

Minutes
Historic Courthouse, Board Chambers, 3rd Floor
225 North Board Street
July 11, 2023

The Thomas County Board of Commissioners met on the above date in a regular scheduled meeting at 9:00 a.m. at the Historic Courthouse, Commission Chambers, with the following board members present:

Zippy Vonier, Chairman, Dist. 8

Rev. Jeremy G. Rich, Dist. 1 (absent)

Kenneth E. Hickey, District 3

Wiley Grady, District 6

Donnie Baggett, Vice-Chair, Dist. 5

Moses Gross, District 2

Mark NeSmith, District 4

Phillip V. Brown, District 7

Staff present was County Manager Michael J. Stephenson, County Attorney Bruce Warren, Planning Director Ken Gay, Zoning Administrator Donna Holbert, Public Works Director Tony Bodiford, Sheriff Carlton Powell, and County Clerk Celeste Tyler.

News/Media present: Chris Hurst, WPAX Radio and Jill Holloway Thomasville Times Enterprise

Others present: Bro. Bill Knight, Pastor at El Bethel Baptist Church

Atty. George Lilly, Alexander & Vann

Chairman Vonier called the meeting to order, and Bro. Bill Knight gave the invocation.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 27, 2023 Board Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner NeSmith. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Grady who made a motion to approve the July 11, 2023 agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hickey. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Under New Business, Chairman Vonier recognized Atty. George Lilly who presented a MOU for consideration between Thomas County and John D. Archbold Memorial Hospital. The document explicitly reflects a commitment of the hospital to provide care to the indigent, uninsured, and underinsured. The hospital must contract with local government in order to continue its participation in the 340B Program, a drug discount program. The contract is up for renewal every five years. Commissioner NeSmith confirmed that there is no cost to the County.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Grady who made a motion to approve the MOU agreement between John D. Archbold Memorial Hospital and Thomas County. The motion was seconded by Commissioner NeSmith. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Open Meeting to the Citizens: Chairman Vonier recognized Candee Henderson of 1453 Egg & Butter Road South, Thomasville, Georgia who spoke on her mission of 100% renewable energy for Thomas County by 2035. She also referenced her latest trip to Amsterdam and while at the North Sea saw a parking lot of

40+ electric cars at a charging station where the energy was generated by solar panels. She encouraged the Board to move forward with a county conversion to an electric fleet.

Reports: Chairman Vonier recognized County Manager Mike Stephenson who in turn recognized Donna Holbert, Zoning Administrator. She Introduced rezoning application #23-7-1, filed by Joe Harvard, Sr., who is the agent for the property owners, Rosemary Coleman and Polly Hopkins. This property is located on Hall Road (Corner of Hall Road and the Bypass) and is located on Thomas County Map 045, Parcel 146 consisting of 20 acres, more or less. The request is to rezone this parcel from Ag (Agricultural) and R-2 (Single Family Residential) to R-4 (Single Family Residential) to allow for the development of a residential subdivision for approximately 50 lots. The request will be heard at the Public Hearing on July 25, 2023. The Planning Staff recommends approval of this application.

County Manager Mike Stephenson distributed a chart depicting ACCG – IRMA Premiums Paid and EPL (Employment Practices Liability) Claims Paid for the time period of 1999-2022. The most recent exorbitant increase in premiums has sparked a deeper dive into the overall program. He also stated that he is in the process of gathering a 20-year total of All Claims Paid. Commissioner NeSmith commented that once the information is all gathered, he would like to discuss it in length at a Finance Committee meeting.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Grady made a motion to ratify the purchase of diesel fuel from Petroleum Products for \$2.4809/gal on June 29, 2023. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Commissioner Grady made a motion to award the six-month bid for Woven Geotextiles to Willacoochee Industrial Fabrics. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Commissioner Grady made a motion to award the six-month bid for Aggregate Rock to Martin Marietta. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hickey. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Commissioner Grady made a motion to award the six-month bid for Hydroseeding Materials to Pennington Seed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Commissioner Grady made a motion to award the Forestry Consultant Services to sole bidder, South Georgia Forest Management, LLC. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

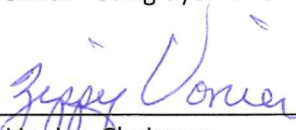
Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to approve the purchase of security cameras at all eight trash sites. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hickey. The motion was approved 6-0-1 with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye. Commissioner Grady abstained due to a conflict of interest.

Commissioner Baggett made a motion to declare the warden's house as surplus and to authorize the sale of the home after September 1, 2023. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Grady. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Hickey who announced that the Public Works Committee meeting will be held on July 19, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. in the Historic Courthouse.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Gross who announced that the Emergency Services Committee meeting will be held on July 17, 2023 at the new Southside Station.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye. The meeting adjourned at 9:22 a.m.



Zippy Vonier, Chairman

ATTEST: 

Celeste C. Tyler, County Clerk