

**Jasper County Board of Commissioners**  
**August 5, 2024**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**6:00 P.M.**

Chairman Bruce Henry called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Bruce Henry, Chairman; Steven Ledford, Vice Chair; Don Jernigan; Sheila Pounds and Asher Gray

Staff: Mike Benton, County Manager, Sheila Jefferson, Clerk- Administrative Services Director, Larissa Ruark, Chief Accounting Officer, Doug Attaway- Planning and Zoning Director,

**Pledge of Allegiance:**

**Invocation:** Ed Westbrook

**Agenda Approval:** Commissioner Jernigan motioned to approve the agenda with item number 11 being moved to item number 1 Commissioner Ledford seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

**Consent Agenda:** Commissioner Ledford motioned to approve the following minutes

Commissioner Ledford motioned to approve the following minutes

- Regular Meeting Minutes- July 1, 2024
- Called Meeting Minutes- July 12, 2024

Commissioner Pounds seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

Commissioner Gray motioned to approve **Check #'s 71532-71765**. Commissioner Ledford seconded the motion, passed unanimously

**Business Item 11: Emergency Management Agency Interim Director Appointment:**

Longtime Jasper County resident and Public Safety professional Ed Westbrook was asked to serve as Interim EMA Director. Mr. Westbrook stated he would be willing to serve as Interim EMA Director for six months. Mr. Westbrook stated if appointed Interim Director, he would train two deputy directors during the six-month period who have already been working on their own to get the certification required for the EMA position. He said he would forgo the annual \$5000 salary and split the wages between the two deputy directors in training. Mr. Westbrook said they are already county employees one at the Sheriff's office and the other at the fire department. He said having two Deputy Directors trained would prevent the county from continuing to struggle if someone leaves.

Commissioner Ledford asked if there would be issues if something were to happen and one of the deputy directors was working as a Sheriff's Deputy also. Mr. Westbrook said this position would not affect his responsibilities as a Sheriff's Deputy. He said that he wants to teach them the things they may not learn in the classes. Mr. Westbrook said he is not looking to receive a dime from the county he just wants to train someone who cares about the county. The Sheriff and the Fire Chief have given consent for their employees to serve as Deputy Directors. Mr. Westbrook said he is willing to continue to help if in six months there is still a need for him to.

Commissioner Gray motioned to appoint Ed Westbrook as EMA Director and train the two deputy directors splitting the salary between them for a six-month term. Commissioner Pounds seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Henry requested a motion to start the public hearing at 6:14 p.m. Commissioner Jernigan motioned to start the Public Hearing. Commissioner Ledford seconded, motion passed unanimously.

**Public Hearing 1: Rezoning Request – Case Number 2024-REZ-001:** Planning and Zoning Director Doug Attaway presented a request for the rezoning of 7.57 acres from residential to agriculture at 150 Landers Ln. Mr. Attaway said the applicant Mr. Pope had petitioned to table the motion. Chairman Henry said the Public Hearing would still be held. Commissioner Jernigan asked if Mr. Pope was being charged anything to table the motion. Mr. Attaway said there was a \$200 tabling fee and Mr. Pope had paid that fee. Chairman Henry called for anyone in favor of rezoning Landers Lane.

**In Favor:** No one spoke in favor of the rezoning.

**Opposed:**

**Cathy Benson:** Mrs. Benson spoke against the rezoning of Landers Lane. She said there are nine homes on Landers Way, six on Hoffman Dr, and three on Hwy 212 all considered Landers Subdivision. She said Playtec also owns 65 acres in that area which is zone residential as well. She asked why the Commissioners would allow Ag zoning in a subdivision saying that's spot zoning at its best. Mrs. Benson then stated that a member of the Planning and Zoning Board said the residential and ag zoning does not support the type of home occupation that is happening at this location. She said that there is at least one County Official possibly two that are pushing for the rezoning to be passed due to the owner's last name and who Mr. Pope is related to. She said if that is true, it is a conflict of interest due to favoritism of a last name and that should not be part of a narrative or decision.

**Sherri Stone Benton:** Mrs. Benton spoke against the rezoning. She presented the commissioners with documents on the home residential ordinance and pictures. She said Jason Pope has been violating county ordinances for the last eight years. She said he has a big truck, and he is ruining the roads. Mrs. Benton said even if he gets the property rezoned, he is still in violation of the ton limit of the vehicle and has two diesel tanks there. She said most of the residents in the subdivision use wells and she is concerned that if those diesel tanks leak it will contaminate the water supply. She said it would contaminate Jackson Lake as well because they are all on Jackson Lake near Franks Restaurant. She said he has three giant garages and dump trucks. She complained that every morning when he starts the trucks, she can smell the fumes and feel the ground vibrate. She said the county is already struggling to repair that area due to tornado damage and his trucks are adding to the damage. Mrs. Benton said that it's not a pretty site and is reducing the value of their homes because it looks like an industrial site. She said that based on the real estate law agriculture is supposed to be for non-farm uses of the land. She said he has a logging company, and it is not even close to a farm. She said Mr. Pope has been running his business from there for 6-8 years. Mrs. Benton said Mr. Pope worked for the power company, but his trucks are blocking power lines and that could cause issues. She said even if his rezoning application was approved, he is still in violation of the ordinance for agriculture home office. She said that she is not just fussing because it's ugly, but if the county is going to have codes, then they should be enforced. She said continuing to drag this situation out needs to stop because his place is an

eyesore, and it is unfair to his neighbors. Mrs. Benton said she is highly opposed to him being able to continue to do what he is doing.

**Mary Patrick:** Mrs. Patrick spoke as a member of the Planning and Zoning Board. She said the board voted unanimously against Mr. Pope's rezoning request.

**Jason Bunn:** Mr. Bunn spoke against the rezoning request saying that he is not directly affected and doesn't know the resident requesting rezoning. He said he has no personal involvement at all. He said he hopes after a yearlong discussion on zoning and rezoning, the commissioners will be consistent in the decisions they make. He said he wants to see whatever an area is zoned stay that way.

**Business Item 1: Rezoning Request – Case Number 2024-REZ-001:** Tabled due to request by applicant.

**Public Hearing 2: Ordinance Amendment – Add Recreational Vehicle Definition to Chapter 119:** Planning and Zoning Director Doug Attaway presented a request to add recreation vehicle definition to Chapter 119. Mr. Attaway said that the P&Z board has been working hard and they made recommendations on some changes. Mr. Attaway said he agrees with their recommendation making it easier to enforce the code regarding living in campers within the county.

Commissioner Ledford mentioned the 2 campgrounds in the county saying they have mailboxes. He asked if they would need to add something regarding that situation. Mr. Attaway stated that this only pertains to AG zoning areas.

Chairman Henry said they are discussing a definition of recreation vehicles. Mr. Attaway said they also want to add a use modification for an exception for new construction homes in AG zoning. No citizens spoke in favor of or opposing the ordinance.

**Business Item 2: Ordinance Amendment – Add Recreational Vehicle Definition to Chapter 119:** Mr. Attaway said the P&Z board voted unanimously in favor of this amendment. Commissioner Gray asked where the term permanently towable by a light-duty truck came from. Mr. Attaway said that FEMA uses it in the flood section of their relief packet. He stated a light-duty truck is anything less than a one-and-a-quarter ton. Commissioner Gray asked if there was a reason this was not included in residential zoning in the area where there are larger tracks. Mr. Attaway said it is in the standing policy that campers are only allowed in AG zoning while building a house.

Commissioner Ledford motioned to approve the Ordinance Amendment- Adding Recreational Vehicle Definition to Chapter 119 and add use modification. Commissioner Gray seconded; motion passed unanimously.

**Public Hearing 3: Ordinance Amendment – Update Table of Permitted Uses Chapter 119:** Mr. Attaway presented a request to update the Table of Permitted Uses. He said the P&Z Board has been working diligently to get the table updated. Commissioner Ledford asked for clarification that items listed but not marked for use on any of the tables are items not allowed. Mr. Attaway said that is correct. Commissioner Ledford asked if such items could be removed to eliminate any confusion. Mr. Attaway mentioned to the P&Z Board about removing items from the table, and they decided to leave items as all items not allowed. Commissioner Ledford asked if items previously removed should be added back to the table and left unmarked with the understanding unmarked items are not allowed. The County

Attorney said any item the county is concerned about they may want to define explicitly as not allowed. He said that he recommends this because when challenged the common argument is ordinances are ambiguous especially those with an old zoning table. Mr. Attaway said the table reads that all uses not shown as permitted or special uses within each district are specifically prohibited in that district. The County Attorney said as currently constituted that would cover the county as unmarked or not listed items are prohibited. Commissioner Gray asked from a legal stand would someone have a better argument if it is not explicitly defined. The County Attorney said that it was hard to say it would be fact-specific. Chairman Henry asked if the County Attorney felt good about the amendment. The County Attorney said it appears to be what he would expect to see. Chairman Henry called for citizen comments from those in favor.

**Mary Patrick:** Mrs. Patrick asked the County Attorney about the items with a blank. She wanted to know if it should be added as a line item, so the county is covered if challenged. The Attorney said again it may be a benefit to specifically list any item the county has a concern with. He said without adding it he is still confident there would be a good legal argument that it not being listed at all means it is prohibited. Chairman Henry asked if listing specific items and leaving the unmark would stop an argument from going to litigation. The County Attorney said that certainly could stop litigation.

**Bill Nash:** Mr. Nash noted the irony of the board removing some items from the use table and then adding short-term rentals. He said that is why P&Z board members decided to add the wording to the use table that if it is blank, it's not allowed. He said that he would agree that being explicated is more helpful in avoiding litigation.

**Business Item 3: Ordinance Amendment – Update Table of Permitted Uses Chapter 119:**

Commissioner Gray suggested adding all uses not shown or blank spaces to cover both. He said if they try to add every item not allowed it would get very detailed and lengthy. He said they could add big items that are more concerning. The County Attorney agreed that the wording would address all issues. Chairman Henry said he would like to see Rock Quarry, Mining, and Adult Entertainment added to the Use Table as not allowed.

Commissioner Ledford motioned to approve the ordinance change adding all uses not shown or purposely left blank and rock quarry, mining, adult entertainment, and solar farms as not allowed. Commissioner Gray seconded.

Commissioner Jernigan asked why they would add solar farms. Commissioner Ledford said the land around solar farms must be completely stripped and underbrush kept cleared off. He said if a storm or other event caused damage to the solar panels the stuff that would leak out of those panels would cause more damage to the surrounding environment than that caused by mining. Commissioner Ledford said there is a difference between someone wanting to place solar panels on their home for personal use and someone looking to profit from the power company and destroying 3000 acres in Jasper County. Commissioner Pounds asked if there have been requests to install solar farms around the county causing Commissioner Ledford to feel the need to include them in the Use Table. Commissioner Ledford said the county has received a few calls, so he would like to add them to the Use Table as not allowed. Commissioner Jernigan said there are already Solar Farms in Jasper County. Mr. Attaway said there is one in the city limits of Shady Dale. The Board of Commissioners jurisdiction is over the unincorporated areas of the county.

The motion passed unanimously.

**Public Hearing 4: Ordinance Amendment- Remove the Conservation Requirement from AG Zoning Chapter 119:**

Mr. Attaway requested that some wording in the county ordinance be changed to match what the county commissioner passed at the May 6, 2024, BOC meeting. He said the request was to remove the conservation subdivision requirement from the AG district. Mr. Attaway said the board recommended removing all major land subdivisions for residential purposes in the AG district. The conservational design would be required to leave large land lots for agricultural use for natural green space protected by the conservation easement. Mr. Attaway said at the May 6 meeting the county commissioners voted unanimously to remove conservation use in AG zoning. He said this would reflect what was voted in, no conservation subdivisions in AG zoning. Chairman Henry asked how the P&Z voted. Mr. Attaway said they voted in favor 4 to 1. No citizens spoke for or against the Ordinance Amendment- removing the Conservation Requirement from AG Zoning Chapter 119.

**Business Item 4: Ordinance Amendment- Remove the Conservation Subdivision Requirement from AG Zoning Chapter 119:** Chairman Henry called for a motion. Commissioner Ledford motioned to approve the Ordinance Amendment and remove the Conservation Requirement from AG Zoning Chapter 119. Commissioner Gray seconded, motion passed unanimously.

**Public Hearing 5: Ordinance Amendment – Update Sign Ordinance Chapter 111:**

Mr. Attaway presented a recommendation from the P&Z board to amend the sign usage for Jasper County. Commissioner Ledford asked if the section regarding the animated sign included signs with a stationary light. Mr. Attaway said an example would be the inflatable characters that move once inflated.

**Bill Nash:** Mr. Nash is a member of the P&Z board, he said he voted in favor at their meeting He said they had a good distinction between on-premises and off-premises. He said he had a second thought of how it should be handled for the on-premises signs. Mr. Nash said he thinks it may be an excessive burden to require someone with an on-premises to reapply and get a permit every three years. He said a better solution is to offer a token fee or permit charge and require proof their sign is in good condition. He said they could also simply have long-term or indefinite time for on-premises. Mr. Nash said he feels the only real concern the county should have about on-premises signs is if they were originally permitted and are they being maintained.

**Business Item 5: Ordinance Amendment – Update Sign Ordinance Chapter 111:**

Commissioner Gray asked what the renewal fee was prior to the ordinance change. Mr. Attaway said there was no renewal fee it was a one-time fee. He said if you got a sign, and it was permitted it would be there until it falls. Mr. Attaway said that the board had suggested an assigned permit number to correlate with the permit and the person who put the sign in place. He said they are currently contacting the property owner because they are leasing the property to the sign owner. Mr. Attaway explained what Mr. Nash referred to when he addressed the board. Chairman Henry asked if this ordinance change would include signs currently in place or would those be grandfathered in. Mr. Attaway said the ones who have permits would be given a three-year date to match the ordinance. Commissioner Jernigan said that several signs throughout the county are illegal, he said removing signs would be a full-time job. Mr. Attaway said the Code Enforcement Officer and Building Inspector have been working together to remove illegally placed signs. Commissioner Ledford motioned to approve the Update Sign Ordinance Amendment. Commissioner Gray seconded motion. Commissioner Ledford said he agrees with Mr. Nash and would like to add the on-site signs to be pushed back to a five-year renewal instead of three if the property and sign have the same owner. Chairman Henry asked if anyone else had mentioned the on-premises signs. Mr. Attaway said no he also thought about it after the board voted. He said that he agreed with Mr. Nash. Commissioner Gray withdrew his second because he thinks

language should be added for on-premises. Chairman Henry asked about places of worship and if they would be required to get permit signage. Mr. Attaway said they would fall under the on-premises unless they place signs in other areas.

Commissioner Gray motioned to approve and add language under section 111-33 with the exception of on-site premise permits being a one-time fee. Commissioner Ledford seconded, motion passed unanimously.

**Public Hearing 6: FY 2022 Capital Improvements Element Update:** Mr. Benton said the PCA requires counties to have impact fee programs to submit annual updates. He said the county has submitted several. Mr. Benton in FY 2022 the DCA update that was submitted had major changes removing the sheriff's office and jail, adding roads and bridges, and animal control. Impact fee funds allocated for the jail and Sheriff's department were used for roads and bridges and animal control. DCA has said three times that this is not how it works. He said few counties have attempted to make amendments or major changes to their impact fee program. He said the bottom line it takes a formal amendment process. He said it can't just be changed. He said you to show the reason why you are making changes. He said the 2022 format was updated and reworked and he is requesting the Commissioner's approval of the updated 2022 CIE to be resubmitted to DAC to get their approval according to their guidelines.

**Mary Patrick:** Mrs. Patrick opposed saying the ad was run in the paper the Thursday before the meeting not giving enough time to research the topic being discussed. She said she arrived early to review information, but no packet was available. Mr. Benton stated the ad stated a packet would be available upon request. Mrs. Patrick said three days before the hearing is not enough time. Mr. Benton suggested trying to get DCA-compliant and approve the 2022 and 2023 because they are older and not approve the 2024 and hold a work session.

**Business Item 6: FY 2022 Capital Improvements Element Update:** Commissioner Gray asked if these had been previously approved. Chairman Henry said the BOC approved but DCA did not. Commissioner Gray asked when they had been sent to DCA. Mr. Benton said he has been working on this for about two years. He said even our Regional Commission approved what was submitted but DCA did not due to the amendment process. Mr. Benton thinks 2024 should be tabled and they should focus on 2022 and 2023.

Commissioner Ledford motioned to approve the FY 2022 Capital Improvements Update. Commissioner Pounds seconded, motion passed unanimously.

**Public Hearing 7: FY 2023 Capital Improvements Element Update:** Chairman Henry said the information for FY 2023 is the same as 2022 but for 2023. No citizen comments in favor or opposed.

**Business Item 7: FY 2023 Capital Improvements Element Update:** Chairman Henry called for a motion. Commissioner Jernigan motioned to approve the FY 2023 Capital Improvements Update. Commissioner Pounds Seconded, motion passed unanimously.

**Public Hearing 8: FY 2024 Capital Improvements Element Update:** Chairman Henry called for a motion to table Public Hearing and business item on the recommendation of the County Manager Mike Benton.

**Business Item 8: FY 2024 Capital Improvements Element Update:** Commissioner Jernigan motioned to table the FY 2024 Capital Improvement Element Update. Commissioner Ledford seconded, motion passed unanimously.

**Presentation/Delegations:** None

**Citizen Comments:**

**Ken Horton:** Mr. Horton gave an update on the Food Bank's progress. He said they have been approved for the Southern Crescent grant allowing them to move forward. Mr. Horton said they were very excited and wanted to thank the County Commissioners for their help throughout the process. He said they sat down with Chairman Henry and Architect Bill Nash to cut costs since the last bid.

**Walt Harrell:** Mr. Harrell spoke about Jordan Rd not being repaired. He said December will be four years that the road has been out. He said he had talked to Mr. Benton several times. He said his concerns have fallen on deaf ears. He said he wants the county commissioners to put heat on the county manager to get it done. Mr. Harrell said he was told the county has the pipe it just needs to be put in. He said he was told to call Public Works Director Michael Walsh and see if he can get him to do it. Mr. Harrell said he is not the county manager and that's not his job. He said he doesn't find that response cute. He said certain residents don't want the road repaired and believes it hasn't been fixed for that reason. He said it's a county road and if the county isn't going to fix it, they need to put a gate on both ends with a lock and let the residents on that road maintain it. He said he likes to ride down Jordan Road with his wife and eat ice cream on Sundays and wants it fixed.

**James Belcher:** Mr. Belcher spoke to the board regarding the Elections and Registration Board. He said the board should have three members one Democratic one Republican and one Non-Partisan if they can find one. He said he submitted three names of candidates he believes would be a good fit.

**Bill Nash:** Mr. Nash spoke to support David McKenna for the Public Facilities Board appointment. He said he knows Mr. McKenna and feels his background makes him a good fit.

**Mary Patrick:** Ms. Patrick spoke against the purchase of a recreation vehicle. She said that instead of purchasing a new \$40,000 vehicle the county needs another code enforcement officer. She said a second code enforcement officer has been needed for several years. Mrs. Patrick said the commissioners can find plenty of money for everything else. She said they support the Chamber of Commerce, the development authority, gave money for a city park, and even paid for a trip to Washington. Mrs. Patrick said if they could find the money for everything else they needed to start funding essential functions of the government. She said if the county is going to have codes they need to be enforced and if they are not going to be enforced then the code needs to be done away with.

**Chris Florence:** Mr. Florence spoke against purchasing a new truck for the Recreation Department. Mr. Florence said he has spoken to senior citizens around the county and what he hears about the most is the tax burden. He said there are several communities around us with much larger recreation departments that don't have a \$400,000 budget or a county vehicle. He said he feels our recreation funding is excessive. He said other communities have boards made up of volunteers. Mr. Florence said the County Commissioners should check with other areas to find out how they operate. Mr. Florence then mentioned that he had asked about the storm damage to the animal control. He said he called to check the status and to his knowledge, nothing has been done to repair the shelter and they are still running at half-capacity. He said he would like the Commissioners to take that issue seriously because the animals don't have a voice.

**County Commissioner Items and Updates:**

**Commissioner Pounds:** Commissioner Pounds spoke regarding the rules for Citizen comments she said the requirement is to state your name and address. She said Mrs. Patrick continuously ignores those rules. She said she would also like to address the comment about trips to Washington DC. Commissioner Pounds said she is unsure if any other commissioner went to Washington DC but if citizens have an issue with that, they need to contact Governor Kemp.

**Chairman Henry:** None

**Commissioner Jernigan:** None

**Commissioner Gray:** Commissioner Gray gave an update on the traffic on the city square saying the City of Monticello Manager gave him information on progress being made at a joint work session. He said GDOT has installed new sensors and cameras as well as adjusted the timing of the lights. He said those items and adjustments will help them gather data and respond to issues accordingly. He said they had also discussed signage to help direct traffic toward the bypasses to reduce traffic around the square. He said they have made some progress and hopes that they will see some changes in the future.

**Commissioner Ledford:** None

**Business Item 9: Elections and Registration Board Appointments:** Chairman Henry said they received seven applications for the Elections Board and will be appointing three members. Chairman Henry said applicants are required to be present and stand before the board. He said applicants will tell the board why they wish to serve on the Elections Board and answer questions from the Commissioners.

**Jason Bunn:** Mr. Bunn said he moved to Jasper County approximately four years ago. He said he's voted since he was 18 but never really got involved in his county until he moved here. He said he was suddenly drawn into being involved. He said he has gotten to know the Commissioners and given them grief over different situations. He said he decided if he wanted to be involved with the direction the county is headed then maybe he should give some of his time back to the county. He said he has approximately fifteen years of management experience and training in dealing with people. He said he just wanted to offer his time to the county. Commissioner Ledford asked Mr. Bunn if he was the owner-operator of the truck he drives, with the ability to set his schedule. Mr. Bunn said he owned his truck for eight years and can adjust his schedule as needed.

**Suzanne Deal Fitzgerald:** Mrs. Fitzgerald said she has lived in Jasper County for over forty years and has always been interested in politics. She said she even ran for County Commissioner in the mid-nineteen-nineties. She said she enjoys politics and living in Jasper County. Mrs. Fitzgerald said she feels she needs to give more of her time to serve her community. She said she joined the fire department for a while but her knees and back could not handle the physical strain. She said she believes she would enjoy serving on the Elections board and would try to be fair. She said she realizes everyone walks a different path and may have different beliefs and she would be honest and try to be fair. She said she might have to work on fairness.

**Mark Logan:** Mr. Logan said he is retired and has no schedule to work around. He said he feels all three members should be non-partisan. He said he is non-partisan; He hates Republicans and Democrats the same. Mr. Logan said he would like to give back and serve the community.

**David McGuire:** David McGuire said he has served as election supervisor for nine years. He said he is knowledgeable about state and federal laws. He said he would ensure elections were freely, fairly, and legally held. He said he has always taken pride in the fact the citizens of Jasper County did not have to be concerned about the way county elections were held and it is his goal to maintain that



reputation of equality. Commissioner Ledford asked Mr. McGuire if he felt it fair for him to be a board member and poll worker. Mr. McGuire said no that would be wrong and if appointed to the board he would no longer work the election polls. Commissioner Gray asked how many years of experience and what political party he belonged to. Mr. McGuire said he has nine years of experience and is a member of the Democratic party. Commissioner Pounds said that Mr. McGuire skipped the question on his application asking if he is related to any elected officials or county employees. Mr. McGuire apologized for the oversight on his part. He said his mother is the activities director at the Senior Center and his aunt is the office manager for Planning and Zoning. Mr. McGuire said he also has relatives who work at Public Works for the county.

**Janice Smith:** Janice Smith said her experience working with teens and law firms has given her the skills and tools she would need to serve on this board. She said she has the time, and this would be a way for her to serve her community. Mrs. Smith said she would bring integrity and transparency into the electoral process.

**Guy Tucker:** Guy Tucker said he has always tried to give back to his community. He said work and family commitments have always limited what he could do. Mr. Tucker said he is now retired and has some free time. Mr. Tucker said he has lived in Jasper County for two and a half years and feels he is a good fit for the Elections board. He said his experience as a VP of Finance could be useful as a board member. He said he ran meetings, worked with committees, and did what needed to be done to organize and carry out plans.

Chairman Henry said they had six applicants present and only three open positions he then called for a motion.

Commissioner Ledford motioned to Appoint Mark Logan for a two-year term, David McGuire for a four-year term, and Guy Tucker for a four-year term. Commissioner Gray seconded, motion passed four to one Commissioner Pounds opposed.

**Business Item 10: Public Facilities Authority Board Appointment:** David McKenna was the only applicant for the open position on the Public Facilities Board. Mr. McKenna said he has lived in Jasper County for six years and would like to give back to the community. He said Bill Nash suggested he apply for the PFA board because of his experience. Mr. McKenna said he has been involved in many Public Facilities projects that were financed with tax-exempt bonds issued by local bonding authorities. He said having been through the process many times he feels his knowledge could be useful to the board.

Commissioner Jernigan motioned to appoint David McKenna to the Public Facilities board. Commissioner Ledford seconded, motion passed unanimously.

**Business Item 12: County-Wide Dirt and Gravel Roads Repair Bid Results – FEMA Disaster Program:** Public Works Director Michael Walsh was called by Chairman Henry to answer questions about county road work. Chairman Henry said the roads damaged by the tornado were put out for bid twice the first time there were no bids entered. The second time, one bid was submitted for more than double what FEMA had approved. Chairman Henry said he spoke with the county attorney to find out if it would be possible to request that the company who placed the bid look at each road and give a quote for just the work that must be done and would be covered by the FEMA funds. The County Attorney said the safest way would be to rebid and only include the work the county would like done. He said there may be other options based on their discussion, but a rebid is the best solution. He said the main concern is losing grant or reimbursement money from FEMA if it is not handled correctly. He said the county could hold a meeting with the company that placed the bid to see what they are willing

to work out, then discuss with FEMA for approval. Chairman Henry suggested tabling until a conversation with the bidding company and FEMA.

Commissioner Jernigan motioned to table. Commissioner Ledford seconded, motion passed unanimously.

**Business Item 13: Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Monticello for Building Inspections and Court Services:** Chairman Henry said the county has been working with the City of Monticello. He said the city has its own Code Enforcement Officer, but the county will handle building inspections and court services. County Manager Mike Benton said the county will receive the fees for inspections done in the city. He said the city has a preapproval process then the county handles inspections. Commissioner Gray asked if the county would receive all fines as well. Mr. Benton replied yes.

Commissioner Ledford motioned to authorize Chairman Henry to sign the Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Monticello for building inspections and court services. Commissioner Jernigan seconded, motion passed unanimously.

**Business 14: Engage Professional Services to Amend the Impact Fee Program:** Chairman Henry said they are discussing using professional services for the Impact Fee Program. He said in 2006 the county used Ross and Associates and is considering using them again. He said they have recently helped some local counties with their Impact Fee Program. Mr. Benton stated Ross and Associates handle most of the counties that have the impact fees amended. He said this is their specialty. Chairman Henry said that Mr. Benton has been working on this for a while but continues to have issues with the DCA. He said this company has a working relationship with DCA and must get everything he does approved. He said they needed to move forward to get the impact fees straightened out. Commissioner Ledford said they can also help with defining projects of what is and is not allowed. Chairman Henry said they lay out projected growth and what impact each item or department will have to determine the dollar amount. The County Manager said there would be a work session with the county commissioners. He said they are looking for the county to work with Ross and Associates to get a proposal. Commissioner Jernigan asked how much it would cost the county. Mr. Benton said he would rather not say but there are several factors involved. He said all he could tell him was that it would not be cheap.

Commissioner Ledford motioned to get a quote from Ross and Associates. Commissioner Jernigan seconded, motion passed unanimously.

**Business Item 15: Recreation Department Capital Expenditure Request – New Vehicle:** Recreation Director Keldrick Davis and Assistant Director Adrian Campbell presented the commissioners with a request for a new truck for the recreational department. Chairman Henry said he had Mr. Benton look into sharing with a department that may already have an available vehicle that fits the needs of Mr. Davis and his employees. He said he hates spending money on one that may be sitting most of the time. Mr. Benton said that the vehicle that would be available the most is the Tax Assessor vehicle. He spoke to the Tax Assessor and she said from January to June the vehicle is mostly available. Her busy season is July to November, so the vehicle would be unavailable most of the time during those months. Mr. Benton said two other options he has would be the code enforcement or county extension office vehicles. He said both are used a good bit of the time but might be a backup option or available

after five p.m. Commissioner Gray said he saw Mr. Davis using his own vehicle when the recreational truck had to be used by other employees to go to training. Mr. Davis said he and his employees use their personal vehicles often. He said when games are in different areas or training, even get food for concessions from one location to the other. He said his employees never complain and rarely ask for mileage or reimbursement for gas. Chairman Henry asked Mr. Davis if the shared option would work for him. Mr. Davis said it could work if there would be a vehicle available when needed. Commissioner Gray suggested a vehicle use schedule and said the recreation department should be listed on the vehicle. He said they should not have to have to ask permission. Commissioner Pounds said her concern is if a vehicle will always be available. Commissioner Gray said a shared schedule for a few months will help track uses and show the need for a second vehicle.

Commissioner Ledford motioned to table the purchase of a new vehicle for the Recreational Department until January unless there is a need before that time. Commissioner Gray seconded, motion passed unanimously.

**Business Item 16: ACCG Legislative Conference Voting Delegate Appointment:** Chairman Henry said they need to appoint a voting delegate for the AGGC Legislative Conference. He said he would be out of town. Commissioner Pounds said she plans to attend the conference and would serve as voting delegate if no one else was available. She said she is upset about recent citizen comments made by Mrs. Patrick regarding conferences she had attended. She said Mrs. Patrick's comment was rude. Commissioner Gray said it was the taxpayer's money and asked why she needed to go to Washington. Commissioner Pounds said she brings a lot to the table after attending classes, things the others don't know about. She said it was never an issue until Commissioner Gray was elected and started listening to Mary Patrick. She said if the board had an issue, they should take it up with Atlanta because if Governor Kemp disapproved of the conferences they would not be offered. Commissioner Pounds said to give her a training budget because she is attending classes and conferences. Commissioner Jernigan requested that the Chairman move on with the appointment. Chairman Henry said they did need to move on, but he also said they do have a budget for travel and training. He said the commissioners need to stay within that budget. Chairman Henry also said if someone attended a conference for training or a class, they need to bring back a report.

Commissioner Jernigan motioned that Commissioner Pounds be appointed as the ACCG Legislative Conference Voting Delegate. Commissioner Ledford seconded, motion passed 4 to 1. Commissioner Gray opposed. Commissioner Gray stated that he voted the way he did because of Commissioner Pounds attitude. Chairman Henry said the open discussion was closed and they were moving forward.

**Business Item 17: Open a New Bank Account for Jasper County Community Food Bank State Economic and Infrastructure Development (SEID) Grant- Grant Award # SEID23GA019:** Finance Director Larissa Ruark presented a request to open a new bank account with the Bank of Monticello. Ms. Ruark said that on July 16, 2024, the county was awarded the Southeast Present Regional Commission Grant for \$350,000. She said one of the requirements was that the county set up a special account, especially for the grant money.

Commissioner Jernigan motioned to approve a new account at the Bank of Monticello for the SEID Grant- Grant Award # SEID23GA019 funds. Commissioner Ledford seconded, and Chairman Henry added that once funds are deposited everything for the food bank be purchased from the special account until the money is gone. He said when the funds from the grant are gone, they can close the account easily, motion passed unanimously.

**Business item 18: FY2024 Audit Engagement – McNair, McLemore, Middlebrooks & Co., LLC:**

Ms. Ruark said it is time for the county to renew the annual audit engagement letter. She said David McCoy with McNair, McLemore, Middlebrooks & Co. has submitted the FY 20224 audit engagement letter. She said it was verified it meets the amounts that the county had budgeted. She said there are several components with the first being the Jasper County BOC audit \$46500. The 911 authority component unit audit \$8500. Jasper County Public Facilities component unit audit \$2500. Department of Community Affairs requirement for the annual report of local government finances report \$1500. The annual required Landfill Financial assurance audit \$2500. The total cost is \$61,500. Ms. Ruark said she is seeking approval to execute the FY 2024 audit engagement letters. Mr. Benton asked if all had been budgeted. Ms. Ruark said they had.

Commissioner Ledford motioned to approve the FY 2024 Audit Engagement Letters. Commissioner Jernigan seconded, motion passed unanimously.

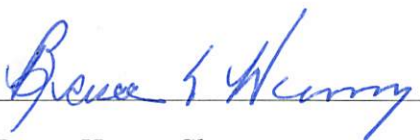
**Business Item 19: Schedule Work Sessions and Called Meetings as Needed:** To be determined at a later date.

**County Attorney Items: None**

**County Manager Update:** Mike Benton said the 2024 LMIG Wild Rd construction was scheduled to start the week of August 12, 2024, according to information from Pittman Construction. The Senior Center storm water drainage project invitation to bid is completed and will be out for bid the week of August 12, 2024. He said the 2024 additional LMIG funding that commissioners voted to use for repairs to Whip-poor-will Rd, Campbell Cross Rd, and part of County Line Rd will also go to bid the same week. Bids for the senior center parking lot and Murder Creek Rd are still in the works. He also gave an update on monthly and year-to-date permit information. He also gave an update on the status of the Recreation Board. He said all five members wish to continue to serve but have had some setbacks but are working to schedule their next meeting.

**Executive Session:** Chairman Henry said he needed a five-minute executive session for personnel. Commissioner Ledford motioned to start an executive session for personnel at 8:41 p.m. Commissioner Gray seconded, motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Ledford motioned to exit Executive Session. at 8:50 p.m. Commissioner Pounds seconded the motion, passed unanimously

**Adjourn:** Commissioner Ledford motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Commissioner Pounds seconded the motion, passed unanimously.



Bruce Henry, Chairman



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Sheila Jefferson, Clerk