

Public Hearing Minutes
Jenkins County Board of Commissioners
Tuesday, August 8, 2023
3:00 P.M.

1. The Jenkins County Board of Commissioners met for a Public Hearing on Tuesday, August 8, 2023 at 3:00 P.M. in the Courtroom at the Jenkins County Courthouse. Commissioners in attendance were Chairman Horace Weathersby III, Hiller Spann, Tracie Coney, Pamela Dwight, and Jonathan Powell. Others in attendance were County Administrator Grady Saxon, County Attorney George Rountree (arrived at 3:10 P.M.) and 206 concerned Citizens (based on the sign in sheets).
2. Chairman Horace Weathersby called the Public Hearing to order at 3:00 P.M. He stated that the purpose of the Public Hearing was to allow citizens to express concerns regarding the proposed Jenkins County Solid Waste Management Plan. Mr. Saxon provided the ground rules for the hearing. He stated that Attorney Rountree would arrive in a few minutes, but the Hearing would proceed without him until his arrival. Chairman Weathersby opened the floor for comments.
3. Mr. Joe Wilson stated that we vote on everything else, so why can't the citizens vote on this?
4. Mr. Bruce Eaton referenced the problems at Milliken. He also stated that cellphone batteries disposed of in landfills can leach out hazardous chemicals into the water. He stated they are more harmful than lead-acid batteries. He stated, "We don't want it."
5. Mr. Wayne Burke stated that the hearing regarded the future of the county, and that it was disrespectful that the lawyer was not here. "That's just wrong."
6. Mr. Mark Joyner asked if there was any consideration for the landowners who own property adjoining the landfill.
7. Chairman Weathersby reminded the audience that today's hearing was about the county's Solid Waste Management Plan.
8. Mr. Ben Wall stated the Atlantic Waste has held two public educational meetings at the landfill to try to explain what would potentially go into the landfill, where it would come from, and try to address any public concerns. He stated that only 15 people attended the meetings. He stated he would be willing to hold a third meeting if anyone was interested in attending.
9. Mrs. Angie Cates asked if the update to the SWMP was being done because it is required by the State and is the update being changed to accommodate or to allow for the landfill. Chairman Weathersby stated that Attorney Rountree would be able to answer that when he arrives. Commissioner Spann stated that he was reasonably sure

that the SWMP was not being redone to allow for a landfill, but that it was a state requirement.

10. Mr. Damon Mullis with Ogeechee Riverkeeper stated that he had read the draft. He discussed the issue of need for a landfill. He also inquired when the plan would be shared with the public.
11. Attorney Rountree addressed Mr. Wilson's question regarding citizens being able to vote on the landfill. He stated that the County's Solid Waste Ordinance, created by the Jenkins County Board of Commissioners, governs the application process for a landfill.
12. Mr. Wayne Burke requested that the Commission Meetings be held later to allow for more public participation.
13. Mrs. Angie Cates inquired about the differences between the old SWMP plan and the newly proposed SWMP. Attorney Rountree stated that today's Public Hearing was to help develop the new SWMP. Another Public Hearing will be scheduled at a later date to discuss the proposed plan and see if any further changes need to be made. He stated that he had not studied the old plan, as it was obsolete. Attorney Rountree stated that the current working document was created using a template.
14. Mr. Damon Mullis inquired about the rush to vote on the previous version of the proposed SWMP. Attorney Rountree stated that there was no rush.
15. Mrs. Sara Sims expressed concerns that a landfill would adversely impact the Hurricane Branch watershed. She was also concerned about the additional truck traffic.
16. Mrs. Cheryl Tatum had multiple questions and concerns regarding the current working document known as the SWMP. She referenced concerns with multiple sections of the working copy of the plan. She stated that citizens don't want trash from 15-20 more counties brought here. She also expressed concern that a lot of the land on or near the landfill was in a wetland. She thinks the ordinance should be reviewed as well. A 225 feet landfill would be an eyesore.
17. Mr. Mike Dann inquired if the SWMP would become the ordinance, and if the ordinance could be amended to allow citizens to vote on whether a future landfill could come to Jenkins County. Attorney Rountree stated that he didn't feel that this amendment would be legal.
18. Mr. Damon Mullis inquired under what guidance the application by Atlantic Waste would be judged under. Attorney Rountree stated that the existing ordinance would be the guide for the application. Mr. Mullis also inquired if it would be legal for Jenkins County to issue a landfill permit without having a SWMP in place. Attorney Rountree stated that the SWMP may or may not have bearing on the current application.

19. Mrs. Angie Cates asked if Commissioners could change the ordinance to allow citizens to vote on the matter of a landfill. Attorney Rountree stated that ordinance provided the guidelines for the County to follow in reference to a landfill.
20. Mr. Johnny Neal inquired as to how much input Atlantic Waste has had in the development of the plan. Attorney Rountree stated that the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has laid out guidelines for a SWMP, and that he has looked at the plans of other counties, and has listened to the ideas of Atlantic Waste in the preparation of the plan for Jenkins County. Attorney Rountree stated that public input would be included when developing the final plan. Mr. Neal wants the public to have more access and opportunities for input in developing the County's plan.
21. Mrs. Angie Cates inquired why a company from Savannah, Georgia have any input on the solid waste management plan for Jenkins County?
22. Mr. Damon Mullis inquired that if the current Solid Waste Management Ordinance was amended, how would affect the current application. Attorney Rountree stated that the current application would fall under the guidelines of the current ordinance.
23. Ms. Shanelle Carr was concerned that an ordinance was voted on without the Commissioners notifying their constituents. Ms. Carr requested Minutes of the meeting where the ordinance was voted upon.
24. Mr. Wayne Burke asked if the vote on the ordinance was conducted during Executive Session or in Public. Chairman Weathersby stated that it was during the Regular Meeting.
25. Mrs. Cheryl Tatum the Solid Waste Management Act of 1990 for the State of Georgia. She stated that the act was updated in 2004. It stated that before a Solid Waste facility could be permitted, each city or county must be included in a solid waste management plan.
26. Mr. Tommy Lane stated that he had served 8 years on the Board of Commissioners. He stated that Screven County and several others had experienced this same ordeal a couple years ago. He stated that Mr. Wall is one of the largest property owners in Jenkins County. He stated that if this landfill is approved, it would grow taller than the fire tower in Jenkins County and would create an awful smell.
27. Chairman Weathersby asked that anyone who had concerns to submit them to the Commission or to Attorney Rountree.
28. Chairman Weathersby adjourned the Public Hearing at 4:00 P.M.

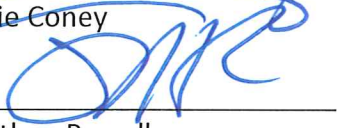
Signatures are on the following page.



Chairman Horace Weathersby III

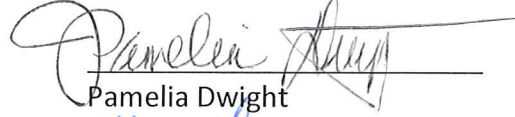


Tracie Coney

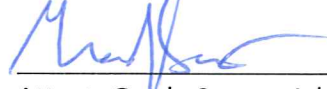


Jonathan Powell

Hiller Spann



Pamela Dwight



Attest: Grady Saxon, Administrator