

PUTNAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



117 Putnam Drive, Suite A ♦ Eatonton, GA 31024

Minutes

Friday, October 4, 2024 ♦ 10:00 AM

Putnam County Administration Building – Room 203

The Putnam County Board of Commissioners met on Friday, October 4, 2024 at approximately 10:00 AM in the Putnam County Administration Building, 117 Putnam Drive, Room 203, Eatonton, Georgia.

PRESENT

Chairman Bill Sharp
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 10:02 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 Brown, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

3. Invocation

Pastor Jonathon Dawson, LakePoint Community Church, gave the invocation.

4. Pledge of Allegiance (DB)

Commissioner Brown led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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5. Special Presentation - Proclamation Recognizing the Month of October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month

The Board of Commissioners proclaimed October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month and presented a proclamation to Human Resources Director Cynthia Miller who is spearheading activities and fund raising efforts.

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

Regular Business Meeting

6. Public Comments

Ms. Barbara Vargo thanked the county road crew and community volunteers for work during the hurricane.

Mr. Matthew Mikel commented on road repairs needed on Wesley Lane.

Mr. William Vargo commented on SPLOST 10.

Mr. Phillip Uzzo commented on SPLOST 10.

Ms. Jennifer Ray commented on fees paid to the attorney for bonds.

Mr. Josh Sprayberry commented on the preliminary plat for Len Resort.

Mr. Richard Garrett commented on SPLOST 10, Jimmy Davis Park, and the public comments sign in sheet.

Mr. Charles Gray commented on the newspaper coverage of negative "letters to the editor" and the county's need to offer rebuttal.

Ms. Kathy Wardlaw commented on a list of ordinances not being followed by the county regarding the Len Resort.

7. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Minutes - September 17, 2024 Regular Meeting (staff-CC)

b. Approval of Minutes - September 17, 2024 Executive Session (staff-CC)

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Commissioner Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner Hersey.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

8. Discussion of Chamber of Commerce Contract/STR Taxes (BS)

Mr. Tommy Jefferson commented that the amount of money given to the Chamber of Commerce is excessive.

Commissioner Hersey commented that a new resolution should be crafted for more tourism product development and the county should get a higher share of the hotel motel tax revenues.

Commissioner Brown inquired if we are following state codes regarding the distribution. County Attorney Nelson advised that we are in compliance.

Commissioner Hersey commented that the tax could be distributed differently and that an ordinance amendment would be required for certain changes.

Commissioner Wooten inquired if local legislation is needed to change the split. County Attorney Nelson advised only if we change the percent rate that we collect.

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Chairman Sharp commented that the majority of hotel motel tax comes from short term rentals and we need to cover compliance and maintenance of short term rentals.

Commissioner Hersey expressed concern about the Special Service Delivery (SSD) fund balance going below recommended levels and requested some of the hotel motel taxes to go to the SSD.

County Attorney Nelson advised that Georgia law requires 3 1/2 pennies (out of every 8) go to the Chamber and we currently give 4 1/2 pennies. The split could be changed to 56% to the county and 44% to the Chamber.

No action was taken.

9. Ratification of Declaration of Local Emergency (staff-CM)

County Manager Van Haute explained that the emergency declaration was signed ahead of Hurricane Helene due to the strong possibility of damage. Sheriff Sills sent the Declaration to GEMA.

Motion to ratify the Declaration of Local Emergency.

Motion made by Commissioner Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

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

Reports/Announcements

10. County Manager Report

County Manager Van Haute reported the following:

- Thanks to the staff for efforts during Hurricane Helene; job well done.
- Thanks for breast cancer awareness month; it has been 10 years since Linda Sadler passed away from this disease.

11. County Attorney Report

No report, but an Executive Session is needed for one real estate matter and one litigation matter.

12. Commissioner Announcements

Commissioner Brown: none

Commissioner Hersey: expressed gratitude to the Public Works department and all those who assisted during the storm; he asked everyone to keep neighbors in harder hit areas in their thoughts.

Commissioner Wooten: expressed appreciation to the Public Works department for getting things done and asked everyone to remember the farmers that lost crops in South Georgia and to pray for our neighbors that were hit hard by the storm.

Chairman Sharp: expressed appreciation to all the citizens who pitched in to help others following Hurricane Helene.

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Executive Session

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

Motion to enter Executive Session as allowed by O.C.G.A. 50-14-4 for Real Estate and Litigation.

Motion made by Commissioner Brown, Seconded by Commissioner Hersey

Voting Yea: Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

Meeting closed at approximately 11:15 a.m.

14. Reopen meeting following Executive Session

Motion to reopen the meeting following Executive Session.

Motion made by Commissioner Brown, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

Meeting reconvened at approximately 12:17 p.m.

15. 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 Hersey, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

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

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

No action taken.

Closing

17. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner Hersey, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.

Voting Yea: Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

Meeting adjourned at approximately 12:20 p.m.

ATTEST:

Lynn Butterworth
County Clerk

B. W. "Bill" Sharp
Chairman

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