



Pierce County Board of Commissioners  
Public Hearing Minutes  
Tuesday, June 4, 2024, 5:30 p.m.

Commissioners in Attendance:

Neal Bennett, Chairman  
Harold Rozier, District 1  
Graham Raley, District 2  
Randy Dixon, District 3  
David Lowman, District 4

Staff in Attendance

Raphel Maddox, County Manager  
Adam Craft, County Attorney  
Donna Golding, County Clerk

1. Call to Order – Chairman Neal Bennett called the Public Hearing to order at 5:30 p.m.
2. Request to rezone Parcel #066A-090, 4.35 acres at 5950 Kennel Road, Patterson, from Single-Family to Agriculture/Forestry to relocate mobile home. Chairman Neal Bennett asked the audience if anyone wanted to speak on this address. Dereck Blocker, currently addressed in Alma, Ga. 31510 said he has purchased a mobile home and would like to move it to 5950 Kennel Rd. Patterson, Ga. 31557.
3. Request to rezone Parcel #035-067, 34 acres at 3401 Floyd Drive, Blackshear, Ga. from Agriculture/Forestry to Industrial for the Industrial Park. Chairman Neal Bennett asked Matt Carter the IDA Director to speak about this change. Matt said that making this change would be good for Pierce County, it will bring in many jobs for the county.
4. Request to rezone Parcel #034A-034, 2.5 acres at 3344 Strickland Avenue, Blackshear, Ga. from Single-Family to Agriculture/Forestry for migrant housing. Chairman Neal Bennett asked the audience if anyone was for this change. Charles Joyner stood at the podium to speak on behalf of Ms. Patel, the owner of

the property. He said Ms. Patel would like to make multiple single living apartments for migrants. Mr. Joyner told the Board of Commissioners that if having migrants living there maybe they should call an immigration lawyer. Ms. Patel said that she is trying to sell the property to someone else who wants to do the same thing to the property. Ms. Patel stated she bought the property on false pretenses with the understanding she could do whatever she wanted.

Commissioner Neal Bennett said if anyone opposed, they could speak. Beth Thomas at 4461 Moneyhole Rd. Blackshear is opposed to migrant workers being at that address. She stated the migrants do not pay taxes and worries about the maintenance of the property.

Victor Gonzalez at 5233 Dixon Road Blackshear was next to speak opposed to the change. He was saying from his personal experience as a retired fire fighter that having a migrant house will attract drugs, gangs, drinking, and driving with no license. He wondered who would be responsible if someone got hurt because of this and the overcrowding that would happen. Mr. Gonzalez told the Board that we need to take care of our citizens before we must take care of migrants.

Felton Batten at 3334 Whitetail Way Blackshear, opposed this change. He said the county doesn't need a migration house. He stated if Ms. Patel wanted to sell, he would help her.

Mr. Myles at 4066 Meadowood Circle, Blackshear is opposed to this change. He stated he is worried about the sewage at the address. He claims the sewage is running out in the yard and with 70-100 migrants living there It would become worse. He also worries about the migrants walking through the ballfields selling drugs as he has seen this happen before. He feels that the migrants will take advantage of the government and receive benefits just to send back to Mexico.

Mary Dowling at 940 Ware St. Apt. 3 lives in a handicapped apartment is opposing this change. She is worried about the residents that live in her complex. Things are being stolen from the residents' apartments and this has led to the residents purchasing weapons to protect themselves.

Sue Steedley at 7261 Clark Rd. opposes this change. Started by saying there are so many apartments that migrants live in that are falling apart. She doesn't feel adding more is a smart decision. She stated that the migrants move here and get food stamps and healthcare and it's not fair to have to pay for them.

Dawn Thompson at 6871 Tanglewood Dr. Blackshear opposed the change by telling the Board of Commissioners we need to take care of our own citizens before we take care of anyone else.

Michael Bennett at 4412 Old Hoboken Rd. Blackshear is opposed to the change by saying he is in support of his community and doesn't think the citizens of Pierce County should be responsible for a migrant house.

5. Public Discussion-Chairman Neal Bennett asked if there was anyone else wanting to talk on the any of the three rezones. No one came to the podium, so Chairman Neal Bennett went onto the next item, adjournment.

6. Adjournment- Chairman Neal Bennett adjourned the meeting at 5:57 p.m.

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Neal Bennett  
Chairman

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Harold Rozier  
Commissioner, District 1

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Graham Raley  
Commissioner, District 2

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Donna Golding  
County Clerk