

Minutes  
Historic Courthouse, Board Chambers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
225 North Board Street  
September 26, 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  
Kenneth E. Hickey, District 3  
Wiley Grady, District 6

**Donnie Baggett, Vice-Chair, Dist. 5**  
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: Chris Hurst, WPAX Radio

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

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Grady who made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2023 Board Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, NeSmith, and Rich voting aye.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Hickey who made a motion to approve the September 26, 2023 agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, NeSmith, and Rich voting aye.

Chairman Vonier recognized Derrick Ogletree who provided the segue into the Streets to Station program and introduced Dennis Knight, AEMT who has been chosen as the team lead for this recruiting class. Dennis also recognized Capt. Clint Chastain and paramedic/firefighter Krystle Perkins who are also instructors. The recruits have completed two weeks of their training, and things are going great. They are tested every Monday and skills on Friday. It is expected that they will go on shift the first part of January. All 9 recruits were individually introduced.

Chairman Vonier recognized County Manager Stephenson who referenced the 2023 SPLOST Intergovernmental Agreement that was signed by all Thomas County mayors and clerks after holding the required Mayor's meeting on July 26, 2023. With the adoption of the Resolution, the Election Superintendent will have an Issuance of Call for Referendum on September 29<sup>th</sup> and a Referendum date of November 7, 2023.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Hickey who made a motion to adopt a Resolution calling for imposition of a County one-percent Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, NeSmith, and Rich voting aye.

**RESOLUTION CALLING FOR IMPOSITION OF A COUNTY ONE PERCENT  
SPECIAL PURPOSE LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX**

Whereas the Thomas County Commission has evaluated the needs of the county for capital outlay improvements and the available funds for construction of these improvements; and

Whereas a method for completing capital outlay improvements is available through the imposition of a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST); and

Whereas the county has met with the Mayors of the various municipalities within the county for the purpose of entering into an intergovernmental agreement to provide that some of the funds raised through a proposed SPLOST be made available to the various municipalities located throughout the county; and

Whereas all of the governmental entities located in Thomas County have expressed their support for the imposition of a SPLOST for the purpose of making needed capital outlay improvements;

Now therefore be it resolved by the Board of Commissioners of Thomas County that the issue of imposition of a SPLOST be placed on the November 7, 2023 ballot for approval by the citizens of Thomas County for the period of time, purposes, and expenditures enumerated below.

*The eligible expenditures and purposes for the SPLOST are as follows: road, street, and bridge improvements; the construction of government buildings & facilities; the construction of public safety facilities; the purchase of public safety equipment; the construction of recreation facilities; the construction of library facilities; the construction of water, sewer, and/or storm water capital outlay projects to be owned and operated by qualified municipalities within the special district. All expenditures will be limited to capital outlay improvements as outlined in OCGA 48-8-111.*

The tax shall be imposed for a period of 24 calendar quarters and the estimated funds to be raised from the tax is \$64 million. The funds generated shall be spent as outlined above.

The intergovernmental agreement entered to on even date is hereby incorporated herein and made a part of this resolution.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the county election superintendent so that the superintendent can issue the call for a referendum on the imposition of the tax.

Approved this the 26<sup>th</sup> day of September 2023.

THOMAS COUNTY  
2023 SPLOST INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT

This Intergovernmental Agreement entered into this the 30th day of August, 2023 by and between Thomas County, Georgia and the cities of Thomasville, Barwick, Boston, Coolidge, Meigs, Ochlocknee, and Pavo and

(hereinafter sometimes referred to as the "Governmental Entities") for the purpose of implementing the provisions of the Official Code of Georgia as they relate to implementation of a County Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST).

WHEREAS, the Governmental Entities desire to provide a formula for distribution of funds to the Governmental Entities located in the Special Taxing District, and provide an agreement to meet the requirements of O.C.G.A. §48-8-115; and

WHEREAS, the projected revenue to be generated in the 24 quarters that the SPLOST will be in existence is \$64 million dollars but may exceed this amount, and the parties wish to provide for the allocation of any and all revenues received; and

WHEREAS, a meeting was conducted on July 26, 2023 pursuant to the provisions of O.C.G.A. §48-8-111 to outline capital outlay projects to be funded by the SPLOST and approved by referendum; and

WHEREAS, Thomas County has requested that the cities of Thomasville, Barwick, Boston, Coolidge, Meigs, Ochlocknee, and Pavo enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement to determine the amount, duration and distribution of the SPLOST for all approved capital outlay projects;

NOW, THEREFORE, the parties agree as follows:

#### SECTION ONE

##### Fund Allocation for SPLOST Capital Outlay Projects

The expected funds for capital outlay projects to be used for the construction of roads, bridges, streets, water systems, sewer systems, storm water systems, construction of recreation facilities and the purchase of recreation equipment, construction of library facilities and purchase of library equipment, construction of public safety facilities and the purchase of public safety equipment as provided in O.C.G.A. §48-8-111 are projected to be \$64.0 million dollars and will be allocated by percentages and estimated amounts as follows, up to the first \$64.0 million dollars in SPLOST revenue collected:

##### **\*Estimated Distribution Pro-Rated by 2020 Population**

Thomas County	50.00%	\$	32,000,000
Thomasville	41.23%	\$	26,387,200
Boston	2.64%	\$	1,689,600
Meigs	1.94%	\$	1,241,600
Ochlocknee	1.47%	\$	940,800
Coolidge	1.15%	\$	736,000
Pavo	0.95%	\$	608,000
Barwick	0.62%	\$	396,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>64,000,000</b>

## SECTION TWO

### Excess Fund Allocation For Funds Exceeding \$64 Million Dollars

All remaining Excess Funds shall be allocated to the Governmental Entities according to the percentages set forth in SECTION ONE and used for the projects shown in Section One.

## SECTION THREE

### Procedures for Distributing Proceeds to Qualified Governmental Entities

#### First \$64 million Dollars & Excess Funds

Any funds received shall be distributed as provided in SECTION ONE. All funds received by each Governmental Entity shall be maintained in a discrete account for each project, and upon receipt, funds will be distributed pro rata among the project accounts. Regardless of the total revenues collected, the Thomas County cities shall be paid their respective percentages as provided in SECTION ONE.

## SECTION FOUR

### Schedule and Priority of Funding

All funds received by Thomas County which are to be distributed to the cities shall be distributed within 10 business days after the end of the month in which the funds are received. All funds received by each Governmental Entity participating in this Intergovernmental Agreement shall be maintained in discrete accounts and accounted for as separate and discrete funds.

## SECTION FIVE

### Fund Accounting, Record Keeping and Audit

All funds received by each Governmental Entity which is a party to this Intergovernmental Agreement shall be maintained in a separate designated fund and shall not be intermingled with any other funds maintained by the Governmental Entity. All records shall be kept by fund so that the records may be audited by each Governmental Entity's designated auditor, and a complete audit of all funds generated by the SPLOST shall be completed annually and made a part of each annual audit performed by the Governmental Entity. No funds generated by the SPLOST shall be expended for any project unless the project meets the criteria shown in O.C.G.A. §48-8-111. All funds received and expended shall be subject to the procedures outlined in O.C.G.A. §48-8-122.

## SECTION SIX

### Agreement

All capital outlay projects outlined above shall be funded as provided and the funds shall be expended as shown unless otherwise agreed by the parties to this Intergovernmental Agreement. If approved by referendum, the SPLOST shall terminate after six years, on December 31, 2030.

SECTION SEVEN

Severability and Completeness

If any law, regulation or court decision shall cause any provision of this Intergovernmental Agreement to be rendered invalid, the remaining provisions of this Intergovernmental Agreement shall remain in full force and effect. This Intergovernmental Agreement reflects the entire understanding between the parties and may not be modified except in writing by the authorized representatives of the parties.

SECTION EIGHT

**Ballot Language**

The ballot for the question of imposing the SPLOST shall read as follows:

- YES
  - NO
- Shall a special 1 percent sales and use tax be imposed in the special district of Thomas County for a period of time not to exceed 24 calendar quarters and for the raising of an estimated amount of \$64 million for the purpose of capital outlay projects in Barwick , Boston, Coolidge, Meigs, Ochlocknee, Pavo, Thomasville and Thomas County, Georgia, including *road, street, and bridge improvements ; the construction of government buildings & facilities; the construction of public safety facilities; the purchase of public safety equipment; the construction of recreation facilities; the construction of library facilities ; the construction of water, sewer, and/or storm water capital outlay projects to be owned and operated by qualified municipalities within the special district.*

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the authorized representatives of the parties have hereunto set their hands and affixed the seals of the respective Governmental Entities as of the date above first written.

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**Reports:**

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Grady who made a motion to ratify the purchase of unleaded fuel for \$3.0059/gal and diesel fuel for \$3.3962/gal from Petroleum Products on September 25, 2023. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, NeSmith, and Rich voting aye. Commissioner Grady also announced the Purchasing Committee meeting will be held on Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> at 8:30 a.m.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Baggett who announced the Public Property Committee meeting will be held on October 5<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Rich who thanked the County Manager and the Department Heads for the presentation they gave to his students at Bishop Hall. It was very well received.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Hickey who made a motion to ratify the proposed road resurfacing 2017 SPLOST/LMIG projects that was presented at the last Public Works Committee meeting totaling \$1,329,230.00. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey NeSmith, and Rich voting aye.

**2023 BUDGET AMENDMENT 23-9-1  
PROJECT LENGTH BUDGET - 2017 SPLOST Capital Projects Fund  
September 26, 2023**

<b>Account Revenues</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Original 2023 Budget</b>	<b>Amended Budget</b>	<b>Difference</b>
329-31-3200	SPLOST	26,000,000	27,000,000	1,000,000
329-34-9920	Oil Dri Reimbursement	0	31,713	31,713
329-36-1000	Interest	50,000	185,000	135,000
329-38-3000	Reimb for Damaged Property	0	3,000	3,000
	<b>Total</b>			<b>\$1,169,713</b>
<b>Net Increase to Revenues</b>				<b>\$1,169,713</b>

<b>Account Expenses</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Original 2023 Budget</b>	<b>Amended Budget</b>	<b>Difference</b>
329-3325-541240-000	Jail Justice Ctr-Improvements	50,000	0	-50,000
329-3500-541300-000	Southside Station	990,000	1,164,000	174,000
329-3550-542200-330	2022/Two Used Fire Trucks	160,000	175,600	15,600
329-3915-541300-000	Animal Service Shelter	960,000	1,100,000	140,000
329-4100-541327-000	Public Works Site Improvements	250,000	0	-250,000
329-4100-541475-000	Jordan Oaks Sewer Rehab	1,750,000	50,000	-1,700,000
329-4103-541405-000	Roddenberry	449,550	380,000	-69,550
329-4104-541410-000	Metcalfe Bridges	1,500,000	0	-1,500,000
329-4118-541405-000	Baldwin	141,750	151,746	9,996

329-4119-541405-000	Dixie Chastain	113,400	122,210	8,810
329-4120-541405-000	Benton	232,200	386,280	154,080
329-4121-541405-000	McGarrah	498,400	468,000	-30,400
329-4122-541405-000	Rupp	175,200	705,700	530,500
329-4124-541405-000	Stage-Palmer-Lower Meigs	329,400	385,500	56,100
329-4126-541405-000	W Pinetree (GA3/Bypass)	0	101,750	101,750
329-4127-541405-000	Shallowbrook Sub.	0	131,350	131,350
329-4129-541405-000	Summer Glen Sub.	0	188,700	188,700
329-4132-541405-000	Beeline	826,000	1,105,350	279,350
329-4133-541405-000	Airline	1,281,571	1,292,670	11,099
329-4134-541405-000	Pavo lone	654,200	749,250	95,050
329-4135-541405-000	Murphy	245,150	296,360	51,210
329-4137-541405-000	Centennial-Airline/Lawhorne	283,500	277,400	-6,100
329-4138-541405-000	Newton	339,830	363,480	23,650
329-4140-541405-000	Wade Chastain	637,500	839,430	201,930
329-4141-541405-000	Centennial-SR122/Lawhorne	1,050,000	45,805	-1,004,195
329-4143-541405-000	Pallbearer	58,050	59,625	1,575
329-4144-541405-000	Stephenson	327,500	443,351	115,851
329-4145-541405-000	M&M	118,800	109,253	-9,547
329-4146-541405-000	Vinson	91,800	92,940	1,140
329-4147-541405-000	Martin	222,750	280,342	57,592
329-4148-541405-000	Twelve Mile Post	250,550	321,035	70,485
329-4173-541405-000	County Line-Meigs	0	170,200	170,200
329-4174-541405-000	Glem Drive	0	70,300	70,300
329-4175-541405-000	Camellia Drive	0	27,750	27,750
329-4177-541405-000	Dillon	962,477	622,277	-340,200

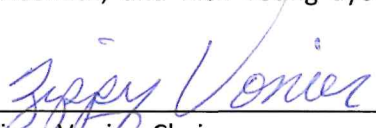
329-4184-541405-000	Plantation Woods Subdivision	186,300	240,596	54,296
329-4187-541405-000	Lake Riverside Streets	515,700	443,864	-71,836
329-4188-541405-000	Harrell Road	17,550	43,682	26,132
329-4189-541405-000	Russell Road	70,200	90,770	20,570
329-4190-541405-000	Vicky Lane	17,550	43,682	26,132
329-4191-541405-000	Club Drive East & West	-	147,450	147,450
329-4192-541405-000	East Lane	-	14,800	14,800
329-4193-541405-000	Commercial Drive	-	90,650	90,650
329-4200-521310-000	Contracted Striping	392,200	750,000	357,800
329-4200-541410-000	County Bridges-DOT Report	650,000	1,500,000	850,000
329-4209-541405-000	Egg & Butter Road	633,515	430,700	-202,815
329-4236-541405-000	Old Bee Line Road	-	325,377	325,377
329-4263-541405-000	Rocky Ford Road/Box Culvert	70,000	82,022	12,022
329-4282-541405-000	Widow White	-	105,251	105,251
329-9010-541405-000	Other Road Projects	2,111,461	200,000	-1,911,461
329-9010-579000-000	Contingencies	1,313,221	4,910,490	3,597,269
	<b>Total</b>			<b>\$1,169,713</b>

**Net Increase to Expenses**

**\$1,169,713**

Commissioner Hickey made a motion to ratify the Mowing Contract to include release of Greens Maintenance and the inclusion of a 4<sup>th</sup> round provided by Matthew Joiner. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, NeSmith, and Rich voting aye.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, NeSmith, and Rich voting aye. The meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

  
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 Zippy Vonier, Chairman

ATTEST:  
  
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 Celeste C. Tyler, County Clerk