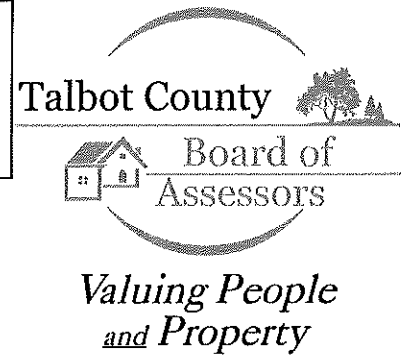


11 N. Jefferson Ave.
PO BOX 337
Talbotton, GA 31827

Daniel B. Coffee, Chairman
Sandra N. Higginbotham, Member
Bryan Watson, Member
Lauren A. Harbin, Secretary



**Called Meeting Minutes for Settlement Conference
1/29/2025 1:00pm**

- Meeting called to order at 1:05 PM by Chairman Coffee
 - In attendance were Daniel B. Coffee- Chairman, Sandra Higginbotham – Vice-Chair, Bryan Watson-Member, Lauren A. Harbin-Secretary, Nick Garcia – Attorney for Board of Assessors, Graham Ghorley-GMass, and Mitchell Graham – Attorney for Timberlands II, LLC
- Agenda approved with a motion by Bryan Watson and second by Sandra Higginbotham. Motion Passed 2-0-0.

Settlement Agreements Discussion

- The Settlement Conference in the appeal to Superior Court filed by taxpayer Timberlands II, LLC was convened via zoom on January 17, 2025, and all parties agreed to continue the settlement conference until today, January 29, 2025, to be held in person at the Talbot County Board of Assessors Office.
- Mitchell Graham represents Timberlands II LLC and agrees to waive the appeals on the following parcels:
 - Parcel number 005-009-06
 - Parcel number 005-009-07
 - Parcel number 005-009-21
 - Parcel number 005-017-17
 - Parcel number 007-215-02
 - Parcel number 007-217-08
- Nick Garcia makes the suggestion to execute a settlement agreement instead of a waiver.
- Discussion on fair market value:
 - 299C applies to fair market value of properties, not Forest Land Protection Act values.

- Settlement Agreements with 299c applying and no change in value were executed by Mitchell Graham for Timberlands II, LLC on the following parcels:
 - Parcel number 005-009-06
 - Parcel number 005-009-07
 - Parcel number 005-009-21
 - Parcel number 005-017-17
 - Parcel number 007-215-02
 - Parcel number 007-217-08

Approval Process

- Lauren Harbin, Chief Appraiser, made the recommendation to the Board to sign the settlement agreements with 299c applying and no change in value on the above listed parcels.
- Motion made by Bryan Watson to approve settlement agreements for six parcels, Motion seconded by Vice-Chair Higginbotham. Motion passed 2-0-0.
- Settlement agreements executed by Chairman Coffee.

Parcel 005-009-19 and 005-147-17

- Lauren Harbin, Chief Appraiser, indicated that upon further review of each of these parcels she found they have parcel owned by Timberlands II that joined and was able to apply an acreage override, which in turn reduced the value.
- Proposed revised fair market value for parcel 00500919: \$54,843 (previous \$65,197)
- Proposed revised fair market value for parcel 00514717: \$73,987 (previous \$116,643)
- The taxpayer found the proposed values agreeable.

Settlement Agreements

- Settlement Agreements with 299c applying and the above changes in value were executed by Mitchell Graham for Timberlands II, LLC on parcels 005-009-19 and 005-147-17
- Lauren Harbin, Chief Appraiser, made the recommendation to the Board to sign the settlement agreements with 299c applying and value changes on the above listed parcels.

- Motion made by Bryan Watson to approve settlement agreements for 005-009-19 and 005-147-17 Motion seconded by Vice-Chair Higginbotham. Motion passed 2-0-0.
- Settlement agreements executed by Chairman Coffee.
- Chairman Coffee notes eight of the 18 appeals are now resolved, leaving 10 remaining. The remaining parcels will be reviewed one by one.

Parcel 005-007-08, 005-015-08 and 005-017-18 Discussion

- Issue raised by Taxpayer regarding the change in FLPA acreage from 2023 to 2024.

Acreage and Value Adjustments

- Chief Appraiser Harbin states that the current maps support the acreage change; any time a parcel is renewed in a covenant the land subs are reevaluated for any changes using the soil maps. However, the taxpayer benefits from oversight where the subrecords were only updated in the FLPA tables and not updated in the FMV tables.
- Mitchell Graham attorney for Timberlands II accepts the BOA value with no change to the Assessment or the disputed acreage on the FLPA land subs.
- Nick Garcia attorney for the BOA notes 299C applies to fair market value, not to the FLPA value.

Property Details 005-017-18

- Property has a hunting camp.
- Noted that in 2023, the accessory improvements were assigned a \$1 value for an accessory building.
- Noted that in 2024, the accessory improvements were assigned a \$1501 value.
- Chief Appraiser Harbin explains:
 - Four quality levels for site improvements:
 - Poor: \$1,500
 - Fair: \$2,500
 - Average: \$5,000
 - Good: \$7,500

- Excellent: \$10,000
- Mrs. Harbin indicated that a field visit was done for this property in 2024 and that the lowest level of site improvement was made. In response to a question from Mr. Graham, Mrs. Harbin states that site improvements are given to all parcels that have electricity, water or other types of habitation according to the level of improvement and that the poor classification here is the lowest level.

Settlement Agreement for 005-015-08, 005-007-08, 005-017-18

- Taxpayer has agreed to the fair market value for tax year 2024 with no changes to value or acreage assignments. The settlement agreements with 299c applying were executed by Mitchell Graham for Timberlands II, LLC.
- Mrs. Harbin recommended to the board to accept and approve the settlement agreement with 299C.
 - 299C applies as the fair market value.
 - 299C does not apply to the FLPA value.
- Motion made by Bryan Watson to approve settlement agreements for the above listed parcels. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Higginbotham. Motion passed 2-0-0.
- Settlement agreements executed by Chairman Coffee.
- Chairman Coffee notes that 11 appeals are now resolved, leaving 7 remaining.

007-049-07

- Mrs. Harbin recommends an acreage override be applied due to it joining another tract.
 - Parcel size is 32.71 acres.
 - Acreage override applied to it for 140.67 acres.
- Discussion regarding acreage adjustment factor of 1.15.
 - Adjustment reflected on the 2023 card.
 - Consistent across all parcels in Talbot County.
- Mitchell Graham proposed a change of adjustment from 1.15 to 1.10.
 - Would reduce value by 5% from \$46,251 to 44,240.

- Mrs. Harbin indicated that due to the override acreage adjustment she is able to consistently apply the reduced factor for parcels between 40-149.99 acres.

Tax Implications

- Changes will reduce taxes slightly.
- Smaller parcels are generally more desirable to landowners.
 - Size factor increases for larger tracts.
 - Sales ratios must have applied to the larger track.
- Small acreage breakpoint discussed.
 - Breakpoint is set at 40 acres.
 - Rural county considerations noted.

Recommendation and Value Changes

- Recommendation for 007-049-07 value of 44,240.
 - Change based on updating acreage factor.

007-223-17

- Next parcel discussed 007-223-17 24.60 ac has an acreage override of 131.80.
 - Mrs. Harbin indicated that due to the override acreage adjustment she is able to consistently apply the reduced factor for parcels between 40-149.99 acres.

Recommendation and Value Change

- Recommendation for 007-223-17 value of 29,512.

Settlement Agreements for 007-049-07 and 007-223-17

- Taxpayer has agreed to the fair market value for tax year 2024 with changes discussed above. The settlement agreements with 299c applying were executed by Mitchell Graham for Timberlands II, LLC.
- Mrs. Harbin recommended to the board to accept and approve the settlement agreement with 299C.
- Motion made by Bryan Watson to approve settlement agreements for the above listed parcels. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Higginbotham. Motion passed 2-0-0.
- Settlement agreements executed by Chairman Coffee.

Parcel 007-223-06 Discussion

- Property already has a factor of 1.10; and it already has an acreage override. No further change is recommended by Mrs. Harbin.
- Current total value for 2024 is \$124,684
- Mitchell Graham requests a 5% reduction to \$118,450
- Chairman Coffee states the need for factual basis to support adjustments.
- Mitchell Graham states property classified as a timber property.
 - No recreational or residential use; lower values expected.
 - Mr. Watson questions Mr. Grahams assertion of no recreational use on property as he knows of a hunting lease existing on this property.
 - Mr. Graham concedes there are hunting leases that exist on the property.
- Lauren Harbin gives historical context of property value.
 - Previous court ruling in 2012 set value at \$1,792 per acre.
 - Current valuation is less than the 2012 value, even with inflation considered.

Parcel 007-227-33 Discussion

- Parcel 007-227-33 is a 37.66 ac tract that has a 175-acre override.
 - This makes the parcel fall into the 150-499.99 ac category for the 1.15 adjustment.
- Current total value for 2024 is \$56,128.

- 2023 Previous value was \$51,088.
- Slight increase due to countywide re-evaluation.
- Mitchell Graham requested a 5% value reduction to \$53,322.

Parcel 007-049-12 Discussion

- Parcel 007-049-12 is a 71.27 ac tract.
- The current total value for 2024 is \$88,572.
 - 2023 Previous value was \$80,630.
 - Mitchell Graham requested a 5% value reduction to \$84,143.
- Mrs. Harbin indicated parcel is being given an Accessibility desirability factor of 6C.
 - Indicates that the parcel is landlocked.
 - Already discounted for being landlocked.
- Factor assignment is based on accessibility to public roads.
 - A property with a 5C would have a factor of 1.00096.
 - This parcel has approximately 20% reduction for being landlocked.

Parcel 007-174-04 Discussion

- Size: 134.18 acres.
- 2024 Value: \$153,855.
- 2023 Value 140,023
- Mitchell Graham requested a 5% value reduction to \$145,162
- The landlocked status of the parcel is discussed assigned code: 4C due to road frontage classification. This property joins property on state Hwy 41 between Manchester and Talbotton.
- Comparison of property values using the web map.
 - Property beside it sold in 2023 for approximately \$2,000 an acre.
 - Current property is valued at approximately \$1,146 an acre.

Parcel 007-225-20 Discussion

- Size: 26.46 acres.
- 2024 Value: \$44,755.
- 2023 Value 43,448
- Mitchell Graham questions the small parcel vs. woodlands designation on the land sub schedule.
- Mrs. Harbin indicates that she can change those classifications to woodlands to see how it would affect value.
 - Upon checking Mrs. Harbin indicated changing from small parcels to Woodlands increases the value to \$59,417.
- Mr. Graham indicates that he would accept the 2024 assessed value of \$44,755 is a settlement can be reached on the previously undecided properties.

Timberland Property Sales

- Mr. Watson inquires about properties that Timberlands II has for sale in Talbot County.
- Mr. Gorley from GMass shows the current properties that Timberlands II has for sale in Talbot County using the web map he prepared.
- The conclusion is that Timberlands II is currently asking approximately \$3,000-4,000 an acre for property for sale in Talbot County with the timber extracted.
- Mr. Watson inquires about parcels sold last year.
 - 48 acres sold for \$194,520, which is approximately \$3,395 per acre.
 - The parcel had a fair market value of \$1,675 per acre.

Status

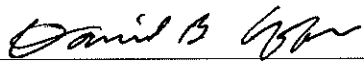
- Five parcels are not resolved after the continued settlement conference.
 - One parcel has an accepted value by the Taxpayer, contingent upon the BOA agreeing to 5% value reduction on the remaining 4 parcels.
 - Thirteen settlement agreements have been signed by the Board and the Taxpayer Representative, out of eighteen appeals.
 - The board indicated the desire to go into Executive Session, to discuss the remaining parcels. Mr. Graham exited to the lobby.

- 2:47pm Mr. Watson motions to enter executive session. Vice-Chair Higginbotham seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
 - The remaining five parcel valuations were discussed individually. No decision was made.
- 3:15pm Mr. Watson made a motion to exit executive session. Vice-Chair Higginbotham seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- 3:16pm Mr. Watson made a motion to enter back into regular session. Vice-Chair Higginbotham seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- Mr. Graham was invited back into Board room.
- Chairman Coffee emphasizes the need for justification for value adjustments.
 - Need to ensure records are factually accurate.
 - Previous concessions on other parcels using factual adjustments were acknowledged.
 - Emphasis on not providing arbitrary reductions for timber companies versus private owners.
- It is noted the Board of assessors has adjusted assessed values down by \$56,000.
 - Taxpayer has received \$18,000 more accumulatively than the original settlement proposal from the Taxpayer.
- Emphasis on avoiding attorney fees and the need for appraisers to prove values.
 - The Board of Assessors made adjustments where appropriate to maintain uniformity.
- Mr. Garcia states the next steps could be consideration of continuing the settlement conference for further negotiation or to conclude the settlement conference to start a 20-day period for taxpayer's payment of statutory fees for appeal to Superior Court.
- Mr. Garcia and Mrs. Harbin draft a Letter of Notice- No settlement reached at Superior Court Settlement Conference for parcels 007-049-12, 007-174-04, 007-223-06, 007-227-33, 007-225-20.
- Mr. Graham reviewed the letter of notice and acknowledged receipt of the said document as taxpayer representative.
- Copies of settlement agreements executed on the thirteen settled properties were given to Mr. Graham.
- A copy of the Notice – No Settlement reached at Superior Court Settlement Conference for parcels 007-049-12, 007-174-04, 007-223-06, 007-227-33, 007-225-20, we provided to Mr. Graham as taxpayer representative.
- Mr. Graham indicated that he would consult with his client concerning the five remaining appeals.

- Timberlands II has 20 days to submit the statutory required fees to file the appeal with Superior Court.

Chairman Coffee notes that the next scheduled monthly meeting is February 11, 2025, at 2:00pm. At 3:45 pm Mr. Watson motions to adjourn the meeting. Vice-Chair Higginbotham seconds the motion. The motion carries 2-0-0.

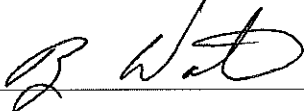
Submitted by Lauren A. Harbin, Secretary



Daniel B. Coffee, Chairman



Sandra N. Higginbotham, Vice-Chair



Bryan Watson, Member