

# PUTNAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



117 Putnam Drive, Suite A ♦ Eatonton, GA 31024

## Minutes

Friday, January 6, 2023 ♦ 9:00 AM

Putnam County Administration Building – Room 203

The Putnam County Board of Commissioners met on Friday, January 6, 2023 at approximately 9:00 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 Alan Foster  
Commissioner Jeff Wooten

### *STAFF PRESENT*

County Attorney Barry Fleming  
County Manager Paul Van Haute  
County Clerk Lynn Butterworth

### **Opening**

#### 1. Welcome - Call to Order

Chairman Bill Sharp called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 a.m.  
(Copy of agenda made a part of the minutes on minute book page \_\_\_\_\_.)

#### 2. Approval of Agenda

Attorney Fleming advised that item #15 (Appointment of County Manager and Approval of Contract) will need to be discussed in Executive Session along with one real estate matter.

**Motion to approve Agenda as noted by the Attorney.**

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

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

#### 3. Invocation

Attorney Barry Fleming gave the invocation.

#### 4. Pledge of Allegiance (AF)

Commissioner Alan Foster led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes	Page 1 of 6	Approved
January 6, 2023		January 17, 2023

5. Special Presentation - Retirement Proclamation for Shelby Collis

The commissioners presented a proclamation and gift card to Shelby Collis congratulating her on her retirement from Putnam County after 27 years.

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

**Regular Business Meeting**

6. Public Comments

None

7. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Minutes - December 20, 2022 Regular Meeting (staff-CC)

b. Approval of 2023 Alcohol Licenses (staff-CC)

**Motion to approve the Consent Agenda.**

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

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

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

8. Authorization for Chairman to sign Resolution to Transfer Funds from Restricted For Ad Valorem Tax Relief Account to Unassigned Fund Balance Account (staff-Finance)

**Motion to authorize the Chairman to sign the Resolution to Transfer Funds from Restricted For Ad Valorem Tax Relief Account to Unassigned Fund Balance Account.**

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

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

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

9. Approval to turn Victim/Witness Funds back over to the District Attorney (staff-Finance)

County Manager Van Haute explained that the funds were originally earmarked for the Solicitor General, but the District Attorney’s office is now handling those duties.

**Motion to approve turning the Victim/Witness Funds over to the District Attorney.**

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

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

10. Authorization for staff to schedule a Public Hearing for proposed changes to the Putnam County Code of Ordinances - Chapter 2 (Administration) (BS)

**Motion to authorize the staff to schedule a Public Hearing for proposed changes to the Putnam County Code of Ordinances - Chapter 2 (Administration).**

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

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

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

Minutes	Page 2 of 6	Approved
January 6, 2023		January 17, 2023

11. Discussion and possible action on forming a Short Term Vacation Rental Study Committee (BS)

Chairman Sharp advised that he has received a lot of questions lately regarding Short-Term Rentals and wants to form a committee made up of people from the community to study our ordinances. He would like each commissioner to appoint one person within the next 10 days and he would like the committee to report back to the board at the second meeting in April.

**Motion to form a Short Term Vacation Rental Study Committee as outlined by the Chairman.**

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

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

12. Appointment of the Vice Chairman of the Board of Commissioners (BS)

Chairman Sharp appointed Commissioner Daniel Brown as the Vice Chairman of the Board of Commissioners.

13. Chairman's Appointment to the Sinclair Water Authority (BS)

Chairman Sharp appointed Commissioner Jeff Wooten to serve on the Sinclair Water Authority.

14. Appointment of the County Attorney

**Motion to appoint and continue with the current counsel, Fleming & Nelson, LLP.**

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

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

15. Appointment of County Manager and Approval of Contract

This item was discussed in Executive Session.

16. Appointment of County Clerk

**Motion to appoint and continue with Lynn Butterworth as County Clerk.**

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

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

Minutes	Page 3 of 6	Approved
January 6, 2023		January 17, 2023

17. Appointments to the Planning and Zoning Commission (staff-CC)

Commissioner McElhenney, seconded by Commissioner Foster, nominated Maurice Hill, Jr. for appointment to the District One seat on the Planning & Zoning Commission.

**Chairman Sharp called for the vote. Commissioner McElhenney voted for Maurice Hill, Jr. Commissioner Brown voted for Maurice Hill, Jr. Commissioner Foster voted for Maurice Hill, Jr. Commissioner Wooten voted for Maurice Hill, Jr.**

Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Wooten, nominated Charles Hurt for appointment to the District Two seat on the Planning & Zoning Commission.

**Chairman Sharp called for the vote. Commissioner McElhenney voted for Charles Hurt. Commissioner Brown voted for Charles Hurt. Commissioner Foster voted for Charles Hurt. Commissioner Wooten voted for Charles Hurt.**

Commissioner Foster, seconded by Commissioner Brown, nominated Harold Jones for appointment to the District Three seat on the Planning & Zoning Commission.

**Chairman Sharp called for the vote. Commissioner McElhenney voted for Harold Jones. Commissioner Brown voted for Harold Jones. Commissioner Foster voted for Harold Jones. Commissioner Wooten voted for Harold Jones.**

Commissioner Wooten, seconded by Commissioner Foster, nominated Shad Atkinson for appointment to the District Four seat on the Planning & Zoning Commission.

**Chairman Sharp called for the vote. Commissioner McElhenney voted for Shad Atkinson. Commissioner Brown voted for Shad Atkinson. Commissioner Foster voted for Shad Atkinson. Commissioner Wooten voted for Shad Atkinson.**

Chairman Sharp, seconded by Commissioner Wooten, nominated John T. Mitchell for appointment as the Chairman on the Planning & Zoning Commission.

**Chairman Sharp called for the vote. Commissioner McElhenney voted for John T. Mitchell. Commissioner Brown voted for John T. Mitchell. Commissioner Foster voted for John T. Mitchell. Commissioner Wooten voted for John T. Mitchell.**

## **Reports/Announcements**

18. County Manager Report

County Manager Van Haute reported the following:

- Employees of the Public Works Department were present and recognized. The Board of Commissioners recently received a letter from a citizen commending them, which is well earned and deserved. Recent work includes helping DOT remove a tree early one morning and clearing trees over the holidays in cold weather and high winds. He thanked them for what they do.
- The Planning and Development Department has been getting busier:
  - In 2020, 2000 total permits were issued; in 2022, 2400 total permits were issued
  - In 2020, 200 site built home permits were issued; in 2022 there were 290
  - In 2020, 14 commercial building permits were issued; in 2022 there were 31
  - In 2020, revenue was 450K; in 2022 it was 778K
- Ambulance calls have experienced a 10% growth. We are almost at enough volume to support another ambulance, which would need 18 fulltime people to staff it.

Minutes	Page 4 of 6	Approved
January 6, 2023		January 17, 2023

- Fire Chief McClain commented on some stats for the Fire Department
  - In 2020 they answered 1839 calls; in 2022 they answered 2097; a 12% increase
  - In addition to answering calls, his staff also works with Planning and Development in plan reviews and does short term rental certificate and alcohol license inspections, just to name a couple. He thanked the board for their support
- DOT information regarding Highway 44 was received this week
- Bridge reports from DOT were also received
- DOT LMIG (local maintenance improvement grant) request is due soon. This will be added to the next agenda to decide on a project – one suggestion is to redo Sammons Parkway because the concrete supply chain issue is better now.

19. County Attorney Report

No report but requested Executive Session to discuss Personnel and Real Estate

20. Commissioner Announcements

Commissioner McElhenney: echoed the comments by the County Manager regarding Public Works, saying they do a fantastic job

Commissioner Brown: welcomed Bill Sharp as Chairman and Alan Foster as District Three Commissioner, saying he’s glad to have them aboard and hopes God's blessings will continue

Commissioner Foster: advised that this was his 269th agenda, but the first one in this term and he looks forward to working with everyone

Commissioner Wooten: thanked Commissioner Foster and Chairman Sharp for taking on their new positions, commented on how well Putnam County handled the recent water crisis and expressed his appreciation for Public Works

Chairman Sharp: commented that during the recent freeze that EPWSA and SWA employees worked around the clock to fix things and he is proud of how they handled it. He also commented on the wonderful employees of Putnam County and thanked all for a job well done.

**Executive Session**

21. 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 Personnel and Real Estate.**

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

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

Meeting closed at approximately 9:53 a.m.

Minutes	Page 5 of 6	Approved
January 6, 2023		January 17, 2023

22. Reopen meeting following Executive Session

**Motion to reopen the meeting following Executive Session.**

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

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

Meeting reconvened at approximately 11:17 a.m.

23. Execute Affidavit concerning the subject matter of the closed portion of the meeting  
Attorney Fleming advised that two real estate matters and one personnel matter was discussed with no final action and that a motion is needed to sign the Affidavit.

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

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

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

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

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

No action was taken.

**Closing**

25. Adjournment

**Motion to adjourn the meeting.**

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

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

**Voting Nay: Commissioner Foster**

Meeting adjourned at approximately 11:19 a.m.

ATTEST:

Lynn Butterworth  
County Clerk

B. W. "Bill" Sharp  
Chairman

Minutes	Page 6 of 6	Approved
January 6, 2023		January 17, 2023