

PUTNAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



117 Putnam Drive, Suite A ♦ Eatonton, GA 31024

Minutes

Tuesday, December 17, 2024 ♦ 6:00 PM

Putnam County Administration Building – Room 203

The Putnam County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, December 17, 2024 at approximately 6:00 PM in the Putnam County Administration Building, 117 Putnam Drive, Room 203, Eatonton, Georgia.

PRESENT

Chairman Bill Sharp
Commissioner Tom McElhenney
Commissioner Daniel Brown
Commissioner Steve Hersey
Commissioner Jeff Wooten

STAFF PRESENT

County Attorney Adam Nelson
County Manager Paul Van Haute
County Clerk Lynn Butterworth

Opening

1. Welcome - Call to Order

Chairman Sharp called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m.
(Copy of agenda made a part of the minutes on minute book page _____.)

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the Agenda.

Motion made by Commissioner Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

3. Invocation

Pastor Brandon Walton, Bible Fellowship Church, was unable to attend the meeting due to a death in his family. County Attorney Nelson gave the invocation.

4. Pledge of Allegiance (JW)

Commissioner Wooten led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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5. Special Presentation - Retirement Proclamation - Darren Alford

The commissioners presented a proclamation and gift card to Darren Alford congratulating him on his retirement.

Zoning Public Hearing

6. Request by William R. Jerles Jr., agent for Danny Copelan, Uyvonna Copelan, and Drew Copelan, to rezone 150 acres at 612 Sparta Highway from AG to C-2 [Map 092, Part of Parcel 017, District 2] (staff-P&D)

Mr. Billy Jerles spoke in support of this request. No one signed in to speak against this item. Planning and Development staff recommendation was for approval to rezone 150 acres at 612 Sparta Highway from AG to C-2 with the following conditions:

1. Use of the property shall be limited to a utility facility, which shall conform to the applicant’s submitted concept plan.
2. All utility vehicles and equipment must be stored in an enclosed building or a designated screened parking lot.
3. This rezoning approval shall be conditioned upon the resurveying and recordation in the Superior Court of Putnam County of an accurate plat within 60 days of approval by the board of commissioners. A copy of the recorded plat shall be filed with the planning and development department director. Failure to file a plat pursuant to this subsection shall have the effect of invalidating the rezoning action as stated in Section 66-165(e)(3) of the Putnam County Code of Ordinances.

Motion to approve the request by William R. Jerles Jr., agent for Danny Copelan, Uyvonna Copelan, and Drew Copelan, to rezone 150 acres at 612 Sparta Highway from AG to C-2 [Map 092, Part of Parcel 017, District 2] with the following conditions:

- 1. Use of the property shall be limited to a utility facility, which shall conform to the applicant’s submitted concept plan.**
- 2. All utility vehicles and equipment must be stored in an enclosed building or a designated screened parking lot.**
- 3. This rezoning approval shall be conditioned upon the resurveying and recordation in the Superior Court of Putnam County of an accurate plat within 60 days of approval by the board of commissioners. A copy of the recorded plat shall be filed with the planning and development department director. Failure to file a plat pursuant to this subsection shall have the effect of invalidating the rezoning action as stated in Section 66-165(e)(3) of the Putnam County Code of Ordinances.**

Motion made by Commissioner Brown, Seconded by Commissioner McElhenney.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

Regular Business Meeting

7. Public Comments

Ms. Barbara Vargo commented on decision making.

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- 8. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval of Minutes - December 6, 2024 Regular Meeting (staff-CC)
 - b. Approval of Minutes - December 6, 2024 Executive Session (staff-CC)
 - c. Approval of 2024 Alcohol License for Pals Watering Hole (staff-CC)

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Commissioner Brown, Seconded by Commissioner Hersey.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

(Copy of alcohol license made a part of the minutes on minute book page _____.)

9. Chairman's Appointment to the Jimmy Davis Park Partnership Advisory Council (DB)
Chairman Sharp appointed Mr. Sidney Jackson to the Jimmy Davis Park Partnership Advisory Council based on Commissioner Brown's recommendation.

10. Authorization for Chairman to sign 2025 Contract between Putnam County and Eatonton-Putnam Chamber of Commerce dba/Visit Eatonton (staff-CM)

County Manager Van Haute advised that the proposed new contract had been changed to a 45% to the Chamber/55% to the County split.

County Attorney Nelson reminded the board that they recently changed the ordinances to follow state law.

Motion to approve the 2025 Contract between Putnam County and Eatonton-Putnam Chamber of Commerce dba/Visit Eatonton as presented.

Motion made by Commissioner Hersey, Seconded by Chairman Sharp.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Hersey

Voting Nay: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten

Motion to approve the 2025 Contract between Putnam County and Eatonton-Putnam Chamber of Commerce dba/Visit Eatonton at a 60% to the Chamber/40% to the County split with a decrease to the Chamber's percentage each year until it reaches 45%.

Motion made by Commissioner Brown. No second received. Motion failed for lack of a second.

Motion to approve the 2025 Contract between Putnam County and Eatonton-Putnam Chamber of Commerce dba/Visit Eatonton and follow state law with a 58% to the Chamber/42% to the County split for one year.

Motion made by Commissioner Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.

Motion amended to end the contract on September 30, 2025.

Amended motion made by Commissioner Hersey, Seconded by Chairman Sharp

Voting Yea: Commissioner Hersey

Voting Nay: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten

Amended motion failed.

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Vote on original motion to approve the 2025 Contract between Putnam County and Eatonton-Putnam Chamber of Commerce dba/Visit Eatonton and follow state law with a 58% to the Chamber/42% to the County split for one year.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten

Voting Nay: Commissioner Hersey

Current Chamber of Commerce President Maggie Milner introduced her replacement, Mr. Robbie King, who will take over the position on January 17, 2025.

11. Appeal by John Crochet of Short Term Rental License Decision (staff-CC)

Mr. Sam Crochet and his sister Stacia Crochet advised that county staff refused their 2024 STR license at 114 Winding River Road and provided handouts to the board explaining what happened.

Motion to uphold the appeal by John Crochet of Short Term Rental License decision and allow them to apply by December 31, 2024.

Motion made by Commissioner Hersey, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey

Voting Nay: Commissioner Wooten

(Copy of documents made a part of the minutes on minute book pages _____ to _____.)

12. Awarding of Solicitation 24-42001-002 2024 Putnam County SPLOST Road Resurfacing (staff-CM)

County Manager Van Haute reported that three bids were received with the lowest bidder being Pittman Construction Company in the amount of \$15,099,945.15. He further advised that he will be asking each district commissioner for additional miles of roads since this bid is lower than the bond amount that was issued.

Motion to award Solicitation 24-42001-002 2024 Putnam County SPLOST Road Resurfacing to Pittman Construction Company in the amount of \$15,099,945.15.

Motion made by Commissioner Brown, Seconded by Commissioner Hersey.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

Reports/Announcements

13. County Manager Report

County Manager Van Haute reported the following:

- Reminder of county employees Christmas lunch tomorrow
- Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and everyone stay safe
- Ribbon cutting for the new Whataburger is tomorrow

14. County Attorney Report

County Attorney Nelson wished everyone a Merry Christmas and commented on how much he appreciated working with Commissioner Brown.

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15. Commissioner Announcements

Commissioner McElhenney: wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Commissioner Brown: wished everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and safe travels.

Commissioner Hersey: wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Commissioner Wooten: wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Chairman Sharp: commented to Commissioner Brown that it had been a pleasure serving with him and thanked him for his contributions; he wished everyone a Merry Christmas and reminded everyone that it was the third week of Advent-Joy.

Executive Session

16. Enter Executive Session as allowed by O.C.G.A. 50-14-4 for Personnel, Litigation, or Real Estate

Executive Session was not needed.

17. Reopen meeting following Executive Session

Executive Session was not held.

18. Authorize Chairman to sign Affidavit concerning the subject matter of the closed portion of the meeting

Executive Session was not held.

19. Action, if any, resulting from the Executive Session

Executive Session was not held.

Closing

20. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner Hersey, Seconded by Commissioner McElhenney.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:09 p.m.

ATTEST:

Lynn Butterworth
County Clerk

B. W. "Bill" Sharp
Chairman

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