

PUTNAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



117 Putnam Drive, Suite A ♦ Eatonton, GA 31024

Minutes

Tuesday, February 21, 2023 ♦ 6:00 PM

Putnam County Administration Building – Room 203

The Putnam County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at approximately 6:00 PM in the Putnam County Administration Building, 117 Putnam Drive, Room 203, Eatonton, Georgia.

PRESENT

Chairman Bill Sharp
Commissioner Gary McElhenney
Commissioner Daniel Brown (arrived late)
Commissioner Alan Foster
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 McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Foster, Commissioner Wooten

3. Invocation

County Attorney Adam Nelson gave the invocation.

4. Pledge of Allegiance (JW)

Commissioner Jeff Wooten led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Regular Business Meeting

5. Public Comments

None

6. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Minutes - February 3, 2023 Regular Meeting (staff-CC)
- b. Approval of Minutes - February 3, 2023 Executive Session (staff-CC)
- c. Approval of 2023 Alcohol Licenses (staff-CC)

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Commissioner Foster, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Foster, Commissioner Wooten

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

7. Discussion and possible action on moving the County Extension Office to Jimmy Davis Park (BOC)

County Extension Agent Keith Fielder explained some preliminary plans for moving the Extension Office to Jimmy Davis Park.

Mr. J.D. Jones commented that a study should be done about moving 4H to Jimmy Davis Park and the community should be involved.

Ms. Karen Evans commented that she likes the idea, but everyone should come together as one and figure out what needs to be done.

Ms. Patricia Hurt commented that it is awesome to hear that 4H wants to go to Jimmy Davis Park, but she is concerned about after hours of 4H.

Mr. Lavoniah Sanders commented that he didn't know the extension office was going to be moved there and asked about the kids and people that want to walk.

Ms. Wanda Lawson commented that she feels mistreated.

Motion to move the County Extension office to Jimmy Davis Park.

Motion made by Commissioner Brown, Seconded by Commissioner McElhenney.

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

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8. Approval of Short Term Rental Study Committee Roster (BS)

Adam reviewed the county ordinance regarding creating committees and the action which took place at the January 6th meeting to create the Short Term Rental Study Committee. He further explained that tonight's agenda item is an offer by the Chairman of the names of the committee members and concurrence from the board for those members to be named.

Commissioner Foster commented that the motion creating the committee stated that each member of the board would appoint one individual and then either the Chairman or his designee would serve, making a total of six people. He further stated he believes the January 6th motion needs to be rescinded at the March 3rd meeting, along with an agenda item for special called meetings for public input.

Ms. Erin Olson thanked the board for bringing up the issue, stating that short term rentals are commercial ventures and the R1R zoning designation has severely restricted uses and does not include hotels/motels or other commercial ventures. She further stated the short term rental study committee was not formed as the motion indicated and is not reflective of the Putnam County citizens.

Mr. Steven Howard commented that short term rentals have marred his neighborhood and scarred their way of life.

Mr. Charles Patten commented his concerns with the short term rental study committee, thinking it was supposed to be six members. He further expects protection of his neighborhood and stated that R1R zoning is for single family not commercial.

Mr. Steve Mallinson commented that short term rentals have disrupted the tranquility of his neighborhood and that commercial ventures should not be allowed.

Motion to table this item until the next regular meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.

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

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9. Approval of Right-of-Way Permit Applications from Charter Spectrum/Ficoa Communications (staff-PW)
 - a. Fawnfield Court to Hickory Point
 - b. Hickory Point to Parks Mill Road
 - c. Marshall Road to N. Sugar Creek Road
 - d. N. Sugar Creek Road to Parks Mill Road
 - e. Nottley Way to Parks Mill Road
 - f. Parks Mill Drive to Parks Mill Road
 - g. Ridgeview Road to Parks Mill Road
 - h. Shadow Lake Drive to Parks Mill Road
 - i. Wortham Drive to Nottley Way

Public Works Foreman Anthony Frazier explained the projects and requests and answered questions.

Motion to approve the Right-of Way Permit Applications from Charter Spectrum/Ficoa Communications:

- a. Fawnfield Court to Hickory Point**
- b. Hickory Point to Parks Mill Road**
- c. Marshall Road to N. Sugar Creek Road**
- d. N. Sugar Creek Road to Parks Mill Road**
- e. Nottley Way to Parks Mill Road**
- f. Parks Mill Drive to Parks Mill Road**
- g. Ridgeview Road to Parks Mill Road**
- h. Shadow Lake Drive to Parks Mill Road**
- i. Wortham Drive to Nottley Way**

Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.

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

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

10. Approval of Georgia Power Easement Purchases (staff-CM)
 - a. Martin Mill Road/Old Landfill - Parcel 012
 - b. Martin Mill Road/Old Landfill - Parcel 013

Motion to approve the Georgia Power Easement Purchases

- a. Martin Mill Road/Old Landfill - Parcel 012**
- b. Martin Mill Road/Old Landfill - Parcel 013**

Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.

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

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11. Appointment to the Eatonton-Putnam Library Board of Trustees (staff-CC)
Ms. Pam Atkinson was nominated for appointment to the Eatonton-Putnam Library Board of Trustees.

**Nomination made by Commissioner Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.
Voting Yea for Pam Atkinson: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown,
Commissioner Foster, Commissioner Wooten**

12. Approval of Letter to Governor regarding GDOT Highway 44 Project (BOC)
Mr. Greg Hawkins advised that the attorneys couldn't be here tonight, and he wants to see the right thing done for the county.

Mr. Tom Thompson asked the board not to rubber stamp a GDOT plan that is 20 years old and to encourage safety but don't impede businesses and residents.

Mr. Jim Pound commented that he was impressed with the proposed letter, talked about the danger of U-turns, and said that roundabouts need to be considered at Scott Road and Harmony Road.

Ms. Carol Gracco commented on her concerns with changes to Highway 44 and how they will detract from the community; she urged sending a letter demonstrating the impact and requesting a pause of the plan design.

Motion to approve the mailing of the letter to Governor Kemp concerning State Route 44.

Motion made by Commissioner Foster, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.

Motion amended to include attaching the package distributed by the SaveMy44 group.

Amended Motion made by Commissioner Foster, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.

Voting Yea: Chairman Sharp, Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Foster

Voting Nay: Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten

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

Reports/Announcements

13. County Manager Report

County Manager Van Haute reported the following:

- The Landfill project has been delayed due to wet weather; we can't get back in there to do the prep work
- There was a fatality on a Transit bus today
- As of March 1, 2023, Anthony Frazier will become the Public Works Director

14. County Attorney Report

No report but requested an Executive Session for two litigation matters.

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15. Commissioner Announcements

Commissioner McElhenney: congratulated Mr. Frazier on the promotion and expressed appreciation for him stepping up and commented that he is the man for the job.

Commissioner Brown: echoed Commissioner McElhenney’s comments and thanked Mr. Frazier.

Commissioner Foster: none

Commissioner Wooten: gave praise to Putnam County Animal Services, commenting that they are always willing to help the community and they do it with smiling faces; he also congratulated Mr. Frazier on the promotion.

Chairman Sharp: congratulated Mr. Frazier on the promotion and commented that he always works hard.

Executive Session

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

Motion to enter Executive Session for Litigation.

Motion made by Commissioner Foster, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.

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

Meeting closed at approximately 7:33 p.m.

17. Reopen meeting following Executive Session

Motion to reopen the meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Foster.

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

Meeting reconvened at approximately 8:37 p.m.

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

Motion to authorize the Chairman to sign the Affidavit concerning the subject matter of the closed portion of the meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner Foster, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.

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

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

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19. Action, if any, resulting from the Executive Session
Two litigation matters were discussed, no final action was taken.

Closing

20. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.

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

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:38 p.m.

ATTEST:

Lynn Butterworth
County Clerk

B. W. "Bill" Sharp
Chairman

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