

Minutes
Historic Courthouse, Board Chambers, 3rd Floor
225 North Board Street
February 8, 2022

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:

Mark NeSmith, Chairman, Dist. 4
Rev. Jeremy G. Rich, Dist. 1 (absent)
Kenneth E. Hickey, District 3
Phillip V. Brown, District 7

Wiley E. Grady, Vice-Chair, Dist. 6
Moses Gross, District 2
Donnie L. Baggett, District 5
Zippy T. Vonier, District 8

Staff present was County Manager Michael J. Stephenson, Attorney Drew Tuggle, Finance Director Laura Nichols, Public Works Director Tony Bodiford, Planning Director Ken Gay, Zoning Administrator Donna Holbert, Facilities and Maintenance Director Lyndall Knight, Sheriff Carlton Powell, and County Clerk Celeste Tyler.

News/Media present: Pat Donahue, Thomasville Times Enterprise

Chairman NeSmith called the meeting to order and Commissioner Grady gave the invocation.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Grady who made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 25, 2022 Board Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Chairman NeSmith declared a Public Hearing and recognized Shane Kelsey with the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission. Thomas County and cities of Boston, Coolidge, Ochlocknee, and Meigs are conducting a public hearing to discuss the update to the Thomas County and the cities of Boston, Coolidge, Ochlocknee, and Meigs Joint Comprehensive Plan. Thomas County is seeking a Broadband Ready designation, which requires an update to the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Kelsey provided a draft copy of a Broadband Ready Plan for the Board's review. A second Public Hearing will be scheduled for public input before final adoption of the plan. With no Public Comments, Chairman NeSmith closed the Public Hearing.

Chairman NeSmith requested approval to sign the Memorandum of Agreements (MOA) with the Georgia Department of Transportation for the following bridge projects: CR 298/Coffee Road @ Aucilla River; CR 305/Palmer Road @ Little Ochlocknee River Overflow; CR 305/Palmer Road @ Little Ochlocknee River; and CR 360 Old US Hwy 84 @ CSX Railroad. The cost for the County for all four bridges is \$225,000.00.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Brown who made a motion to authorize the Chairman of the Board to sign the Memorandum of Agreement with the Georgia Department of Transportation for the four bridge projects as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Chairman NeSmith recognized County Manager Stephenson who sought approval of the 2021 End of Year Budget Amendment 22-2-1, as presented below.

**2021 BUDGET AMENDMENT 22-2-1 - 2021 End of Year
February 8, 2022**

GENERAL FUND (100)

	Increase/Revenues	Increase/Expenses
Revenues		
LOST	359,000	
 Expenses		
Department		
State Court		10,000
Sheriff's Office		130,000
Courthouse Security		65,000
Drug Squad		3,000
Humane Society		50,000
Sanitation		100,000
Welfare-Indigent Burials		1,000
TOTAL	359,000	359,000

**UNINCORPORATED FUND
(200)**

	Increase/Revenues	Increase/Expenses
Revenues		
Building Licenses & Permits	11,000	
 Expenses		
PLUS		11,000
TOTAL	11,000	11,000

**EMERGENCY SERVICES
FUND (273)**

	Increase/Revenues	Increase/Expenses
Revenues		
Ambulance Fees	315,000	
 Expenses		
Department		

Emergency Rescue		5,000
ES Administration		310,000
TOTAL	315,000	315,000

AIRPORT FUND(785)

	Increase/Revenues	Increase/Expenses
Revenues		
Timber	45,000	
Expenses		
Other Supplies		45,000
TOTAL	45,000	45,000

The FY 2022 Preliminary End of Year Major Operating Funds was distributed and an increase in the accumulative Fund Balance is projected.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Brown who made a motion to approve 2021 Budget Amendment 22-2-1 – 2021 End of Year. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

County Manager Stephenson also recommended the 2022 Fund Transfer from the Unincorporated Services, Fire District 1 & 2, and Fire District 3 to Emergency Services, a total of \$1,270,000.00.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Hickey who made a motion to approve the 2022 fund Transfer from the Unincorporated Services, Fire District 1 & 2, and Fire District 3 to Emergency Services (\$1,270,000.00). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Grady. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Open Meeting to the Citizens: Chairman NeSmith recognized Candee Henderson of 1453 Egg and Butter Rd. South, Thomasville, GA who encouraged the Board to commit to the goal of 100% renewable energy by 2035. She distributed a sample Resolution to the Board for review.

Reports: Chairman NeSmith recognized County Manager Stephenson who announced that Thomas County has been awarded a \$6.8 million grant in partnership with Windstream for Broadband Infrastructure. He thanked County Clerk, Celeste Tyler, for her work and submission of the grant. A second round of funding is expected to become available before the end of the year. The County will actively pursue an additional grant when it becomes available for application.

County Manager Stephenson submitted a proposal for Senior transit trips. He recommends one- way trips for those 55+ for a rate of \$.50. He went on to explain that with the re-opening of the Senior Center, this

would help out seniors who want to attend its activities. The current rate schedule would create a hardship on Seniors living away from Thomasville, who may want to attend Senior Center activities on a regular basis.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to adopt a new transit rate for those 55+ for all one-way trips as presented (\$.50 per trip). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Vonier. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

County Manager Stephenson recognized Zoning Administrator Donna Holbert who introduced re-zoning application 22-2-1. Monte Ott, property owner is requesting to rezone property located on Rena Ridge (Map 46G, Parcel 16 vacant lot). The request is to rezone this property consisting of .53 of an acre from R-3 (Residential, Mixed Use) to CL, CU (Commercial Limited, Conditional Use, Parking Lot. If approved, this would allow the parcel to be used for parking for the adjoining auto repair shop. The Planning Staff recommends approval of this application. A Public Hearing will be held at the February 22, 2022 Board of Commissioners' meeting.

County Manager Stephenson recognized Planning Director Ken Gay who gave an update on the Evergreen Brook Apartments project. The developers have been given some suggestions from the Planning Department and progress is being made. Several permits (DOT, EPD, etc) will need to be obtained.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Drew Tuggle who came in representation for County Attorney Bruce Warren. Mr. Tuggle reported that the deed for the property being purchased for the Boston Volunteer Fire Station on Five Forks Road will be ready today.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Vonier who made a motion to ratify the diesel fuel purchase from Coastal Plains Farmers CO-OP for \$2.8375/per gal. on February 1, 2022. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Commissioner Vonier made a motion to ratify bid approval for a ½ ton pick-up truck for Facilities Management from Stalling Motors for \$33,998 (plus a cover). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hickey. The motion was approved 6-0-1 with Commissioner Brown abstaining.

Commissioner Vonier made a motion to ratify bid approval for a 2022 Road Widener for Public Works from Yancey Brothers (\$190,925). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Commissioner Vonier made a motion to ratify bid approval for a Flex Wing Mower for Public Works from Ag Pro (\$20,200.00) The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Commissioner Vonier made a motion to ratify bid approval for two Dump Trucks for Public Works from Peterbilt (\$326,080.00). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Grady. The motion was approved

unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye

Commissioner Vonier made a motion to ratify bid approval for a 1- ton pick-up truck for Public Works from Stalling Motors (\$65,938.00). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hickey. The motion was approved 6-0-1 with Commissioner Brown abstaining.

Commissioner Vonier made a motion to ratify bid approval for 8 Sanitation Roll-Off Containers from Lewis Steel Works Incl (\$44,000.00). the motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Grady who made a motion to ratify the approval of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the YMCA and their operation of the Scott Senior Center. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

The upcoming committee meetings were announced. The Emergency Services Committee will meet at the Historic Courthouse on February 15th at 8:30 a.m., and the Public Works Committee will meet at the Historic Courthouse on February 16th at 8:30 a.m.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gross. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye. The meeting adjourned at 9:58 a.m.



Mark NeSmith, Chairman

ATTEST:



Celeste C. Tyler, County Clerk