

Minutes
Historic Courthouse, Board Chambers, 3rd Floor
225 North Board Street
August 8, 2023

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:

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
Moses Gross, District 2
Mark NeSmith, District 4
Phillip V. Brown, District 7

Staff present was County Manager Michael J. Stephenson, Attorney Drew Tuggle, Planning Director Ken Gay, Zoning Administrator Donna Holbert, Fleet Services Director Jamie Parrott, Sheriff Carlton Powell, Capt. Steve Jones, and County Clerk Celeste Tyler.

News/Media present: Jill Holloway Thomasville Times Enterprise
Others present: Melissa Breese, Brookwood School Financial Officer

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

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 25, 2023 Board Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Hickey who made a motion to approve the August 8, 2023 agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Under New Business, Chairman Vonier recognized County Manager Stephenson who briefed the Board on an ARPA rule change that permits local government to include revenue that was lost, not to exceed \$10 million, and use that amount to fund government services. The 1.7 million out of the \$8.6 million awarded amount to Thomas County will be distributed as follows: General Fund \$1,275,000, ESD/911 \$340,000 and Fire Districts 1, 2, and 3 \$85,000.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to approve the distribution of ARPA Funds for Government Services Relief as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

County Manager Stephenson spoke on the upcoming proposed 2023 SPLOST and presented an Intergovernmental Agreement that has been slightly modified to insure consistency between the agreement and the ballot language. The language also allows the request for a six-year SPLOST rather than a 5-year SPLOST.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner NeSmith who made a motion to authorize the Chairman to sign the 2023 SPLOST Intergovernmental Agreement. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Reports: Chairman Vonier recognized County Manager Mike Stephenson who in turn recognized Donna Holbert, Zoning Administrator. She Introduced a conditional use zoning application that has been filed by Sean Neel, Neel & Sons Tree Service, LLC, for property located at 2136 Smith Avenue (Map 046H, Parcel 118) consisting of 3.07 acres, more or less and owned by Ronald Cohen LP & William Blackburn. The subject property is located within a CG (Commercial General) zoning district and the request is for a conditional use on this property to allow for a tree service. This application will have a public hearing at the August 22nd County Commission meeting. Donna stated that they want to have a commercial office and tree service equipment on the property. Chairman Vonier inquired about debris on the property. Ken Gay added that conditions can be placed on the approval, and he can draft those conditions before the Public Hearing for review.

Chairman Vonier recognized Attorney Drew Tuggle who addressed several questions regarding the Agreement between the Thomas County Sheriff's Office and Brookwood School referencing a School Resource Officer. The discussion included school liability, direct point of contact between Sheriff and Headmaster; monthly billing, a 9-month versus 10-month agreement, value of service by both parties, sporting events, off-duty security, etc. Mr. Tuggle agreed to "tighten" the language to reflect the wishes of the Board and will resubmit the document for approval. Meanwhile, Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Grady who made a motion to approve the Brookwood SRO position and proceed with an officer assigned to the school. The Thomas County Board of Commissioners will bill the school for the month of August while simultaneously working out the agreement and billing logistics for the remaining of the school year. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hickey. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Grady made a motion to ratify the purchase of diesel fuel from Petroleum Products for \$2.9277/gal on July 27, 2023. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Commissioner Grady made a motion to ratify the purchase of 16 Axon In-Vehicle Cameras to be paid for in 5-year interest free payments for a total of \$159,155.84 The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baggett. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

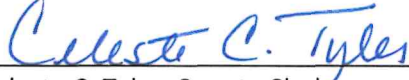
Commissioner Grady made a motion to ratify the purchase of a 15-ton split heat pump unit for the DFACS building for \$31,515.00 The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Hickey who announced that the Public Works Committee meeting has been rescheduled for Thursday, August 24, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. in the Historic Courthouse.

Chairman Vonier recognized Commissioner Brown who made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Grady. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman Vonier and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Gross, Hickey, and NeSmith voting aye. The meeting adjourned at 9:42 a.m.



Zippy Vonier, Chairman

ATTEST: 

Celeste C. Tyler, County Clerk