

Minutes
Historic Courthouse, Board Chambers, 3rd Floor
225 North Board Street
January 26, 2021

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:

Phillip V. Brown, Chairman, Dist. 7
Rev. Jeremy G. Rich, Dist. 1
Kenneth E. Hickey, District 3
Donnie L. Baggett, Dist. 5

Wiley E. Grady, Vice-Chair, Dist. 6
Moses Gross, Dist. 2
Mark NeSmith, Dist. 4
Zippy T. Vonier, Dist. 8

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

News/Media present: none

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

Chairman Brown recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2021 Board Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Vonier. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Brown and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Gross, Hickey, NeSmith, Rich, and Vonier voting aye.

Chairman Brown declared a Public Hearing.

Donna Holbert, Zoning Administrator introduced Re-Zoning application 21-11-1. The application requests a medical hardship variance on property located at 1300 Dillion Road (Map 45, Parcel 5) consisting of 5.5 acres, more or less. The request from Dale Millere, property owner, is to approve a variance that will allow for a manufactured home to be placed on the property for a family member with a medical hardship. The Planning Department Staff recommends approval of this application.

With no opposition present, Chairman Brown closed the Public Hearing.

Chairman Brown recognized Commissioner NeSmith who made a motion to approve application 21-11-1. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hickey. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Brown and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Gross, Hickey, NeSmith, Rich, and Vonier voting aye.

Chairman Brown recognized County Manager Stephenson who introduced the annual Southern Judicial Circuit Public Defender Contract. Commissioner Grady made a motion to approve the 2021 Public Defender Contract. Commissioner NeSmith seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Brown and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Gross, Hickey, NeSmith, Rich, and Vonier voting aye.

Open Meeting: Chairman Brown recognized Mr. Ananias Hopkins of 827 Turkey Trot Dr., Thomasville, Georgia who expressed his concerns over the derogatory remarks that were made by the E-911 Director on social media. He stated that employee salaries are in essence paid by the tax payers, and supervisors

should be held accountable for their actions. He hopes the County will do what is necessary to rectify the situation. Chairman Brown recognized Lucinda Brown of 103 Halcyon Way, Thomasville, Georgia who stated that the E-911 Director, Whitney Hopkins, and her spouse, Robbie Hopkins, an EMT employee should both be terminated. Ms. Brown read several posts from Mr. Hopkins Facebook page. She commented that the remarks made especially about President Biden and Vice President Harris were extremely hurtful to a lot of people and totally unacceptable.

Chairman Brown recognized Commissioner Vonier who made a motion to ratify the diesel fuel purchase from Petroleum Products for \$1.6409/gal. on January 25, 2021. The motion was seconded by Commissioner NeSmith. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Brown and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Gross, Hickey, NeSmith, Rich, and Vonier voting aye

Chairman Brown recognized Commissioner Rich who expressed his wish for County-wide implicit bias training to be implemented during 2021.

Chairman Brown recognized Commissioner Hickey who made a motion to ratify the 2021 Budget (SPLOST) to include thermoplastic centerline striping, a cost of \$25,000. Commissioner Baggett seconded the motion. The motion was approved by Chairman Brown and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Gross, Hickey, NeSmith, Rich, and Vonier voting aye.

The upcoming committee meetings were announced. The Personnel Committee will meet at the Historic Courthouse on January 27, 2021 at 8:30 a.m. The Purchasing Committee will meet at the Historic Courthouse on February 2, 2021 at 8:30 a.m. The Public Property Committee will meet at the Ranges at Oakfield on February 4, 2021 at 8:30 a.m.

Chairman Brown recognized Commissioner NeSmith who made a motion to go into closed Executive Session. Commissioner Baggett seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Brown and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Gross, Hickey, NeSmith, Rich, and Vonier voting aye. (6:23 p.m.)

The Board of Commissioners returned from closed session at 7:27 p.m. No action was taken.

Chairman Brown recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Vonier. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Brown and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Hickey, NeSmith, Rich, and Vonier voting aye. The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.


Phillip V. Brown, Chairman

ATTEST:


Celeste C. Tyler, County Clerk