

Minutes  
Historic Courthouse, Board Chambers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
225 North Board Street  
June 27, 2023

The Thomas County Board of Commissioners met on the above date in a regular scheduled meeting at 6:00 p.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 (absent)**

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, Emergency Services Director Derrick Ogletree, and County Clerk Celeste Tyler

News/Media present: Jill Holloway, Thomasville Times Enterprise

Others present: Jennifer Fabbri, Thomas County Accountability Court; Superior Court Judge Jim Prine

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

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner NeSmith who made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 13, 2023 Board Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Grady. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

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

Chairman Vonier recognized Jennifer Fabbri, Program Director for the Southern Circuit Accountability Courts and Judge Jim Prine. Ms. Fabbri announced that we received the FY24 grant award for the Thomas County Accountability Court. She added that there are currently 28 active participants. The program averages 2 years in length, and the first graduation is set for early Fall (Sept/Oct). Thomas County received full accreditation/certification in September 2022. The FY24 Budget includes a total cash match from the County of \$13,035. Commissioner NeSmith added that he considers the contribution to the program an overall savings and reiterates that the County no longer has to house (county jail) the participants. Judge Prine added that they work closely with Georgia Pines, the Daily Reporting Center, the District of Attorney, and the Public Defender. Chairman Vonier commented that he attended the last Daily Reporting Center's graduation and was very impressed. In response to Commissioner Brown's question, Ms. Fabbri stated that they do accept referrals and an assessment is completed to see if those referred are legally eligible for the program.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner NeSmith who made a motion to authorize the Chairman of the Board to sign the FY24 grant award documentation. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Chairman Vonier recognized County Manager Stephenson who stated that the 5-yr Joint Comprehensive Plan had been submitted and approved by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. An adopted resolution is the final step in this process.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Grady who made a motion to adopt a Resolution for the Thomas County 5-yr Joint Comprehensive Plan. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gross. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

**A RESOLUTION  
BY THOMAS COUNTY  
TO ADOPT THE THOMAS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, THOMAS COUNTY, Georgia, has found it necessary to update the Thomas County Comprehensive Plan as part of the requirements to maintain its Qualified Local Government Status;

**WHEREAS**, the County Commission held public meetings and hearings to allow private citizens to review the Comprehensive Plan and gathered citizen's input;

**WHEREAS**, in the development of the comprehensive plan, THOMAS COUNTY examined, evaluated, and, where applicable, incorporated considerations of both the Flint River Basin Regional Water Development and Conservation Plan and the Environmental Planning Criteria pursuant to O.C.G.A. 12-2-8, and;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the THOMAS COUNTY, Georgia, that the Comprehensive Plan shall be adopted, hereby certifying that adequate citizen participation requirements have been met.

Adopted this **27th** day of **June**, 2023.  
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**Reports:** Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner NeSmith who madd a motion to approve the 2022 Annual Financial Report as prepared and presented by Lanigan & Associates. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Grady. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Commissioner NeSmith made a motion to approve the payment of the 2022 Financial Audit final invoice to Lanigan & Associates for \$21,758. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Grady who announced the next Purchasing Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 5, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. due to the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Brown who made a motion to re-appoint Charlene Hampton for a second term to the Thomas County Library Board. The motion was seconded by Grady. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Commissioner Brown made a motion to re-appoint Lisa Williams for a second term to the Dept. of Family and Children Services Board. The motion was seconded by Commissioner NeSmith. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Hickey who made a motion to set the warranty/bond for Bloomfield Subdivision Phase I at \$338,920.60 as recommended by the Public Works Committee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner NeSmith. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Gross who made a motion to implement the Apprenticeship Program with Southern Regional Technical College for the Emergency Services Department as recommended by the Emergency Services Committee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Grady. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Commissioner Gross made a motion to ratify the purchase of 8 Lucas devices (\$160,000) and to adopt the 2023 Budget Amendment 23-6-1 reflecting the expenditure. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hickey. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

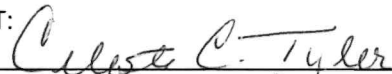
**2023 BUDGET AMENDMENT 23-6-1  
PROJECT LENGTH BUDGET - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND (350)  
June 19, 2023**

Account	Description	Original 2023 Budget	Amended Budget	Difference
<b>Expenses</b>				
350-3600-542500-000	2023/8 Lucas Devices	0	160,000	160,000
350-9010-612005-000	Contingencies	1,050,554	890,554	-160,000
	<b>Total</b>			<b>0</b>

**Net Increase to Expenses** \$0

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Hickey who made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Grady. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye. The meeting adjourned at 6:24 p.m.

  
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Zippy Vonier, Chairman

ATTEST:   
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Celeste C. Tyler, County Clerk