

Minutes
Historic Courthouse Annex, Room 215
116 West Jefferson Street
March 18, 2014

The Thomas County Board of Commissioners met on the above date in a workshop at 8:00 a.m. with the following board members present:

Moses Gross, Chairman, Dist. 2	Kenneth E. Hickey, Vice-Chairman, Dist. 3
Merrill E. Baker, Jr., Dist. 1	Mark NeSmith, Dist. 4
Hershel P. Ansley, Dist. 5	Wiley E. Grady, Dist. 6
Phillip V. Brown, Dist. 7	J. Elaine Mays, Dist. 8

Staff present was Michael J. Stephenson, Johnny Reichert Planning and Zoning Director, Donna Holbert, Administrative Assistant, Sheriff Carlton Powell and Twink Monahan, County Clerk. There was no media present.

Vice-Chairman Hickey opened the meeting at 8:10 a.m. and gave the invocation.

Mr. Stephenson explained that some of the commissioners on the board were not as familiar with the zoning regulations and building codes as those that have been serving for a while. Mr. Reichert is going to explain his office's purpose and processes for building codes and zoning ordinances. His staff have provided notebooks outlining the codes and processes for each commissioner.

Mr. Stephenson further explained that he has provided model ordinances for derelict property and junkyards attached to the agenda. He asked the board to review them and provide their views.

Johnny Reichert began by explaining when building codes were adopted in Thomas County beginning with the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) 1984 standard for a Uniform Code Enforcement for construction. The codes began with the Southern Building Code with eight standards. The DCA is now updating the code every 2 years by reference.

Thomas County hosts the Georgia's largest training session, Electrical Seminar for annual updates, for electricians and HVAC contractor's to receive required licensing CEU's. Commissioner NeSmith asked if the county could provide the same training opportunity for licensed plumbers and Mr. Reichert answered affirmatively.

The history of consolidation of city and county inspection departments was discussed. Mr. Reichert explained that both department are ruled by the same code, though the interpretation of the code might be different. It was also discussed that Thomas County does the inspections for all the small municipalities except for Pavo and that the County does not provide any nuisance abatement for any of the municipalities.

The junkyard owned by HD Colvin on Old Hwy 84 outside of Boston was discussed. The junkyard was grandfathered when Land Use Standards was adopted on August 19, 1996. Since that time Mr. Colvin has encroached onto the AG property owned by Robert Hutchinson, the R1 property owned by David Huddleston, and the county road right of way. He is in violation with the Thomas County code. Mr. Reichert explained that the abatement process. It is the opinion of the board to list the areas of violation; no parking, right of way set back and 10' set back from property line as outlined by

Commercial General zoning regulation. Mr. Reichert explained that he would like to speak with him personally and if the situation is not resolved, issue the citation.

The appeal process was discussed. It was stressed that the landowner has to be the person applying for any zoning change. Two denials were discussed where a potential buyer of the property wanted to make application.

When there is a building code appeal of the department's decision it is referred to the Thomas County Building Code Board of Appeals. When there is an appeal of denials in a zoning change that appeal come to the Board within the time period set forth in the administrative procedures of the Land Use Standards Code. Zoning appeals after a board decision must go to superior court.

The Premier Home classification of their homes was discussed. The classifications are regulated by the Federal Coach Standards. These homes cannot be larger than 399 square feet or they would be in violation of HUD standards. The Thomas County ordinance does not allow them to be a permanent residence. They can be used as guest houses or lake houses for recreational purposes. They cannot be on road frontage and must be buffered from the road on a large track. The board members decided to maintain the existing ordinance and hear appeals on a case by case basis.

Mr. Reichert pointed out that the Tax Assessor's office is listing RV's as real property, which is incorrect.

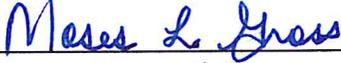
Commissioner Brown was not present for closed session.

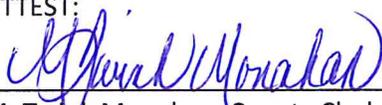
Chairman Gross recognized Commissioners Mays who made a motion to enter into closed session at 10:25 a.m. to discuss personnel matters. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ansley. Motion carried unanimously; Chairman Gross, Vice-Chairman Hickey and Commissioners Baker, Ansley, NeSmith, Grady, and Mays voting aye.

Chairman Gross recognized Commissioners Mays who made a motion to return to open session at 10:45 a.m. reporting that a meeting with the Board of Tax Assessors is set for August 20, 2014 at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Room. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Grady. Motion carried unanimously; Chairman Gross, Vice-Chairman Hickey and Commissioners Baker, Ansley, NeSmith, Grady, and Mays voting aye.

The board briefly discussed the Hill Building project. The architectural proposals will be opened this week.

Chairman Gross recognized Commissioner Mays who made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ansley. Motion carried unanimously; Chairman Gross, Vice-Chairman Hickey and Commissioners Baker, Ansley, NeSmith, and Mays voting aye.


Moses L. Gross, Chairman

ATTEST:

M. Twink Monahan, County Clerk