

Rep. Gurtler goes over post-election politics in meeting

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Georgia House District 8 State Rep. Matt Gurtler joined the Mountain Movers and Shakers on a rainy Friday, Nov. 8, morning at the Sundance Grill in Hiwassee.

Gurtler spoke about state politics in the meeting, though little was mentioned regarding the Georgia gubernatorial race since the outcome had yet to be determined.

“We’ll have a runoff between (Brad) Raffensperger and John Barrow, and that will be Dec. 4,” said Gurtler of the Secretary of State race. “We lost one seat in the Senate. On the House side, we lost about 11 seats.

“We’re going down to a little over a hundred Representatives that are Republicans now in the House of Representatives in Georgia, so they’ll be a little more emboldened, but we still have a majority in the House in Georgia.”

There are 180 seats in the Georgia House of Representatives, and Gurtler said that each Representative has approximately 60,000 constituents, while the Georgia Senate has 56 members, each with about 180,000 constituents.

Gurtler also briefly discussed the Special Session called by Gov. Nathan Deal that began on Tuesday, Nov. 13. These sessions are rare, only occurring once about every 10 years, according to Gurtler.

“This is so that we would be able to allocate funds and amend the 2019 Budget for hurricane relief to the counties affected by Hurricane Michael,” said Gurtler. “That’s what we are told, actually, by the governor and the speaker.”

However, Gurtler has learned through Atlanta news media that the Special Session will be used for other purposes as well pertaining to matters related to Gov. Deal’s office.

“We’re being told one thing and then the media is telling us differently,” said Gurtler. “Rest assured that I will be keeping an eye out for



Rep. Matt Gurtler speaking with the Mountain Movers and Shakers in Hiwassee on Friday, Nov. 9. Photo by Mark Smith

what’s really going on down there, and I’ll keep you guys informed on that.

“And especially this time, the budgets that I’ve opposed adamantly for the last couple of years always seem to have those bad sorts of subsidies or incentive types of packages in there, so I’ll keep an eye out for you guys.

“Another thing is caucus elections. We’re going to be having caucus elections again. Every two years, we elect a new speaker, a new majority whip, new vice-chairman, etc., in the House.

“On Tuesday, when I go back down, we’ve got to elect those House members in the body and then, come January, when we start our official session, we’ll be electing the Speaker of the House for another two-year term.”

Gurtler said current Speaker David Ralston would likely run again, and that he was not aware of anyone running against Ralston at this time.

Georgia Majority Whip Christian Coomer was appointed to a judgeship, according to Gurtler, and Georgia Majority Caucus Vice-Chairman Sam Teasley was one of the 11 Republican House members to be defeated in the midterms. So, at least two new caucus members are set to be elected.

“I think all of the DeKalb

delegation and the Gwinnett delegation lost their seats, so we don’t have any more Republicans down there,” said Gurtler. “There seems to be a lot of big government status on the federal level and the state level, and I’ve seen this personally (in) two years at the state capitol.

“There were Democrats and Republicans coming together to increase the size of government routinely. Limited government, fiscal responsibility and free markets are what Republicans are supposed to be all about in politics, and it’s my responsibility to call it out when Republicans act otherwise.

“I can tell you right now that business is booming. The economy is up. If you looked at those numbers from the third quarter, there were 250,000 new jobs. GDP is up over 3 percent, wages are up, unemployment is at a historic low. So, it’s awesome right now.”

Gurtler said he will be introducing his flagship bills – his Constitutional Carry Bill and the Departmental Budget Bill – in the next Legislative Session, and that he’s heartened by the level of involvement among his constituents in Georgia.

“We had some 37,000 people vote in the 8th District in this election, and that’s about 62 percent of registered voters,” said Gurtler. “That’s pretty amazing.”

said Taylor. “They just scribble something off and sometimes forget to even sign it. Each request should at least spell out who, what, when, where and why. We need to know what it’s for.”

Proper adherence to fundraiser request guidelines helps the board figure out which fundraisers are worth approving and which are not, according to Taylor, and the school system plans on being more strident in enforcing request guidelines moving forward.

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scenario happen next during phase two of renovations.

Of course, the schools hope to receive the modernization grant funds for phase two sooner than October 2019.

“I talked about how phase two would go,” said Underwood, recounting a recent conversation with the state. “I asked if we had to wait again until October and if we need to do the same managing of the money.”

Added Underwood, “We should not have to wait like we did this past year. It runs on a first come, first serve basis when you submit your payments in. I promise you, ours will go in as soon as they come in. I’m hoping that next summer it won’t be quite as nerve-wracking.”

Also in the meeting, Board Member Jerry Taylor discussed the importance of enforcing regulations on fundraiser requests.

“Some of the requests do not have enough in them.”

Hiwassee...from Page 1A

were millions!” to everyone’s amusement.

Ordiales said she had to make a trip to the local Ingles to replenish candy supplies when they ran out, and Councilwoman Nancy Noblet added that she gave out close to 700 juice pouches.

Noblet observed that the Halloween event was a success, even with Blairsville, Murphy, North Carolina, and Hayesville, North Carolina, all having their Halloween celebrations on that same night at about the same time.

City Councilwoman Amy Barrett said several parents told her that they were very happy that they could relax a little and not have to keep checking that their kids weren’t darting out into a busy street.

In other news, Ordiales said the new auditors were there that week and that they seemed to be doing a great job.

“Just so you know, Bonnie (Kendrick) and I have uploaded 236 pieces of paper,” said Ordiales. “It’s brutal, man, brutal. And there’s still three more days of them being here.

“But the good part is that we have found a lot of things that we could do much better, more efficiently, and just things that we’ve been doing wrong.”

The council approved the annual renewal of the AirMedCare contract in the amount of \$4,900. Ordiales said she feels that it’s well worth it for the residents of Hiwassee because it protects them in case an Air Methods helicopter isn’t available in an emergency.

Towns County has a contract with Air Methods for emergency air ambulance service, which covers Hiwassee.

The council approved the second reading of the Ordinance for Municode Digital Listing. With this in place, residents and anyone else can access all City of Hiwassee Ordinances online, and it will save people from having to submit Freedom of Information Act requests.

The 2019 Holiday Schedule for the employees of the City of Hiwassee was also approved. There will be no January 2019 regular meeting because it falls on New Year’s Day.



Hiwassee City Councilmembers Nancy Noblet and Amy Barrett in their Nov. 6 regular city meeting. Photo by Mark Smith

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from the same residence had been transported by a private vehicle.

The female subject was identified as Ginger Rewis, the wife of the male gunshot victim found at the residence off of U.S. 76.

Also at the hospital, officers took a male subject into custody who was determined to be the alleged shooter.

The alleged shooter was identified as Jacob Bowman, 31, of Hiwassee, and he was charged at the time with two

felony counts aggravated assault in reference to the shooting incident.

Both gunshot victims were admitted to medical facilities, and they were listed in stable condition at that time.

Agents with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, along with a detective from the Towns County Sheriff’s Office, investigated the reported shooting.

Upon further investigation, an additional warrant of attempted murder

was taken out against Bowman.

Ginger Rewis, 35, of Hiwassee, was also charged with attempted murder following further investigation.

The warrants have been served on both suspects, and they are being held in the Towns County Detention Center without bond.

The incident is believed to be domestic in nature.

The case will be referred to the Enotah Judicial Circuit District Attorneys’ Office for prosecution.

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ago, on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918, World War I finally ended. Keep in mind, though, that the first official Veterans Day was observed on Nov. 11, 1921, three years later at the National Cemetery in Arlington.”

Creel went on to talk about the women who have participated in every war since the beginning of the United States.

“We were considered sissies, the fairer sex and delicate flowers,” said Creel. “Women have served in all of America’s major conflicts. Every day, our service women and our military take giant leaps forward, paving the path for our next generation of heroes.”

Attendees of the ceremony took time to applaud the veterans and thank them for their service in the military.



The laying of the memorial wreaths is always a solemn occasion at the Veterans Day Service. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

Also honored in the ceremony were Towns County veterans who have passed away, with the official unveiling of a new slate of names etched upon the Veterans Memorial Wall. The wreaths laid during the ceremony stayed up through Sunday to show support throughout Veterans Day.