

Minutes
Historic Courthouse, Board Chambers, 3rd Floor
225 North Board Street
March 11, 2025

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, Dist. 7

Donnie L. Baggett, Vice-Chair Dist. 5

Moses Gross, Dist. 2 (absent)

Wiley Grady, Dist. 6

Zippy T. Vonier, Dist. 8

Staff present was County Manager Michael J. Stephenson, County Attorney Bruce Warren, Public Works Director Jay Knight, Planning Director Ken Gay, Zoning Administrator Donna Holbert, and County Clerk Celeste Tyler

Others present: Magistrate Judge Matt Shiner

Jackie Leatherman, President of Destination Thomasville Tourism Authority

News/Media present: none

Chairman NeSmith called the meeting to order, and Mike Nichols, Ochlocknee Baptist Church pastor gave the invocation.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Hickey who made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2025 Board Meeting. Commissioner Vonier seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Chairman NeSmith, Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to approve the agenda for the March 11, 2025 Board Meeting. Commissioner Grady seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Chairman NeSmith, Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Clerk of Court Randa Wharton who asked the Board to consider entering into an intergovernmental agreement with Brooks County for shared services for the Board of Equalization. Brooks County currently has only one member who is qualified to serve, and therefore, is unable to hold any hearings. Thomas County has three members on the Board of Equalization who would be willing to help and drive to Brooks County. Randa has some concern because a few of her board members also serve as grand jury bailiffs. With that understanding, Brooks County will have to work around Thomas County's schedule. Answering Commissioner Hickey's questions, Randa stated that the number of cases/hearings is currently small, and Brooks County's need is now.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to approve entering into an intergovernmental agreement with Brooks County for shared services for the Board of Equalization and to authorize the Chairman of the Board to sign the agreement on the Board's behalf. Commissioner Grady seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Chairman NeSmith, Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Hickey who made a motion to appoint Mills Herndon to the Tax Assessor Board to fill Len Powell's remaining term that expires on 12/31/2025. Commissioner Baggett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Chairman NeSmith, Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Chairman NeSmith recognized County Manager Stephenson who presented a request on behalf of the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission to amend our Service Delivery Strategy to explicitly include domestic violence shelters. The City of Thomasville in partnership with Halcyon Home has requested assistance from SWGRC in applying for a Community Development Block Grant to construct a new domestic violence shelter. The current facility does not meet ADA compliance standards and is inadequate for the needs of its clients.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Hickey who made a motion to amend the Service Delivery Strategy to include domestic violence shelters. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Chairman NeSmith, Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Chairman NeSmith recognized County Clerk Celeste Tyler who asked for approval of the ACCG Safety Action Plan to be submitted as part of the application for the annual ACCG Employee Safety Grant. The grant award is based on percentages for claims submitted for personnel and property damages.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to approve the 2025 ACCG Safety Action Plan and submission for the ACCG Employee Safety Grant. Commissioner Vonier seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Chairman NeSmith, Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Open Meeting to Citizens: Chairman NeSmith recognized Chief Magistrate Matt Shiner who gave an update on the happenings in his department. A new website has been implemented giving greater visual presence and interaction capabilities. Court information is being saved to servers rather than individual computers affording more ease for backing up files. At no additional cost NTS has provided the convenience of video arraignments for the Sheriff's Office and Police Department. New software will be installed in June that will allow warrants to be activated at any time with the modernization of e-sign and distribution to all parties.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Grady who introduced Jackie Leatherman, the newly hired President of Destination Thomasville Tourism Authority. Although a native of Ohio, Jackie has lived in Arizona for the past several years. She relocated here three weeks ago and looks forward to providing development and outreach to Thomas County. County Manager Stephenson extended an invitation for her to join the Citizens' Academy class, which she happily accepted.

Committee Reports

County Manager Stephenson recognized Planning Director Ken Gay who requested approval to make application to amend the Land Use Standards Ordinance for lot size requirements in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 Land Use Districts so that the lot sizes align with the State of Georgia regulations. Included in the request is a recommendation to amend the minimum size of the rezoning sign that is required to be posted on the property.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to file application 25-3-1 as presented. Commissioner Grady seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Chairman NeSmith, Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Vonier who made a motion to ratify the purchase of regular fuel for \$2.2298/gal and diesel fuel for \$2.4887/gal on February 26, 2025 from Petroleum Products. Commissioner Baggett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Chairman NeSmith, Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Commissioner Vonier made a motion to approve the purchase of Clay Targets from Industrial Chemicals for \$22,880.88. Commissioner Grady seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Chairman NeSmith, Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Commissioner Vonier made a motion to approve the purchase of Concrete Drainage Pipes from Foley Product Company for \$22,905.16. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Chairman NeSmith, Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Commissioner NeSmith recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to ratify the bid award to Brooks-Jeffrey Marketing, Inc. for the Sheriff's Office Website for \$29,815.00. Commissioner Vonier seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Chairman NeSmith, Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

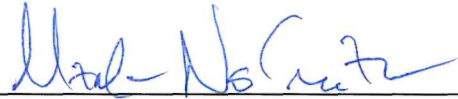
Commissioner Baggett made a motion to ratify the bid award to NEC Corporation of America for a IBW Latent Workstation, Flatbed Scanner, Software Licenses for \$39,050 (Sheriff's Office). Commissioner Grady seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith, Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Commissioner Baggett made a motion to approve the contract renewal with the City of Valdosta for the use of its Regional Crime Laboratory during analysis of evidence for \$25,000 (Sheriff's Office Drug/Narcotics Dept.). Commissioner Vonier seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Chairman NeSmith, Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Hickey who made a motion to ratify the purchase of Drive 240' LF timber piling treated and mobilization from Southern Concrete Construction Company for Ponder Bridge repair for \$26,600.00. Commissioner Baggett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Chairman NeSmith, Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye.

In Other Business, Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Baggett who reported that the meeting with the city on Monday regarding the Drug Squad went well.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Brown who made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Vonier seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Chairman NeSmith, Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, and Vonier voting aye. The meeting adjourned at 9:36 a.m.



Mark NeSmith, Chairman

ATTEST:



Celeste Tyler, County Clerk