

Minutes
Historic Courthouse, Board Chambers, 3rd Floor
225 North Board Street
October 11, 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 (absent)
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, County Attorney Bruce Warren, Planning Director Ken Gay, Capt. Steve Jones, and County Clerk Celeste Tyler.

Others Present: Barbara Grogan, Windstream

News/Media present: Chris Hurst, WPAX Radio

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

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Gross who made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 27, 2022 Board Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, and Vonier voting aye.

Open Meeting to the Citizens: Chairman NeSmith recognized Candee Henderson of 1453 Egg and Butter Road South, Thomasville, Georgia who requested that Thomas County commit to 100% renewable energy by 2035. Coming off the heels of Hurricane Ian, she also expressed support for others during this disaster, and referenced climate change and its effect on the intensity of the storms. (Category 4)

Chairman Nesmith recognized Lucinda Brown of 103 Halcyon Way, Thomasville, Georgia who again requested Thomas County Board of Commissioners to hire a Human Resource Manager who would ensure employees are treated fairly and coached when needed. She stated that the County Manager and County Attorney are not equipped to do the job of a Human Resource Manager. She asked for this to be considered in the budget for next year, and offered to bring in a Human Resource expert if needed to talk about the benefits of having this position added to the staff.

Under New Business Chairman NeSmith recognized County Manager Stephenson who requested the approval for the 2022 Budget Amendment 22-10-1 that consists of the addition of \$20,000 (anonymous gift) to the Capital Improvements Fund for the Sheriff Shooting Range.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Grady who made a motion to approve the 2022 Budget Amendment 22-10-1 as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, and Vonier voting aye.

**2022 BUDGET AMENDMENT 22-10-1
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND (350)
OCTOBER 11, 2022**

Account	Description	Original 2022 Budget	Amended Budget	Difference
Revenues				
350-37-1000	Contributions & Donations	0	20,000	20,000
	Total			20,000
Net Increase to Revenues				\$20,000
Account	Description	Original 2022 Budget	Amended Budget	Difference
Expenses				
350-3300-54-1207	Sheriff - Shooting Range	170,000	190,000	20,000
	Total			20,000
Net Increase to Expenses				\$20,000

County Manager Stephenson also asked for approval of the Authorizing Resolution for the Transit Grant Application. He commented that the resolution is a part of the annual process from GDOT, the overseer of the Federal Grant monies for the Transit Department.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Brown who made a motion to approve the Authorizing Resolution for the Transit Grant Application. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Vonier. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, and Vonier voting aye.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Barbara Grogan, a representative of Windstream, who spoke on the Broadband Grant awarded to Thomas County at the beginning of the year by the State of Georgia. The buildout by Windstream will cover approximately 2098 households. Barbara emphasized the importance of citizens that are not covered under this grant to contact Windstream expressing their wishes to be provided service. She also commented that another round of grant monies is speculated to come out the beginning of 2023. County Manager Stephenson interjected that no service provider applied for Thomas County in the recent round of grants. Barbara stated that the mapping gets better with each award, and no address can be covered more than once by any grant. County Attorney Warren reviewed the Build Agreement between the two entities and would like to edit the **Purpose** found in the **Introduction** of the Agreement on the first page to include the matching funds.

Amount	% of Funding	Source
\$6,840,302	51%	State of Georgia grant
\$5,164,325	39%	Windstream
\$1,291,081	10%	Thomas County

Chairman NeSmith made a motion to approve the Build Agreement with Windstream with the inclusion of edits from the County Attorney. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. The motion was

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

Reports:

Chairman NeSmith recognized County Manager Stephenson who recognized Planning Director Ken Gay. Ken gave an update on the Evergreen Brook Apartments project. The Planning Department has been notified that they would like to be on the October 25th Board of Commissioners' Meeting Agenda. Ken stated that once he has reviewed their edited plat and is satisfied, he will bring his recommendation to the Board.

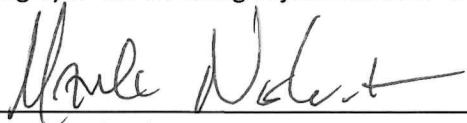
Ken also reported that the Southside Station is progressing. They are putting up steel now and should be completed with that next week.

Chairman NeSmith recognized County Attorney Bruce Warren who reported on a contract he has prepared between Thomas County Board and Commissioners and Community Outreach Training Center. The organization was chosen as the agent for the County who will handle the distribution of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant funds to eligible recipients in the unincorporated areas of Thomas County. The contract will include an attached Exhibit A consisting of an updated proposal from Sharon Edwards, Executive Director.

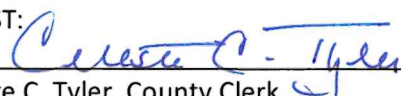
Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Brown who made a motion to approve the contract between Thomas County Board of Commissioners and Community Outreach Training Center, Inc. with the inclusion of a revised proposal (Exhibit A) as presented by the County Attorney. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, and Vonier voting aye.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Vonier who made a motion to accept the bid from Green Maintenance and Cleaning for the Right-of-Way Mowing and Litter Pick Up for a total annual cost of \$347,100 (3-yr. contract). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gross. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, and Vonier voting aye.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Brown who made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, and Vonier voting aye. The meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.



Mark NeSmith, Chairman

ATTEST: 

Celeste C. Tyler, County Clerk