

PUTNAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



117 Putnam Drive, Suite A ♦ Eatonton, GA 31024

Minutes

Friday, April 5, 2024 ♦ 10:00 AM

Putnam County Administration Building – Room 203

The Putnam County Board of Commissioners met on Friday, April 5, 2024 at approximately 10:00 a.m. in the Putnam County Administration Building, 117 Putnam Drive, Room 203, Eatonton, Georgia.

PRESENT

Chairman Bill Sharp
Commissioner Daniel Brown
Commissioner Steve Hersey

ABSENT

Commissioner Gary McElhenney
Commissioner Jeff Wooten

STAFF PRESENT

County Attorney Adam Nelson
County Manager Paul Van Haute
Deputy County Clerk Donna Todd

STAFF ABSENT

County Clerk Lynn Butterworth

Opening

1. Welcome - Call to Order

Chairman Sharp called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 a.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 Brown, Seconded by Commissioner Hersey.

Voting Yea: Chairman Sharp, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey

3. Invocation

Pastor John McMillan, Crossroads Baptist Church, gave the invocation.

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4. Pledge of Allegiance (SH)

Commissioner Hersey led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ordinance Public Hearing

5. Proposed adoption of changes to the Putnam County Code of Ordinances Chapter 32 - Fire Protection and Prevention (staff-Fire)

County Attorney Nelson explained that any action of the body requires an affirmative vote of the majority of Commissioners then in office; therefore, since three commissioners are present, three affirmative votes will be necessary to take any action. The Chairman may vote if and only if exactly two affirmative votes have been cast by District Commissioners. If a Commissioner does not vote in the affirmative on an action item, the Chairman does not vote and the action would fail.

Mr. William Vargo spoke in favor of the amendments that are being proposed.

Mr. Rick McAllister spoke. Although not a citizen of Putnam County, he appreciates the work the Fire Chief is doing. He asked that the Board consider the point of view of the development community when revising the code.

Ms. Maureen Kays commented that she was surprised at the number of changes. In agreement with Mr. McAllister, she also asked that the board consider the impact of the ordinances on the business community, to include considering if the changes to the code might deter businesses from wanting to come here.

Mr. Charles Gray commented that updates to new codes are the result of a disaster somewhere. He encouraged the board to listen to the experts. The policies are important to a community. The purpose of a fire ordinance is to protect life safety and protect property. Additional levels of fire protection result in lower insurance rates. He stated he understands the concerns of the developers and is confident there is a relief process for them.

Fire Chief Thomas McClain addressed the comments made, explaining the necessity of the specifications of the construction standards. He addressed the fees collected are for plan review and inspection and explained that because the fire department does not inspect residences, the fees collected are not specifically for the fire department.

Motion to table the approval of the ordinance changes until Chief McClain and Mr. McAllister can have another meeting concerning future construction requirements and making necessary corrections before bringing the changes to the ordinances back to the board, at the May 3 BOC Meeting, for a vote.

Motion made by Commissioner Brown, Seconded by Chairman Sharp.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Brown

Voting Nay: Commissioner Hersey

Motion failed.

Motion to approve the proposed changes to the Putnam County Code of Ordinances with the following changes: Section 32-19 – delete subsection b in its entirety and renumber that subsection; Section 32-19 – subparagraph h, revise the subsections i, ii, and iii by renumbering the subsection as paragraph or subsection h “Water Flow and Spacing of Fire Hydrants” and re-writing as follows: i. In single family subdivisions, a minimum flow of water shall be 750 gallons per minute, fire hydrants shall be spaced not to exceed 525 feet. ii. In multi-family subdivisions, or multi-family apartment complexes, a minimum flow of water shall be at 750 gallons per minute, fire hydrants shall be spaced not to exceed 525

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feet. iii. In industrial and commercial areas, a minimum flow of water shall be at 1000 gallons per minute, fire hydrants shall be spaced not to exceed 400 feet. iv. Additional fire hydrants may be required by the fire department to permit all portions of a development to be reached by hose glaze, not more than 400 feet, by road travel. In Section 32-21, another item to delete is the sentence beginning with “exception, single family...” at the bottom, under a3, and to insert at a3 “except single family residential property with gated driveways. Under 32-21 c1, to insert “short-term rentals with occupancy greater than 10 persons. Under 32-21 c5, delete subsection b in its entirety and renumber that subsection. Under 32-21 c8 b, to delete “within a subdivision.” Under section 32-21 c 10 b. to insert “if required,” to allow for a manufactured home or single-family dwelling converted to a home care facility to require sprinkler systems as the national code requires. Finally, to authorize the County Attorney to make said changes.

Motion by Commissioner Hersey, Seconded by Chairman Sharp

Voting Yea: Commissioner Hersey

Voting Nay: Commissioner Brown

Motion failed.

County Attorney Nelson advised that if there is no action, it will remain on the table to be held over to the next meeting. The item is still before the body and the board can still entertain actions on same. Given that there was no action on the item, without a table to a date certain, County Attorney Nelson advised to readvertise a public hearing.

Regular Business Meeting

6. Public Comments

None

7. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Minutes - March 19, 2024 Regular Business Meeting (staff-CC)

b. Approval of Alcohol Licenses (staff-CC)

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Commissioner Brown, Seconded by Commissioner Hersey

Voting Yea: Chairman Sharp, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey

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

8. Request from Rick McAllister, Agent for Blue Heron Cove, LLC, for Final Plat Subdivision Approval (staff-P&D)

Mr. McAllister spoke about the project, which would be a total of 56 units. Docks and seawalls have been repaired and replaced and a new common dock has been added. The clubhouse has been fully renovated on the inside.

Motion to approve the request from Rick McAllister, Agent for Blue Heron Cove, LLC, for Final Plat Subdivision Approval.

Motion made by Commissioner Brown, Seconded by Commissioner Hersey.

Voting Yea: Chairman Sharp, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey

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9. Approval of Assets Proposed for Surplus (staff-Finance)

The board viewed a list of items set to be sold as Surplus, provided by Finance Director Linda Cook.

Motion to approve Assets Proposed for surplus.

Motion made by Commissioner Brown, Seconded by Commissioner Hersey.

Voting Yea: Chairman Sharp, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey

(Copy of document of Assets Proposed for Surplus made a part of the minutes on minute book page _____.)

10. Authorization for Chairman to sign the Resolution to Issue General Obligation Bonds (staff-LC)

County Attorney Nelson spoke about the resolution, explaining that the resolution acknowledges the approval of the General Obligation Bond referendum at the March meeting. This is necessary to validate the bonds before the Superior Court. This is following what the voters have asked the Board to do and is needed to present to the superior court to continue the process to acquire the bonds. If approved, we can begin the process of bond validation before the superior court with a deadline at the end of the month. Approval would be necessary to maintain that current schedule at this meeting. Approval outside the timeframe would mean starting over with scheduling.

Motion to authorize the Chairman to sign the Resolution to Issue General Obligation bonds in the principal amount of \$12 million dollars.

Motion made by Commissioner Hersey, Seconded by Commissioner Brown

Voting Yea: Commissioner Hersey

Voting Nay: Commissioner Brown

Motion failed.

Motion to authorize the Chairman to sign the Resolution to Issue General Obligation Bonds.

Motion made by Commissioner Brown, Seconded by Chairman Sharp.

County Attorney Nelson commented that the resolution is an acknowledgement of what the voters approved. The actual amount to be taken out on these approved bonds is not a part of the resolution. If the amount were to be less at a certain date, the board could make a decision at that time.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Brown

Voting Nay: Commissioner Hersey

Motion failed.

County Attorney Nelson advised that the Chairman may schedule a Special Called Meeting, as long as the board members are notified within 24 hours of the meeting. The Chairman will schedule a Called Meeting to discuss this item.

11. Scheduling of Ordinance Public Hearing - Chapters 28 and 66 - April 16, 2024 (staff-CM)

Motion to schedule an Ordinance Public Hearing for Chapters 28 and 66 to be held April 16, 2024.

Motion made by Commissioner Brown, Seconded by Commissioner Hersey.

Voting Yea: Chairman Sharp, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey

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12. Proposed County Extension office and pickleball courts for consideration as a SPLOST 10 project (staff-CM)

Ms. Vickie spoke and emphasized the popularity of pickleball and encouraged the board to build 8 to 10 pickleball courts to accommodate the popular sport.

County Manager Van Haute commented that the plans and drawings are very preliminary and are subject to change. The architects from GMC gave a presentation with slide show to showcase different plans and drawings for the proposed SPLOST 10 project. Mr. Keith Fielder, Extension Agent, spoke in favor of the new Extension office, commenting that that the current facility is too small for their needs. No action taken.

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

13. Discussion and possible action regarding the Pittman Construction estimate for labor and material for a full depth reclamation of Scott Road and Sammons Industrial Parkway (staff-CM)

County Manager Van Haute provided labor numbers to create and pave with the new asphalt material on Sammons and Scott Roads. The labor cost would be \$180,000 for Sammons and \$163,000 for Scott. Looking at 1.2 million for the total cost of both roads, slightly under 4 miles. The cost for Scott is \$483,983.75 and Sammons is \$421,127.50.

The prices on Pittman's end are unknown. No one has used the material yet. If it does work, we'll have a better understanding of what all we can do going forward. Need a way to do full-depth reclamation on our roads at a cost that won't cripple our TSPLOST 2 budget. Roads will be identified and made known to BOC, indicating which roads need which materials, so each road will be custom designed for the condition of the road. He anticipates Scott or Sammons to be done in the next 90 to 120 days.

Commissioner Brown wanted to make the public aware of what's going on. The biggest problem we have with our paved roads is water. The project involves grinding up the roads, adding a material that makes it stronger and waterproof, to make the roads stronger and last longer. Hope to save money on future repair costs.

Motion to authorize the action regarding the Pittman Construction estimate for labor and material for a full-depth reclamation of Scott Road and Sammons Industrial Parkway.

Motion made by Commissioner Brown, Seconded by Commissioner Hersey.

Voting Yea: Chairman Sharp, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey

(Copy of estimate for labor and material made a part of the minutes on minute book pages _____ to _____.)

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14. Discussion and possible action regarding the fire at Precision Outdoors

County Manager Van Haute called on Fire Chief McClain to speak on this matter. Chief McClain talked about how the fire was believed to be started and how Precision Outdoors is cooperating fully with the Fire Department's efforts to keep the burn contained. The Chief said the fire would have to burn out on its own. Ms. Stephanie Cahill, Compliance Specialist, from the Environmental Protection Division in Atlanta spoke about the fire, its contributing factors, and how Precision Outdoors is cooperating with efforts to help extinguish the fire.

Motion to authorize the County Attorney, pursuant to O.C.G.A. 41-2-1 and following, to file a petition for abatement of a public nuisance resulting from the operation of Precision Outdoors and to seek an injunction to refrain Precision Outdoors from continuing their operation.

Motion made by Commissioner Hersey with no second. Motion fails. No action taken.

15. County Manager Report

No report.

16. County Attorney Report

No report.

17. Commissioner Announcements

Commissioner Brown: None

Commissioner Hersey: He is wholly disappointed with the actions of the board this morning. He does not look forward to the next three years serving. He reminded those in attendance to please wear eye protection to view the eclipse.

Chairman Sharp: Continue to pray for Fireman Darren Alford, Commissioner Gary McElhenney, who are both in the hospital, and County Clerk Lynn Butterworth. Lynn's surgery was successful and she is home. She is recovering from surgery and appreciates all our love and prayers.

Closing

18. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner Brown, Seconded by Commissioner Hersey.

Voting Yea: Chairman Sharp, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey

Meeting adjourned at approximately 12:16 p.m.

ATTEST:

Donna Todd
Deputy County Clerk

B. W. "Bill" Sharp
Chairman

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