

**HEARD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
December 19, 2023 - 6:30 P.M.**

The Heard County Board of Commissioners held a regular Commissioners Meeting on December 19, 2023, 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 via phone.

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 for Special Use - James Hadden, 2710 Liberty Hill Glenn Road

Chairman Boone opened the public hearing. The Chairman stated the applicant was requesting a Special Use permit to create a family grave located at 2710 Liberty Hill Glenn Road. The Planning Commission gave a recommendation to the Board to approve the application. The applicant, Mr. James Hadden, explained to the Board that there are two existing graves located on the property. Mr. Hadden stated he would like to take half an acre or less of the 25-acre tract to convert it into a family cemetery. The Chairman asked Mr. Hadden if there are plans for the upkeep of the cemetery with future generations. Mr. Hadden responded by saying that his will had been updated to address the upkeep of the cemetery. Commissioner Perry asked if the cemetery was

registered with the State. Mr. Hadden was unsure but stated that he would check to see and if it is not, he will register it. Attorney Hill advised the Board that they could set special conditions, if approved, to have the property surveyed and recorded to show the family cemetery. There were no comments for or against the Special Use Permit. On a motion (Walls) and second (Harris), the Board voted unanimously to close the public hearing.

b) Application to Rezone from Rural Development to Agriculture - Bryan and Jessica Stone, 724 Elm Road

Chairman Boone opened the public hearing. The Chairman stated the applicant was requesting to rezone 16.41 acres of land located at 724 Elm Road from Rural Development to Agriculture in order to have a deer processing shop on the property. The Planning Commission gave a recommendation to the Board to approve the application. The applicant, Mr. Bryan Stone and Mrs. Jessica Stone, introduced themselves to the Board. Mr. Stone addressed the Board to explain that there is already a deer processing shop on the property, he wants to be in compliance with Heard County in order to operate the shop. There is a shipping container located on the property that has been converted, by a professional company, into a cooler that will hold between 80-90 deer. Mr. Stone explained that it takes three to five days to process a deer. Currently there are no other deer processing shops operating in Heard County. Commissioner Perry asked how they planned to dispose of the carcasses and other waste from the deer. Mr. Stone stated that they currently have a dumpster on the property, they have bags with lime in them that they bag and place all the waste into. Mr. Stone stated that he contacted DNR and EPD, and they approved of the method. EPD has given them

a permit to dump the waste themselves. Commissioner Walls asked if they would only be processing deer or would they process livestock as well. Mrs. Stone stated that they do not process livestock. Tom Bush, of 238 Redland Road, spoke in favor of the application. On a motion (Hammond) and second (Perry), the Board voted unanimously to close the public hearing.

c) Application for Special Use – Brent Harris, 500 Loblolly Lane

Chairman Boone opened the public hearing. The Chairman stated the applicant was requesting a Special Use permit to host a Homestead Festival on the property located at 500 Loblolly Lane. The Planning Commission gave a recommendation to the Board to approve the application with the following conditions:

- approval for a onetime event on October 4th, 5th, and 6th of 2024
- upon satisfaction of the Sheriff and Fire Chief
- approval of camping, RV, and primitive campsites for the onetime event.

Emily Faulkner, of 3012 Antioch Road, Franklin, GA, and Rosie Haynie, of 1190 New Mexico Road, Bowdon, GA, addressed the Board on behalf of the applicant, Brent Harris. Ms. Faulkner and Ms. Haynie stated they would be the event planners. Dr. Harris is the sponsor and owner of the property, he would be the responsible party for the event. Ms. Faulkner stated that they would like to hold a yearly educational event for farmers, people interested in learning to homestead, canning food, gardening, bread baking, and chicken processing. They would like to have food trucks, various vendors, and speakers for the event. The pre-ticket sale would be limited to fifteen hundred tickets. Chairman Boone asked about how traffic would be handled. Commissioner Perry inquired about the plan for emergency medical assistance and security. Ms. Faulkner responded by stating

that they would coordinate in advance with the Sheriff's Office and Emergency Services. They would pay for off-duty security and medical services. Ms. Haynie stated the property was previously used by tree farmers so there are already electric hookups in place for RVs, they would go in and update or fix anything that needed to be done prior to the event. There are wells on the property, but there is no sewage system so the RVs would have to be self-sufficient. They would also like to offer primitive camping sites. The property is 160 acres and has gravel roads located within the property. There are pre-existing structures on the property (mobile homes and a warehouse). There is currently only one way in and one way out. The Chairman suggested that himself and the Commissioners should visit the property to get a better layout of the land, Ms. Faulkner agreed. Ms. Faulkner advised the Board that they could contact Dr. Harris to schedule a day and time to visit the property. There were no comments for or against the Special Use Permit. On a motion (Walls) and second (Perry), the Board voted unanimously to continue the public hearing until the next regularly scheduled Commissioners Meeting on Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

Agenda Item # 4 – Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the November 21, 2023, Commissioner's meeting were presented to the Board for approval. On a motion (Hammond) and second (Perry), the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the November 21, 2023, regular Commissioner's meeting as written.

Agenda Item # 5 – Amend Agenda

Commissioner Perry asked for an amendment to add Discussion – Solar Farms as item “f” to New Business. On a motion (Perry) and second (Walls), the Board voted unanimously to amend the agenda to add item “f” Discussion – Solar Farms under New Business.

Agenda Item # 6 – New Business

a. Decision - Application for Special Use - James Hadden, 2710 Liberty Hill Glenn Road

On a motion (Walls) and second (Perry), the Board voted unanimously to approve the application with the recommendation to survey out the exact designated area of the cemetery and research the State to see if the existing graves are registered.

b. Decision - Application to Rezone from Rural Development to Agriculture - Bryan and Jessica Stone, 724 Elm Road

On a motion (Perry) and second (Hammond), the Board voted unanimously to approve the application.

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

No decision, continued until the next regularly scheduled Commissioners Meeting on Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

d. Adopt - Resolution to set Qualifying Fees for 2024 BOE

Chairman Boone read the Resolution By The Heard County Board Of Commissioners Setting Qualifying Fees for the 2024 School Board Election into the record.

On a motion (Hammond) and a second (Harris), the Board unanimously voted to approve the Resolution By The Heard County Board Of Commissioners Setting Qualifying Fees for the 2024 School Board Election.

e. Set 2024 meeting dates and times for BOC

Chairman Boone asked the Board to review the proposed 2024 Board Of Commissioners meeting dates. The dates mirrored the 2023 schedule of being every third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. located in the Commission Chamber located at 201 Park Avenue, Franklin, GA. On

a motion (Harris) and a second (Walls), the Board unanimously voted to approve the 2024 Board Of Commissioners meeting dates and time.

f. Discuss – Solar Farms

Chairman Boone opened the discussion. Commissioner Perry stated that there is so much information to review regarding solar farms. He suggested that the Board place a moratorium on any solar farm applications until the Board can have sufficient Work Sessions to discuss how to handle solar farms in Heard County. On a motion (Perry) and a second (Walls), the Board unanimously voted to place a moratorium on applications for solar farms in the county until they have some work sessions to decide how to handle future applications.

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 (Walls), the Board voted unanimously to enter Executive Session at 7:49 p.m. On a motion, (Hammond) and second (Walls), the Board voted unanimously to return to Open Session at 8:33 p.m. During the Executive Session the Board discussed possible litigation. The Board asked the County Attorney to do some research and draft some letters 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 8:37 p.m.

Katrina Billingsley

County Clerk

Lee Boone

Chairman

Date 01-19-2024