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**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**WWDA Board of Directors**

**July 10, 2024**

**9:00 A.M.**

**2855 Forest Drive**

**Waycross, Ga 31503**

**Board members present: Board members absent:**

James Willis Stephen Burse

Candice Moody-Rice

Thomas Wesley

Rusty Hall

Christopher Kovacs

Dan Good

Michael-Angelo James

**Staff present:**

Jason Rubenbauer

Chase McDonald

1. **Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Waycross Ware County Development Authority was called to order by chairman James Willis at 9:06.

1. **Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance**

Michael-Angelo James provided the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. **Approval of Agenda**

Michael-Angelo James made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Rusty Hall seconded the motion. All present members voted aye, and the motion was passed 7-0.

1. **Approval of Minutes**
* June 5, 2024

Michael-Angelo James made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 5th, 2024, meeting as presented. Chris Kovacs seconded the motion. All present members voted aye, and the motion was passed 7-0.

1. **Approval of Financial Reports**
	* May 31, 2024

Jason Rubenbauer allowed the board to review the financial report and noted that some budgetary adjustments might be necessary in the future and noted that the WWDA should begin to receive funding from the recent 2023 SPLOST passing in the upcoming months. Rusty Hall made a motion to approve the May 2024 financial report. Candice Moody-Rice seconded the motion. All present members voted aye, and the motion was passed 7-0.

1. **Community Reports**
* Waycross-Ware County Chamber of Commerce
* Downtown Waycross Development Authority
* Waycross Convention & Visitors Bureau
* Coastal Pines Technical College
* South Ga. State College
* Ware County Board of Education

Taylor Hereford gave an update on the status of the Nursing Simulation Lab at South Georgia State College, announcing that the reveal and public demo has been delayed.

1. **Old Business**
* Logo Proposal

Chase McDonald presented a new concept for the Authority’s plan to introduce a new logo. The board commended the visual appeal of the logo, and the symbolism of the monogram there-in. The board decided to further review the logo until the next meeting before making a motion to act.

1. **New Business**
* Presentation, discussion, and request for action of the listing of WWDA property on LoopNet

Jason Rubenbauer discussed the benefits of joining LoopNet, a real estate listing website used by companies, investors, and other property developers, noting that joining the platform would allow the properties owned not only by the Authority, but also by other property owners in Waycross, to be marketed to a wider audience of prospective developers. After discussion regarding the price of the platform and the long-term goals for the Authority, the board agreed to purchase the subscription. Dan Good made the motion to approve the purchase. Thomas Wesley seconded the motion. All present members voted aye, and the motion was passed 7-0.

* Presentation, discussion, and request for action of Placer.ai platform

Jason Rubenbauer presented materials from Placer.ai, a location intelligence and foot traffic data software. Jason detailed the Authority’s plans for the software, highlighting its usefulness in gathering data around the Authority’s properties and how the Authority can use that data to recruit new businesses to Ware County. The board discussed options of packages and agreed to purchase the national data package, with plans to use SPLOST funds to reimburse the purchase due to its planned usage to directly aid in development. Michael-Angelo James motioned to purchase the software. Rusty Hall seconded the motion. All present members voted aye, and the motion was passed 7-0.

* Presentation, discussion, and request for action of Housing Plan information

Jason Rubenbauer led a discussion on Waycross and Ware County’s housing initiative, asking the board’s opinion on being more actively involved in the plan to ensure adequate housing opportunities for employees working at local businesses and industries. Jason informed the board about state-wide and nation-wide grant opportunities for housing initiatives, and suggested that a more proactive approach from local government could present additional opportunities to access these grants. Mayor Michael-Angelo James highlighted the need to act quickly on all governmental levels, given the current state of housing opportunities in Waycross and Ware County. Jason Rubenbauer notes his desire to receive a full, comprehensive housing study and the potential cost of such a study. Christopher Kovacs asked a question about potential delays during the legislative process of having more houses built in the county, and Michael-Angelo James validated this concern by explaining some of the potential legislative and judicial delays that could occur. As this item required no official action, there was no vote.

* Presentation, discussion, and request for action of CPTC Foundation Golf Tournament request

Jason Rubenbauer presented an opportunity to sponsor the Coastal Pines Technical College Foundation’s John P. Pike Memorial Scholarship golf tournament. After discussion about the distinction of sponsorship relevance and suitability, the board agreed to sponsor the event at its lowest tier. Candice Moody-Rice motioned to fulfill the sponsorship. Dan Good seconded the motion. All present members voted aye, and the motion was passed 7-0.

* Presentation, discussion, and request for action of Okefenokee Swamp Run request

Jason Rubenbauer presented an opportunity to sponsor the Okefenokee Swamp Run. After continuing the discussion about the distinction of sponsorship relevance and suitability, the board agreed to not sponsor the event. Candice Moody-Rice motioned to not fulfill the sponsorship. Dan Good seconded the motion. All present members voted aye, and the motion was passed 7-0.

* Presentation, discussion, and request for action of Miss Pumpkin Fest Pageant request

Jason Rubenbauer presented an opportunity to sponsor the Miss Pumpkin Fest Pageant. After continuing the discussion about the distinction of sponsorship relevance and suitability, the board agreed to not sponsor the event. Candice Moody-Rice motioned to not fulfill the sponsorship. Dan Good seconded the motion. All present members voted aye, and the motion was passed 7-0.

* Presentation, discussion, and request for action of Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament request

Jason Rubenbauer presented an opportunity to sponsor the Chamber of Commerce ‘Tee up Fore Business’ golf tournament. After continuing the discussion about the distinction of sponsorship relevance and suitability, the board agreed to sponsor the event. Candice Moody-Rice motioned to fulfill the sponsorship. Dan Good seconded the motion. All present members voted aye, and the motion was passed 7-0.

* Presentation, discussion, and request for action of Ware County property transfer request

Jason Rubenbauer updated the board on the Ware County property transfer request for a new State Patrol post. Jason clarified the intent to receive the property where the current post resides for the Authority. Dan Good motioned to fulfill the transfer request. Candice Moody-Rice seconded the motion. All present members voted aye, and the motion was passed 7-0.

1. **Attorney’s Items**
* Hillary Stringfellow – Gilbert, Harrell, Sumerford & Martin, P.C.

The Authority’s attorney, Hillary Stringfellow, was not present for the meeting, thus, no attorney’s items were discussed.

1. **President’s Report – Jason Rubenbauer**

Jason Rubenbauer gave an update on projects and events he has participated in for the month of June and informed the board of his trip to Atlanta for the CCC Atlanta Development Summit on July 11th.

1. **Chairman’s Report – James Willis**

There was no report made available by Chairman James Willis, but Mr. Willis took the opportunity to express his gratitude for each member of the board. Christopher Kovacs announced his intent to move to Jacksonville, Florida, to pursue a career opportunity. The board thanked him for his time and contributions to the board and to the Authority.

1. **Executive Session**
* For discussion of land/lease and acquisition matters pursuant to O.C.G.A. 50-14-3(b)(1)(B)

Michael-Angelo James motioned to enter executive session. Candice Moody-Rice seconded the motion. The board entered executive session at 11:16 AM.

Michael-Angelo James motioned to enter regular session once again. Candice Moody-Rice seconded the motion. The board entered back into regular session at 11:50 AM.

1. **Adjournment**

Dan Good motioned to adjourn the meeting. Rusty Hall seconded the motion. All present members voted aye, and the motion was passed 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 11:54 AM.