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## Road naming sparks debate

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by By Joel Martin Senior writer

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The Troup County Commission named five roads Wednesday, but not without controversy.

The commission voted to name part of old U.S. 27 north of LaGrange after Robert Hayes Sr., a prominent landowner and farmer in the Hillcrest community who died in 1944.

The road stretches from south of Ware's Cross Road to north of Hillcrest Road and was abandoned as a state route when the state Department of Transportation widened U.S. 27, also called New Franklin Road, several years ago.

About a dozen of Hayes' descendants appeared at Wednesday's meeting. They had first asked that the road be named in Hayes' honor in 2007.

Nearly all the 45 residents on the road signed a petition asking that the name be "Hillcrest School Road." Hillcrest United Methodist Church made the same request.

But Hayes' great-granddaughter, Yvonne Atchison, said, "Check the facts. Mr. Hayes and his wife lived on U.S. 27 before the Hillcrest schools were built."

Commissioner Buck Davis said he had gotten a lot of calls on the issue and suggested the name "Hayes-Hillcrest Road." That idea didn't get anywhere, and Commissioner Richard English made the motion to name it after Hayes alone.

Commissioner Morris Jones said the Hayes name would avoid confusion on 911 emergency calls because there's already a Hillcrest Road.

Other new road names are: Fernwood Drive, which also is a part of old U.S. 27 north of LaGrange; Jones Brothers Drive, which is off Hannah Road in the Hillcrest community; Pleasant Grove Church Road, which is an old part of U.S. 27 south of LaGrange; and Smokemont Drive, to replace one of the two Mandy Brooke drives in Smokemont subdivision.

Joel Martin can be reached at [jmartin@lagrangenews.com](mailto:jmartin@lagrangenews.com) or (706) 884-7311, Ext. 235.

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