

Minutes
Historic Courthouse, Board Chambers, 3rd Floor
November 22, 2016, 6:00 p.m.
225 North Board Street
Thomasville, GA

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:

Kenneth E. Hickey, Chairman, Dist. 3	Phillip V. Brown, Vice-Chairman, Dist. 7
Merrill E. Baker, Jr., Dist. 1	Moses Gross, Vice-Chairman, Dist. 2
Mark NeSmith, Dist. 4	Hershel P. Ansley, Dist. 5
Wiley E. Grady, Dist. 6	J. Elaine Mays, Dist. 8

Staff present was Michael J. Stephenson, County Manager, Bruce Warren, County Attorney, Twink Monahan, County Clerk, and Toyna Brooks, Board Secretary. Media present was Jordan Barela, Times-Enterprise.

Sheriff R. Carlton Powell gave in invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Chairman Hickey recognized Commissioner Grady who made a motion to approve minutes from the November 8 and November 14, 2016 board meetings. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ansley. Motion carried unanimously; Chairman Hickey, Vice-Chairman Brown, Commissioners Baker, Grady, Gross, Ansley, NeSmith and Mays voting aye.

Chairman Hickey recognized Steve O'Neal with the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission.

Chairman Hickey called a Public Hearing to begin the Thomas County Comprehensive Plan. The current plan expires on June 30, 2018. The purpose of this hearing is to brief the community on the process to be used to develop the plan, opportunities for public participation in the development of the plan, and to obtain input on the proposed planning process.

Mr. O'Neal explained the procedure and the next step for the board to proceed. A Steering Committee needs to be selected and meet twice either in January or February 2017. The Steering Committee can be made up of staff and citizens. The county will need to meeting with officials of each municipality in Thomas County.

There were no public comments and the public hearing was closed.

The board selected February 9 and February 16, 2017 for the Steering Committee meetings. Mr. Stephenson suggested that each board member select 2 citizens to be on the committee.

Chairman Hickey recognized Lee Webb Executive Director of the Thomasville Landmarks. Mr. Webb

stated that the Metcalfe project is currently in a 60-day review at the Department of Transportation. He is hoping the construction documents will be signed by the end of 2016. The project will have sidewalks, street lamps, benches and bike racks. Mr. Webb will set a meeting with Mr. Stephenson in December. The balance on the EMS Engineering consultants have \$8,000 on their contract to complete the project. He thanked the board for their patience concerning the lengthy delays in the project.

Chairman Hickey recognized Sheriff R. Carlton Powell. Sheriff Powell asked the board to reconsider raises for deputies that rotate shifts that was not approved in the 2017 Budget Hearing on November 14, 2017. These deputies rotate 12-hour shifts every quarter from day to night shifts, 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. The cost for each of these deputies to receive a \$1 per hour raise is \$56,784. He also stated that most of the deputies with less than 5-years of service make less than \$15 per hour.

Chairman Hickey recognized Commissioner Grady who made a motion to approve the sheriff's request and grant the \$1 per hour increase for the deputies that rotate shifts. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mays.

Chairman called for discussion.

Chairman Hickey recognized Commissioner NeSmith. Commissioner NeSmith stated that there is a certain amount of revenue every year and the county needs to defend its reserves. He acknowledged it is a critical job. He commended the Sheriff for the control he has on his department's budget. He noted that each year there is a surplus in the Sheriff's Office budget and asked if he could revisit his budget to see if there is another area where he can forfeit to avoid a budget increase. Commissioner NeSmith also pointed out other emergency service departments with shift work that make less than \$15 per hour.

After further discussion, Chairman Hickey called for a vote.

Motion carried 7 to 1; Chairman Hickey, Vice-Chairman Brown, Commissioners Baker, Gross, Ansley, Grady and Mays voting aye. Commissioner NeSmith voted nay.

Chairman Hickey recognized Commissioner Mays who made a motion to ratify the 11/11/2016 purchase of 7,500 gallons diesel fuel from Petroleum Products at \$1.5870 per gallon. The motion was seconded by Commissioner NeSmith. Motion carried unanimously; Chairman Hickey, Vice-Chairman Brown, Commissioners Baker, Gross, NeSmith, Ansley, Grady and Mays voting aye.

Chairman Hickey recognized Commissioner Grady who made a motion to ratify the November 18, 2016 contract with the Department of Natural Resources for the grant to construct a recreational shooting range. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gross. Motion carried unanimously; Chairman Hickey, Vice-Chairman Brown, Commissioners Baker, Gross, NeSmith, Ansley, Grady and Mays voting aye.

Manager Michael Stephenson reported that in January the board needed to schedule a Planning Meeting. The preliminary audit, comprehensive plan, shooting range, solar installations and the


prison are some of the matters to discuss. The board agreed to set January 17, 2017, 8:30 a.m. at the commission conference room.

Commissioner Brown set a Personnel meeting for January 12, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

Chairman Hickey recognized Commissioner Gross who made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Brown. Motion carried unanimously; Chairman Hickey, Vice-Chairman Brown, Commissioners Baker, Gross, NeSmith, Ansley, Grady and Mays voting aye.


Kenneth E. Hickey, Chairman

ATTEST:


M. Twink Monahan, Clerk