

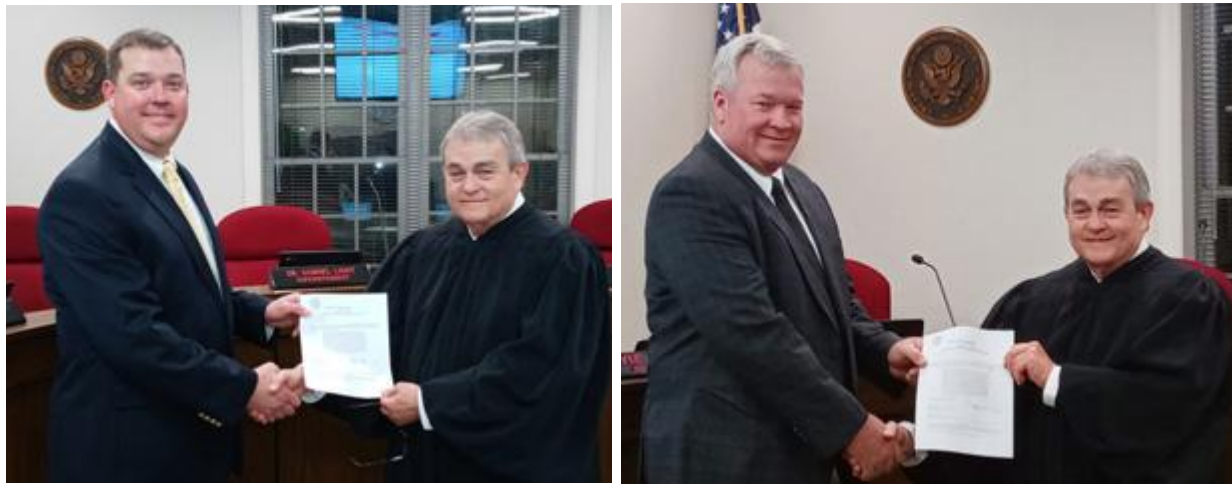
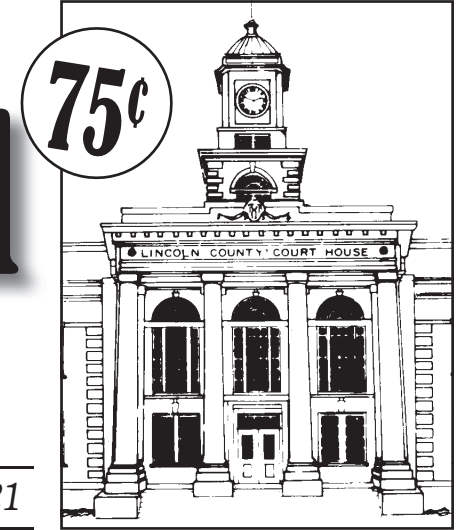
# The Lincoln Journal

"To thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man."

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Kyle Reese (left photo, left), former city councilman, was sworn in as the new representative for District One on the Lincoln County Board of Education, along with District Two representative Jim Mattison (right photo, left) by Judge Lee Moss.

## Light informs board on procedures used in determining school closing

After in-school closures took place earlier this month, virtual learning was extended through January 22, due to the rise in students and teachers in quarantine, which was a key point of discussion held by the Lincoln County Board of Education last week.

"Currently all of our schools are on virtual," Superintendent Dr. Samuel Light said. "I talked to the [Lincoln County Health Department], I talked to [Nurse Manager Hillary Daniel] today, and she is aware of 25 positive cases today with a total of 40 because she got back some [tests] that were called 'probable.'"

Light noted that those recent positive COVID cases were individuals recorded throughout the community and were not specifically students or teachers.

"As we get closer [to the end of closure] we're looking at probably requiring an extension of the current virtual," Light said. "I don't want to do that because I know that face-to-face is a whole lot better for our students to be educated, however we need the safety requirement that is there."

"So, in looking forward, all of the kids currently are supposed to come back the 19th of January, I am currently looking at extending that through that next week," he said, adding, "I am every day talking to Hillary and trying to make sure that we're doing what is right for our children and keeping them as safe as possible."

Further discussion regarding procedures for school closures fol-

lowed by inquiring board members. The superintendent informed them that the district uses spreadsheets to track positive cases, those that have been directly exposed, and secondarily exposed, as each school's principal completes forms identifying such information.

Leadership teams likewise meet regularly to discuss how these cases affect the students, staff, and district as a whole. Factors regarding teacher shortages, the lack resulting in an inability to accommodate proper teacher-to-student ratios, are also taken into consideration for school closures.

According to Light, between the leadership teams meeting, consulting charts and spreadsheets, and adhering to CDC guidelines, a decision to close down schools is then made.

Furthermore, school officials explained that quarantining lasts 7-10 days according to CDC guidelines. If someone tests positive, they should quarantine for 10 days, however after five days if someone tests negative, they may then shorten quarantine to seven days.

Light also emphasized that safety protocols are ever-changing and that the district does its best to stay on top of shifting information and guidelines as it is issued by the CDC and other official entities.

In other business, the board returned attention to its appointment to the Lincoln County Board of Elections, which was a point of both contention and confusion at last month's meeting.

Superintendent Light informed

members that he spoke with Ben Jackson, attorney for the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners and Board of Elections, for clarity on the issue regarding Helen Cavitt's term limit of service to the Board of Elections.

"The term does end December 31, 2020, that is in question," Light said. He referred to a piece of local legislature sent to him by Jackson that indicated Board of Elections terms first began in 1997.

"I contacted Mrs. Cavitt about the board's intention of identifying another person to go to the next term and I am recommending that we approve Jandi Matthews as the representative to the Lincoln County Board of Elections," Light said.

In a unanimous vote, Matthews was approved as the representative, however the appointment comes in conflict with certain protocols regarding appointment procedures outlined within county legislation, as highlighted by the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners at its meeting last Thursday.

County commissioners signed a "Resolution to Amend the Law Creating the Lincoln County, Georgia, Board of Elections," which also regards appointments made by local governing entities, including the county, city, and school board (separate story on page 1).

Additionally, the Board of Education accepted a bid of \$43,200 from M&M Lawn Maintenance for the mowing, trimming, mulching, and pruning of school properties. The sum will be paid each year for the duration of a two-year contract.

An insurance proposal of \$94,993 was also accepted from Franklin Insurance. The insurance includes community property, community general liability, government and crime coverage, coverage of automobiles and buses, and cyber risk, a new addition to the district.

The vote was unanimous with member Jim Mattison abstaining, noting that his mother works with Franklin Insurance.

Furthermore, the board reviewed a budget calendar for the fiscal year 2022.

It also approved meeting dates for 2021.

Member D'Metric Barksdale was voted to continue in the position of vice chairman for the board.

In other discussion, the superintendent noted the Georgia Department of Education sent information regarding "legislative priorities" for 2021, which include funding, expanding opportunities for students, and other pertinent subjects.

As a part of her financial report, Director Kaye Bufford noted that 50 percent of the fiscal year is now complete with 49.93 percent of local ad valorem taxes collected, and revenues totaling \$2.61 percent.

"We received federal Impact Aid money in December, and we will be discussing how to amend our budget to account for that money," Bufford said.

According to the director, expenditures are at 47.33 percent, and

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## County signs resolution to amend legislation for Board of Elections

The Lincoln County Board of Commissioners were busy Thursday night, January 14, with a packed agenda including a resolution to amend legislation established by Local and Special Acts and Resolutions of the General Assembly of the State of Georgia, in 1996.

Commission Chairman Walker Norman turned the explanation of the resolution over to County Attorney Ben Jackson, stating that the issue had been discussed at the county work session last week.

"Basically, what this resolution does is – the County Commission would be requesting the legislative representatives in the House and Senate in Atlanta to change the Board of Elections. I know there has been some confusion about appointments," Jackson said. "And in essence, what this will do is continue to allow the same entities to make the appointments. That would be the Republican Party, Democratic Party, Board of Commissioners, City Council of Lincolnton, and Board of Education. What would happen is, it would be specified when those appointments would be made."

The section in the resolution dealing with term limits, which will stagger terms, states that on or before the date of January 1, 2023, the Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education shall appoint their members to serve four-year terms to run from January 1, 2023-December 31, 2026, and coincide with the term of service of the Governor of the State of Georgia.

On or before the date of January 1, 2025, the City Council, the Democratic Party and Republican Party shall appoint their members to serve four-year terms to run from January 1, 2025-December 31, 2028, and coincide with the term of service of the President of the United States.

The appointment of each member of the board shall be transmitted to the Clerk of Superior Court of Lincoln County who shall certify the name of each such appointed member to the Secretary of State and provide for the issuance of an appropriate commission to each member of the board within the same time and in the same manner as provided by law for registrars.

All terms of current members appointed to the Board of Elections under the Act approved on the 4th day of April 1996, shall cease within thirty days of the date the Governor signs this legislation. However, prior members shall be eligible to be re-appointed as members of the successor board created by this Act. Any appoint-

### Residents requested to mask up before entering courthouse

In an attempt to slow down the spread of the COVID-19 virus, Chairman of the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners Walker Norman has limited access to the courthouse, tax assessor's office, and closed the gymnasium at the recreation complex.

"The only open door at the courthouse will be the front door which faces Humphrey Street. Anyone entering will have a temperature check and will be asked to wear a mask," Norman said.

"There are no plexiglass partitions installed at the courthouse or tax assessor's office, so we ask that residents wear a mask when entering. Any county business that can be conducted via email or telephone call is preferred," he said.

For more information call 706-359-4444.



Herbert Powell (left) was presented with an commemorative sign by Chairman Walker Norman and the Board of Commissioners designating the naming of the road leading to the agricultural building in the recreation complex as "Herbert Powell Court."

ment shall only be until the period shown in above.

"After the Governor signs, or if he does signs at this point, a new board of elections would be created, with new appointments, which would begin and last until the four-years stated. There would be direct appointments from the county, city, the Democratic Party, the Republican Party and the Board of Education. There would be no going through any intermediate processes in this," Jackson said.

"This just staggers the terms so we don't have appointments at the same time and clarifies it so that the same people can be appointed without going through the Grand Jury," Norman said. "I've spoken with Senator Lee Anderson and told him we would like to get this into the hopper as soon as possible."

In a surprise move, commissioners passed a resolution naming the

road leading to the new agricultural building at the Curry Colvin Recreation Complex in honor of former coordinator of the Lincoln County office of the UGA Cooperative Extension Service Herbert Powell.

Powell, who was in attendance along with his wife, children, grandchildren, and other family members was overwhelmed by the honor.

With the passing of the resolution the road will be designated as "Herbert Powell Court."

Powell served as the Extension Service coordinator from 1985 until his retirement in 2001. Prior to coming to Lincoln County, he served as the county agent in Wilkes County going back to 1964. Powell's influence is still being felt through the children of the children of the children he helped

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## Potential jurors should report to gym at rec. complex Jan. 25

Potential jurors for the Lincoln County Grand Jury in the January 2021 term of Superior Court should report for selection when the court convenes on Monday, January 25, according to Lincoln County Superior Court Clerk Amanda.

A statewide Judicial Emergency Order was first issued by Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court Harold D. Melton on March 14, 2020. The order has been extended nine times, with the last being dated December 9, 2020, which now authorizes the resumption of Grand Jury proceedings.

Superior Court Chief Judge Harold A. Hinesley, who is set to preside over the proceedings, wants jurors to know that, "We are taking precautions to insure everyone's safety while serving on the Grand Jury. Therefore, the selection of the Grand Jury will be January 25, 2021, and will take place at the Walker T. Norman Gymnasium located at the Curry Colvin Recreation Complex located at 1962 Rowland-York Road," rather than at the Lincoln County courthouse.

After selection ends, the Grand Jury proceedings will move to the Lincoln County courtroom in the courthouse located at 210 Humphrey Street. All jury summons have indicated the time to report at the Walker T. Norman Gymnasium. Jurors are asked to wear masks, to maintain social distancing upon entering the gymnasium, and to follow the bailiffs' instructions at all times."

Stephanie Chavous McNair, Deborah Kennedy Mickens, Tom FS Mickens, Blake Austin Murray, Willie Walter Murray, David Lee Newberry, Bianca Norman, John Peyton Norman, Mallory H. Norman, Carsonia Lenette Parks, Gergory Daniel Parks, Jessie Kendale Parks, Patricia Hiers Partridge, Timothy W. Partridge, Rebecca Beggs Phillips, Ricky Alan Raley III, Hawes L. Reed, David L. Riley, Wanda Elizabeth Kight Rushing, Hope Raya Ruyack, Mary Alice Sherman, Angela Hundley Sizemore,

Randy Andre Stespritt, Linda Lu Taylor, Michael Gale Todd, Charles Anthony Turner, Robert Alan Turner, Willie Rufus Walton, Margaret Ann Weaver, Lillian Wynn Willis, Shaniece Porter Willis, Nadine Anthony Wright, Tamara Taynea Wright, and James Craig Zimmerman.

## Health department begins COVID vaccinations today

Starting today, Thursday, January 21, COVID-19 vaccinations will be administered locally by the Lincoln County Health Department and vaccinations here will continue as long as time and vaccine doses are available. However, it is not available to everyone at this time and time is not available for everyday dispensing, according to Lincoln County Health Department Nurse Manager Hilary Daniel.

The State of Georgia is currently in Phase 1A+ of the vaccine rollout. That means that healthcare workers, long-term care facility workers and residents, law enforcement personnel, and adults over 65, regardless of health conditions, and their caregivers are eligible for the vaccine. Others will be included as future phases are rolled out but the time of that is unsure at present.

Those who qualify may call the health department at 706-359-3154 to schedule an appointment. "If you do not have an appointment, you will not be vaccinated," Daniel said.

"We are working with a very limited number of time slots, so appointments may be booked one-two weeks out," she said. "We are doing the best we can, and if no one answers the phone, please

leave a message and we will return your call within five business days to get you scheduled."

Daniel also stated that at this time the health department is not offering a wait list for those who do not qualify for the first round of vaccines.

The LCHD will be operating its vaccination clinic in a drive-through model, where scheduled appointments will arrive and park in the back parking lot of the health department. After arriving, registration and vaccination will take place inside the driver's vehicle. The entire process from start to finish will take approximately 30 minutes.

Daniel explained that "it is very important that you arrive on time, do not come early. You will be asked to leave the parking lot until your appointment time, as we are operating with limited space. If you arrive five minutes late, you will be rescheduled."

If you cannot make your appointment it is imperative that you call and cancel your appointment. "We do not want to waste a vaccine if you are unable to make it. Once an appointment is made, a dose is reserved for that person and the dose could go to waste if the appointment is not cancelled," Daniel stressed.