Watts stated she spoke on the record in a meeting because she did not know what else to do. Yet here we are, a year later, in the exact same situation, actually worse because there has been no accountability for his actions. Mrs. Watts asked again, is communication better, worse, or the same as it was at this time last year? Are the Commissioners and Staff being notified by text or email when the County Manager is going to be out of the office? Are you getting regular weekly County Manager reports like you have been asking for since he was hired 3 1/2 years ago? Are your employees in the County being treated better than they were a year ago? Are you confident that when your County Manager speaks on your behalf that a complaint will not end up before a county committee, a judge, or the EEOC? Are you confident that the County Manager will consult the entire Board including the County Attorney before making decisions on your behalf? Does your County Manager's actions make you proud of your choice to hire and retain him as your county manager? In July of 2023, the County Manager conducted evaluations of office staff and county department heads that are available through open records. Yet the County Manager's last public evaluation was conducted on May 26, 2022. What has improved since your last public evaluation almost two years ago, and why would a majority of the members of this board choose to do an evaluation of your County Manager in the executive session of the January 31, 2024 meeting? Better yet, why would this evaluation not be mentioned in a public meeting? Is there accountability in

an evaluation that you made behind closed doors? What are you afraid of? Mrs. Watts noted she questioned the legality of this secret evaluation and was advised by the County Attorney that: “the evaluation of the county manager was conducted in Executive Session as authorized by the applicable provisions of law and is not subject to public disclosure.” It may be legal, gentlemen, but is it ethical? And are you proud of that decision as you face members of the voting public here tonight? Actions should have consequences, but the only consequences Mrs. Watts is seeing are going to affect the employees and citizens of this county with not one but two EEOC lawsuits now pending against the county. ACCG’s Code of Ethics says: “As the duly elected or designated commissioner(s) of this Georgia county... we subscribe to the ACCG Code of Ethics.1) To continue to make honesty the keystone of our efforts, by always being mindful of our oath of office, and by practicing honesty and impartiality in all our actions. 2) To keep the public informed on county operations and activities since we believe that ‘county business is ever public business. There is more, but you should get the picture. You are elected by the people of this county to work with our county manager for the good of Pike County. If you are not happy with what you see, no one else can fix the problem. And when a majority of the Board decides that the County Manager’s annual evaluation should be given in secret rather than insisting that our County Manager be held to the same standard as all of our other employees, you are part of the problem. In closing, Mrs. Watts asks the Pike County Board of Commissioners to release the results of the county manager’s secret evaluation to the public so it can be compared to his annual evaluation from May of 2022. In the future, please choose to make the hard decisions for the good of the entire county. That means praising the County Manager when he does his job well, writing him up when he breaks state law or your trust, and holding him to the same standard as all of our county employees. If you, as an individual board member, choose to continue hiding behind closed doors when it comes to the performance and evaluation of our County Manager, you probably need to consider stepping down from your responsibilities as a county commissioner because you are not doing the job that you were elected to do. Integrity matters!

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. County Manager Brandon Rogers requests an Executive Session for discussion or deliberation on the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or employee or interviewing applicants for the position of the executive head of an agency, as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(2), germane to personnel.
- b. County Manager Brandon Rogers 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.
- c. County Manager Brandon Rogers requests Executive Session for discussion of the future acquisition of real estate as provided by O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(4). (agenda amended to add Executive Session item)

Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Proctor to adjourn Regular Session and enter into Executive Session at 7:14 p.m., motion carried 5-0.

CLOSED MEETING AFFIDAVIT

[A copy of the affidavit must be filed with the minutes of the meeting]

STATE OF GEORGIA  
COUNTY OF PIKE

AFFIDAVIT OF PIKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Members of the Pike County Board of Commissioners, being duly sworn, state under oath that the following is true and accurate to the best of his/her knowledge and belief:

1.

The Pike County Board of Commissioners met in a duly advertised meeting on 2-27-2024.

2.

During such meeting, the Board voted to go into closed session.

3.

The executive session was called to order at 7:14 p.m.

4.

The subject matter of the closed portion of the meeting was devoted to the following matter(s) within the exceptions provided in the open meetings law:

Yes 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);

No Discussion of tax matters made confidential by state law as provided by O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(2) and \_\_\_\_\_insert the citation to the legal authority making the tax matter confidential);

Yes Discussion of the future acquisition of real estate as provided by O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(4);

Yes Discussion or deliberation on the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or employee or

interviewing applicants for the position of the executive head of an agency, as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(2);

No Other – Germane to authorizing negotiations to purchase, dispose of or lease property.

Pike County Board of Commissioners:

J. Briar Johnson, Chairman	(L.S.)
Tim Daniel, Commissioner	(L.S.)
Tim Guy, Commissioner	(L.S.)
Jason Proctor, Commissioner	(L.S.)
James Jenkins, Commissioner	(L.S.)

This the 27th day of February 2024.

Sworn to and subscribed  
Before me this 27th day of February 2024.

Robert L. Morton  
Morton & Morton Associates  
County Attorney and Notary Public  
My commission expires: August 10, 2026.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Commissioner Jenkins left at 8:50 p.m.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Guy to adjourn Executive Session and enter into Regular Session at 9:02 p.m., motion carried 4-0.**

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion/second by Commissioners Guy/Proctor to adjourn at 9:03 p.m., motion carried 4-0.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
J. Briar Johnson, Chairman

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Angela Blount, County Clerk