

**Board of Commissioners
Official Minutes
Public Hearing/Budget Work Session
Emergency Services Center
November 12, 2012**

The Thomas County Board of Commissioners met on the above date for a Public Hearing and Work Session at 9:00 a.m. at the Thomas County Emergency Services Center, 1202 Remington Avenue, Thomasville GA, with the following board members present:

J. Elaine Mays, Chairman, Dist. 8	Moses L. Gross, Vice-Chairman, Dist. 2
Merrill E. Baker, Jr., Dist. 1	Kenneth E. Hickey, Dist. 3
Mark NeSmith, Dist. 4	Hershel P. Ansley, Dist. 5
Mary Jo Beverly, Dist. 6 (Absent)	Phillip V. Brown, Dist. 7

Staff present was Michael J. Stephenson, County Manager, Laura Nichols, County Attorney, Toyna Allen-Brooks, secretary, and M. Twink Monahan, County Clerk. There was no media present.

Chairman Mays declared a public hearing to receive comments from the public concerning the proposed 2013 county budget. There were no citizens present to comment.

The public hearing was closed.

The board entered into a work session.

Michael Stephenson explained the main points for the 2013 Budget. The following table reflects no across the board cost of living adjustment and no merit increase and no increase in personnel. The table below explained the recommended budget, rainy day funds, carryover funds and 2011 fund balance.

Fund	Budget	Rainy Day	Carryover of funds	2011 Fund Balance
General	19,805,389	0	607,491	7,398,370
Emergency Services	3,750,339	54,263	0	2,868,633
Fire District 1 & 2	1,025,305	35,621	0	72,787
Fire District 3	1,120,275	10,575	72,108	205,131
E-911	1,465,613	NA	NA	NA
Transit	975,500	NA	NA	NA

Included in the recommended budget were the following capital expenses:

<u>Department</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Replacing/New</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Building Maint	shop roof	rusting roof	20,000
Building Maint	crew truck	1997 pickup (236,171 mi.)	35,000
Building Maintenance	16' trailer	new	2,500
Magistrate	copier	2003 – 300,000 copies	5,700

Sheriff	4 patrol cars	2005 Ford (192,245 mi.) 2005 Ford (128,936 mi.) 2005 Ford (162,042 mi.) 2008 Ford (144,042 mi.)	132,719
Sheriff	equipment	Deputy Leather gear and equipment	44,000
Drug Squad	equipment	Equipment	17,000
Corrections	equipment	Dryer, Dishwasher, Ice Machine	29,431
Public Works	1 motor grader lease in 2013 (new)		20,000
Public Works	office space	1440 sq. ft.	30,500
Extension Service	4 WD,Ext.cab truck	1997 F150 Ext (179,000 mi.)	28,000
Fire Districts 1 & 2	3 fire trucks – lease payment		70,000
Fire District 3	3 fire trucks – lease payment		70,000
EMS	ambulance	1999 Ford 350 (140,083 mi.)	125,000
EMS	equipment	Radios, stretchers, extrication equip.	71,095
911	recording system	inoperable unit	52,067

Mr. Stephenson stated that any changes made to his recommendations would increase to the general fund would increase the amount of the carry-over funds. (Drug Squad line item was removed)

Thomas County Public Library System

Bonnie Spann, Board Chairman and Nancy Tillinghast, Director requested an increase of \$82,195 to cover the increase costs passed down from the State to cover health insurance and pension expenses.

Chairman Mays recognized Commissioner Brown who made a motion to approve the request to increase the recommended budget by \$82,195 for a total 2013 budget request of \$903,614. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baker. Motion carried 6 to 1; voting in favor were Commissioners Ansley, Baker, Brown, Gross, Hickey and Mays. Voting in opposition was Commissioner NeSmith.

Thomas County Extension Service

Johnny Whiddon introduced Laura Johnson, the new Southwest District Extension Director from Tifton. They requested the board to increase their recommended budget to hire a Family and Consumer Science Agent. They explained that since Rebecca Moore retired in 2009 the state did not fund the position to be filled. There are state funds in 2013 and the county portion would be \$32,574.

Chairman Mays recognized Commissioner NeSmith who made a motion to deny the request to increase the Thomas County Extension Service Budget by \$32,574 due to budget restraints. Chairman Mays called for a second to the motion twice. The motion failed due to a lack of a second.

Tax Assessors' Office

Don Long, Chief Assessor requested the part time position that is not in the recommended budget be restored. Herman Davis currently fills that position and has

earned all the necessary certifications since 2010. No determination of the request was reached at this time. David Clark from the Assessor Board was also present.

Tax Commissioner's Office

Alicia Hester was congratulated by the board for her election to the office. Ms. Hester stated that in January she will be assuming the duties of Ex-Officio and collecting delinquent taxes. The funds for the duty are already reflected in the recommended budget as well as the funds to fill the position vacated by Ms. Hester.

Public Defender

Kent Edwards, Public Defenders Office introduced W. Travis Sakrison, Executive Director of the Georgia Public Defender Standards Council. They are requesting an increase of \$19,218 for insurance and retirement benefits and \$1,750 for a court reporter and \$800 for an interpreter. There was no action taken.

Lunch break

Chairman Mays called the work session to order.

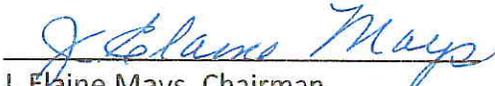
John Taylor presented to the board several options for consideration to reduce health insurance expenses. These options included a plan design change such as deductibles and out of pocket limits, a wellness program, higher specific deductibles. The board discussed these options in detail.

The board agreed to organize a county-wide meeting to make employees aware of the options and decisions facing the board in the next year.

The board reviewed the action taken changing the recommended budget.

Increase Library funds	\$82,195
Add advertising funds to Tax Commissioners	unknown amount – staff checking history
Restore Part time position to Tax Assessor	\$14,261

Chairman Mays recognized Vice-Chairman Gross who made a motion to adjourn at 3:30 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ansley and was approved unanimously.



J. Elaine Mays, Chairman

ATTEST:



M. Twink Monahan, County Clerk