

HEARD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
January 16, 2024 - 6:30 P.M.

The Heard County Board of Commissioners held a regular Commissioners Meeting on January 16, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Commission Chamber of the Heard County Administration Building. In attendance at the meeting were Chairman Lee Boone, District 2 Commissioner James Perry, District 3 Commissioner Iris Harris, District 4 Commissioner Larry Hammond, and District 5 Commissioner David Walls. District 1 Commissioner Larry Hooks was unable to attend. County Attorney Michael Hill was present.

Agenda Item # 2 - Welcome, Invocation, and Pledge to the American Flag

Chairman Lee Boone called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone present, and gave the invocation.

Agenda Item # 3 – Public Hearings

Chairman Boone went over the rules for public comments and asked that each person speak directly into the microphone.

a. Application to Rezone Rural Development to General Commercial – Thomas Yarbrough, 214 Yarbrough Road

Chairman Boone opened the public hearing. The Chairman stated the applicant was requesting to rezone one and a half acres to be used as a hair salon. The Planning Commission gave a recommendation to the Board to approve the application with the following conditions:

- the rezoning be approved for use as a hair salon only
- the setbacks be grandfathered in for the building located on the property.

The applicant, Mr. Thomas Yarbrough, explained to the Board that his wife is a master cosmetologist who currently owns a salon located in Carrollton, GA. Mr. Yarbrough

went on to say that she would like to relocate her business to Heard County. He owns a one point five-acre lot with an old house on it that he would like rezoned to commercial property and renovate the 1,040 square foot home into a salon. His wife would like to rent out four chairs to other stylists. There were no comments for or against the Special Use Permit. On a motion (Harris) and second (Perry), the Board voted unanimously to close the public hearing.

b. Application for Special Use – Brent Harris, 500 Loblolly Lane

Chairman Boone opened the public hearing. The applicant has requested a Special Use permit to host a Homestead Festival on the property located at 500 Loblolly Lane. At the previous meeting the Board voted to postpone the decision.

The applicant, Mr. Brent Harris, addressed the Board with an update. He stated that he hasn't had a chance to meet with Commissioner Walls to allow him to see the property. He has contacted the local fire department and spoke with Deputy Chief, Robert Bell. Deputy Chief Bell informed Mr. Harris that the time of year that the proposed festival would be held is open fire season for controlled burns, campfires, etc. He left a message with the Sheriff's Department but has not received a call back.

Commissioner Walls asked the applicant if he has formalized any type of planning on paper, to which the applicant stated that he had not. The Chairman expressed the Board's desire to visit the property and have the Fire Chief attend at the same time to discuss the layout, traffic control, medics and other potential issues. Mr. Harris replied that he did not know how many people would be attending. Commissioner Hammond interjected and said the Board wants to know how many primitive campsites and RV sites he plans

to have, how water hook-ups and sewage would be handled. He stated the Board would like to see some sort of plan written on paper. Commissioner Perry stated that they needed to see a proposal before making a decision in order to know if Heard County has the services to provide medical, protection, fire, and anything else in case something happens at the event. The Chairman referenced that at the previous meeting it was said by the applicant that they planned to have around fifteen hundred people in attendance which would require a plan. Commissioner Harris stated that she thought the event would be similar to the old Powers Crossroads festival where people would attend at different times and not all at once. Mr. Harris stated that most people would not stay overnight, he thought most people would want to stay in surrounding cities at hotels. He stated there is plenty of land to carve out enough parking for a couple of hundred people along with campsites on the one hundred-fifty to one hundred-sixty acre site. Attorney Hill explained to the applicant that the Board is looking for a plan on how he intends to control traffic, disposal of waste, provide emergency services, provide safety, etc. The Chairman said he thought the event would be good for our community, that he and the Board are not trying to discourage the applicant. He explained that there were ordinances that had to be followed in order to be in compliance.

There were no comments for or against the Special Use Permit. On a motion (Walls) and second (Hammond), the Board voted unanimously to continue the public hearing until the next regularly scheduled Commissioners Meeting on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

Agenda Item # 4 – Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the December 19, 2023, Commissioner’s meeting were presented to the Board for approval. On a motion (Hammond) and second (Walls), the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the December 19, 2023, regular Commissioner’s meeting as written.

Agenda Item # 5 – Amend Agenda

No amendments.

Agenda Item # 6 – New Business

**a. Decision - Application to Rezone Rural Development to General Commercial –
Thomas Yarbrough, 214 Yarbrough Road**

On a motion (Harris) and second (Perry), the Board voted unanimously to approve the rezoning from RD to GC subject to the condition it can only be used as a salon and nothing else.

b. Decision - Application for Special Use – Brent Harris, 500 Loblolly Lane

No decision, continued until the next regularly scheduled Commissioners Meeting on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

c. Appoint – County Clerk & Deputy Clerks for 2024

Chairman Boone recommended to reappoint Katrina Billingsley as County Clerk for 2024.

On a motion (Walls) and a second (Perry), the Board unanimously voted to reappoint Katrina Billingsley as County Clerk for 2024.

Chairman Boone requested to reappoint Felicia Adams and Susanne Palmer as Deputy Clerks for 2024, in the event Katrina Billingsley is absent. On a motion (Perry) and a second (Hammond), the Board unanimously voted to reappoint Felicia Adams and Susanne Palmer as Deputy Clerks for 2024.

d. Appoint – Vice-Chairman for 2024

On a motion (Hammond) and a second (Harris), the Board unanimously voted to reappoint James Perry as Vice-Chair for 2024.

e. Appoint – County Attorney for 2024

On a motion (Walls) and a second (Hammond), the Board unanimously voted to reappoint Michael Hill as County Attorney for 2024.

f. Appoint – County Auditor for 2024

Chairman Boone recommended to reappoint Kim Kimmel as the County Auditor for 2024. Mr. Kimmel has been the County Auditor for 20 years. Finance Director, Felicia Adams highly recommends his reappointment. His contract fee would remain the same as 2023. On a motion (Perry) and a second (Hammond), the Board unanimously voted to reappoint Kim Kimmel as County Auditor for 2024 and give the Chairman permission to sign the contract once it has been reviewed by the County Attorney.

g. Re-Appoint Chief Jim Short to HC Board of Health

On a motion (Hammond) and a second (Harris), the Board unanimously voted to reappoint Chief Jim Short to the Heard County Board of Health for a 4 year term.

Agenda Item # 7 – Old Business

There was no Old Business.

Agenda Item # 8 – Public Comments

There were no Public Comments

Item # 9 – Executive Session

Chairman Boone asked for an Executive Session to discuss possible litigation. On a motion, (Hammond) and second (Perry), the Board voted unanimously to enter Executive Session at 7:20 p.m. On a motion, (Perry) and second (Walls), the Board voted unanimously to return to Open

Session at 7:55 p.m. During the Executive Session the Board discussed possible litigation. The Board asked the County Attorney to draft a letter to respond to a litigation suit on the Boards behalf.

Item # 10 – Adjourn

There being no further business, on a motion (Harris) and second (Perry), the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Adjourned 7:57 p.m.

Katrina Billingsley

County Clerk

Lee Boone

Chairman

Date 02-20-2024

