

# PUTNAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



117 Putnam Drive, Suite A ♦ Eatonton, GA 31024

## Minutes

**Friday, January 5, 2024 ♦ 10:00 AM**

*Putnam County Administration Building – Room 203*

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

### *PRESENT*

Chairman Bill Sharp  
Commissioner Gary 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  
Deputy County Clerk Donna Todd

### **Opening**

#### 1. Welcome - Call to Order

Chairman Sharp called the meeting to order at approximately 10:01 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 Wooten.**

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

#### 3. Invocation

County Attorney Adam Nelson gave the invocation.

#### 4. Pledge of Allegiance - (SH)

Commissioner Hersey led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes	Page 1 of 6	Approved
January 5, 2024		February 2, 2024

5. Special Presentation - Habitat for Humanity (Murali Thirumal)

Mr. Murali Thirumal presented information on the ways in which Habitat for Humanity has helped citizens of Putnam County. In the past 25 years, Habitat for Humanity has built 28 houses in Putnam County, all within the city limits. Two are currently under construction and two more are about to break ground. New models of funding homes are considered every year.

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

6. Special Presentation - Uncle Remus Golf Course Superintendent Michael Benton

Golf Course Superintendent, Mr. Michael Benton, displayed a PowerPoint presentation to showcase improvements made to the Uncle Remus Golf Course. He highlighted the increase in memberships and the loyal customer base the Golf Course has.

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

**Regular Business Meeting**

7. Public Comments

Mr. Bill Vargo – Presented a handout to the Commissioners. He stated there was a lack of representation from the elected District 3 representative. County Attorney Nelson reminded Mr. Vargo that speaking about a person by name was prohibited. Mr. Vargo complied and stated that he hoped communication would improve between the elected official and the citizens in the district.

(Copy of handout made a part of the minutes on minute book pages \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.)

8. Consent Agenda

- a. ~~Approval of Minutes – November 21, 2023 Regular Meeting (staff-CC)~~
- b. Approval of Minutes - December 19, 2023 Regular Meeting (staff-CC)
- c. Approval of Minutes - December 19, 2023 Executive Session (staff-CC)

**Motion to approve the Consent Agenda.**

**Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.**

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

9. Chairman to appoint Vice-Chairman for 2024 (BS)

Chairman Sharp thanked Commissioner Brown for the outstanding job he did serving as Vice-Chairman. Commissioner Brown resigned as Vice-Chairman to run for re-election in District 2. Chairman Sharp appointed Commissioner Wooten as Vice-Chairman.

Minutes	Page 2 of 6	Approved
January 5, 2024		February 2, 2024

10. Request for final plat subdivision approval - Enclave at Waterfront (staff-P&D)

Chairman Sharp called on Planning & Development Director, Lisa Jackson, to speak about this item. Ms. Jackson advised that Mr. John Wojtas, agent for the developer, was in attendance and asked him to speak. Mr. Wojtas spoke about development indicating that the plat approval is for the last 12 homes. Planning & Development staff recommendation is for approval with the condition that all three streetlights are installed within 30 days of receipt by Tri-County. This is per the letter submitted by Tri-County dated December 13, 2023. The streetlights and poles are on backorder.

**Motion to approve the request for final plat subdivision approval – Enclave at Waterfront with the condition that all three streetlights are installed within 30 days of receipt by Tri-County.**

**Motion made by Commissioner Hersey, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.**

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

11. Repeal of HB 300 (staff-CM)

County Manager Van Haute advised that House Bill 300 was adopted and passed in 2011 and dollar values have changed; salary is now set by state law. The Commissioners expenses would be treated like employees. Per County Attorney Nelson, the action is to make a request to our legislative delegation to repeal House Bill 300.

**Motion to request legislative delegation to repeal House Bill 300.**

**Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.**

**Amended motion to request legislative delegation to repeal HB300 only after county has come to replacement compensation package.**

**Amended motion made by Commissioner Hersey, Seconded by Commissioner Brown**

**Voting Yea: Commissioner Hersey**

**Voting Nay: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, and Commissioner Wooten**

**Vote on original motion:**

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

**Voting Nay: Commissioner Hersey**

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

Minutes	Page 3 of 6	Approved
January 5, 2024		February 2, 2024

12. Approval of 2024 LMIG Project List (staff-CM)

Mr. Billy Webster expressed concern about District 4's LMIG road paving being in District 3 and that agenda item 14 implies that Districts 1 and 3 will get all the LMIG money. Commissioner Brown commented that District 3's LMIG funds were given to District 4, for Dennis Station. Commissioner Wooten commented that the wrong side of Dennis Station was paved by mistake. County Manager Van Haute stated that if the contractor who made the mistake is awarded the project this time, they will correct the mistake.

**Motion to approve the 2024 LMIG Project List.**

**Motion made by Commissioner Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.**

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

(Copy of list made a part of the minutes on minute book pages \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.)

13. Request for approval of installation of four FLOCK cameras in County ROW (staff-Public Works/PCSO)

Public Works Director Anthony Frazier spoke about this item, stating that FLOCK cameras are to be installed in county right of way at Highway 441 and Twin Bridges. These cameras have been requested by Sheriff Howard Sills and are legitimate cameras. The cameras will provide surveillance and look at vehicle license plates.

**Motion to approve the installation of four FLOCK cameras in the County Right of Way.**

**Motion made by Commissioner Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner McElhenney.**

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

**Voting Nay: Commissioner Hersey**

14. Request for approval purchase material for two road resurfacing projects (staff-Public Works)

Public Works Director Anthony Frazier presented information about the paving materials for resurfacing projects on Scott Road and Sammons Parkway and stated that samples have been collected. Utilizing the product provided by the vendor, Lithified Technologies, will give the base of the roads just under a 500K PSI base, which is far better than results with concrete. The material used is 100% waterproof and will make the total expense for the projects less than \$548,000.

**Motion to approve request for approval to purchase material for two road surfacing projects.**

**Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Hersey.**

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

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Minutes	Page 4 of 6	Approved
January 5, 2024		February 2, 2024

15. Approval of FY24 Budget Amendment #1 (staff-Finance)

Assistant Finance Director Jennifer Fricks presented information on the budget amendment for the 2024 budget. The items in the amendment are to account for grant money that was received in fiscal year 2023 instead of 2024, and to allocate donations received by the Clerk of Superior Court and for the new Fire/EMS Station.

**Motion to approve the FY24 Budget Amendment #1.**

**Motion made by Commissioner Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner McElhenney.**

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

(Copy of amendment made a part of the minutes on minute book page \_\_\_\_\_.)

16. Setting of Qualifying Fees for 2024 General Election (staff-Finance)

Finance Director Linda Cook, spoke about the 2024 General Election qualifying fees and stated the Elections Supervisor agrees with the calculations presented.

**Motion to set the Qualifying Fees for the 2024 General Election as shown in meeting packet.**

**Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Hersey.**

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

(Copy of fees made a part of the minutes on minute book page \_\_\_\_\_.)

17. Authorization for Chairman to sign Resolutions for the Tax Commissioner's Office (staff-Tax Comm)

- a. Resolution for Authority for Tax Commissioner to Receive Funds
- b. Resolution for Waiver of Penalties and Interest on Unpaid Ad Valorem Taxes
- c. Resolution Establishing Due Date for all Taxes

Newly appointed Tax Commissioner Terrell Abernathy spoke about each item and explained their necessity.

**Motion to authorize the Chairman to sign the Resolutions for the Tax Commissioners Office.**

- a. Resolution for Authority for Tax Commissioner to Receive Funds
- b. Resolution for Waiver of Penalties and Interest on Unpaid Ad Valorem Taxes
- c. Resolution Establishing Due Date for all Taxes

**Motion made by Commissioner Hersey, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.**

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

(Copy of resolutions made a part of the minutes on minute book pages \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.)

**Reports/Announcements**

18. County Manager Report

No report.

Minutes	Page 5 of 6	Approved
January 5, 2024		February 2, 2024

19. County Attorney Report

County Attorney Adam Nelson stated that the Governor has asked County Attorney, Barry Fleming, to serve as a Superior Court Judge for the Columbia County Judicial District. As a result, County Attorney Fleming will be leaving the Fleming and Nelson law practice. County Attorney Nelson stated that he appreciates the opportunity to remain as Putnam County's Attorney.

20. Commissioner Announcements

Commissioner McElhenney: thanked the staff, especially the County Manager, for the work he does to save us money.

Commissioner Brown: expressed pride in our County Manager and all the Putnam County staff who do such a great job for our County.

Commissioner Hersey: none.

Commissioner Wooten: expressed gratitude that Putnam County did so well and accomplished so much in 2023.

Chairman Sharp: asked that everyone continue to keep County Clerk Lynn Butterworth in their prayers as she returns to Texas for treatment. He also asked everyone to pray for our county.

**Closing**

21. Adjournment

**Motion to adjourn the meeting.**

**Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.**

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

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:18 p.m.

ATTEST:

Donna Todd  
Deputy County Clerk

B. W. "Bill" Sharp  
Chairman

Minutes	Page 6 of 6	Approved
January 5, 2024		February 2, 2024