

Newton County Board of Commissioners
Minutes
January 4, 2022
1124 Clark Street
Historic Courthouse
Covington, GA 30014

In attendance, Chairman Banes, Commissioners; Edwards, Mason, Sanders, Henderson, Cowan, Attorney Patrick Jaugstetter and Deputy Clerk Susan Nolley.

1. Call to Order-Chairman Banes
2. Invocation-Commissioner Edwards
3. Pledge-Led by Commissioner Sanders
4. Agenda Adoption

Commissioner Henderson made request to remove items 8(e) and 8(f) from the Consent Agenda and to be added as Regular Agenda items 9(a) and 9(b).

Commissioner Sanders made motion for the following (2) items to be added to the Regular Agenda:

10a Discussion of Interim County Manager position

Commissioner Henderson seconded. PASSED 5-0

10b Discussion of COVID measures and safety measures for Newton County

Commissioner Henderson seconded. PASSED 5-0

Motion: Commissioner Edwards motioned to approve Agenda Adoption as amended, Commissioner Sanders seconded. PASSED 5-0

5. Citizen Comments NONE

6. Reports from Chairman

Acknowledgement of Berry's Christmas Tree Farm- delivered Christmas Trees for Vice President Kamala Harris

Chuck and Lori Berry were acknowledged and received a plaque of recognition for their Award Winning Christmas tree that was purchased and delivered to the home of U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris.

Mr. Hunter Hall-Newton Chamber of Commerce Board Chair

Presented a strategic plan analysis for economical and projective growth for the Covington-Newton County Community.

7. Approval of the minutes

12-07-2021 Special Call Meeting/Regular Meeting

Motion: Commissioner Edwards motioned to approve, seconded by Commissioner Mason. Vote 5-0. PASSED

8. Consent Agenda

- a) Ratification of 2022 Alcohol Beverage License Renewals
(December 7, 2021 BOC agenda)
- b) Ratification of approval for Newton County Animal Services to apply for Petco Grant. (Training Grant)
- c) Ratification of **RESOLUTION-R080421E** A MANDATORY MASK POLICY ADOPTED AUGUST 4, 2021 **UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.**
- d) Newton County Sheriff's Office-seeks permission to accept the FY 2020 Naloxone Grant.
Deadline: January 15, 2022
Funding Source: Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC)
- e) Appointment of the Vice-Chairman
- f) Appointment of the County Clerk
- g) Newton County Planning Commission-James Johnson-Appointment at Large
Motion: Commissioner Edwards motioned to approve, seconded by Commissioner Sanders. Vote 5-0. PASSED

Regular Agenda

9a Appointment of Vice Chair-Commissioner J.C. Henderson Calendar Year 2022

Discussion: Commissioner Henderson expressed concern stating that it was time for the for Vice-Chair receive an upgrade and suggested they should have a name plate and name tag stating Vice-Chair and they be addressed as such. He also would like to have public budget meetings.

Motion: To appoint Commissioner J.C. Henderson as Vice-Chair for calendar year 2022, to recognize and to provide the Vice-Chair a name tag and name plate, also to have additional public budget meetings conducted as part of the budget process prior to adoption of the budget, and to be addressed at public meeting by fellow Board members as Vice-Chair.

Motioned by Commissioner Henderson, seconded by Commissioner Sanders.

Discussion: Commissioner Mason stated, we are putting two different subject matters into one motion and the budget hearings should not be a part of this particular motion. This motion should be made after the Finance Director and County Manager has provided the Board the budget hearings calendar, at the time we are approving that budget hearings calendar and we can add additional meetings if we so choose. Tonight, we should not be making a motion around budget hearings, and feels the Board should address item 9a which is appointment of the Vice-Chair and what that entails.

Chairman Banes added for clarification, the Vice-Chair rotates annually, and this year it's at the seat of Commissioner Henderson, also suggesting that a separate motion be made regarding the budget.

Commissioner Edwards asked for clarification of the exact motion.

Attorney Patrick Jaugstetter stated, right now the motion is to appoint J.C. Henderson as Vice-Chair for calendar year 2022, to provide to the Vice-Chair a name tag and a name plate denoting his status as Vice-Chair, to be addressed at public meeting by fellow Board members as Vice-Chair, and to have additional public meetings during the budget process held with the general public prior to public hearing and adoption of the budget.

Chairman Banes called for the vote. Vote 3-2. FAILED

Discussion: Commissioner Sanders stated that she would like to make a motion to appoint Commissioner J.C. Henderson as Vice-Chair for calendar year 2022, to provide the Vice-Chair a name tag and name plate to designate his status as Vice-Chair and for the other Commissioners to refer to him as Vice-Chair during public meetings.

Commissioner Edwards asked for clarity of the motion as it refers to addressing the Vice-Chair.

Attorney Patrick Jaugstetter replied, the motion includes only in public meetings, adding that it's not enforceable. There is no manner in which you can enforce that.

Chairman Banes called for the vote.

Motion: Commissioner Sanders motioned to appoint Commissioner J.C. Henderson as Vice-Chair for calendar year 2022, seconded by Commissioner Cowan.
Vote 5-0. PASSED

9b Appointment of County Clerk Jackie Smith Calendar Year 2022

Motion: Commissioner Henderson made the motion to appoint County Clerk Jackie Smith for calendar year 2022, Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion, adding, she would like to table the agenda item to discuss the actual position of the County Clerk in detail.

Substitute motion: Commissioner Cowan made a substitute motion to appoint Jackie Smith, County Clerk for calendar year 2022, Commissioner Edwards seconded.
Vote 5-0. PASSED

9c Clarification of compensation for County and State employees regarding premium pay.

Brittany White, Finance Director addressed the Board for clarification purposes and for the recorded minutes confirming that all county employees and state employees that receive supplemental pay from the county, will receive the premium pay. The payments are ARPA (American Relief Plan Act) funds, which are federal funds, and the understanding is clear for recording purposes when it is reported to ARPA.

District Attorney, Randy McGinley discussed further and clarified that he has state employees that work the same number of hours as other county employees and would like to request they be compensated the same as other employees.

Brittany White added, the Agricultural Resources Department has two state employees who also receive supplemental pay from the county.

Motion: All county employees and state employees of elected and constitutional officers that receive supplemental pay from the county be entitled to the appropriate premium pay/ARPA funds as approved by the Board December 7, 2021.

Commissioner Cowan motioned to approve, seconded by Commissioner Henderson.
PASSED 5-0. (Legal advice pending regarding payment for constitutional officers)

10. Cornish Creek-James Brown, Director-requesting Amendment #2 Change Order #1 to Williams St. Crowder Agreement. Add engineering evaluation of the existing City Pond Dam to Design-Builder's Phase I scope for the Williams Street Rehabilitation Project. Cost: \$52,761.45 Funding Source: GEFA (Georgia Environmental Finance Authority)

Motion: Commissioner Henderson motioned to approve, Commissioner Mason seconded.
PASSED 5-0

Chairman Banes authorized order of the agenda as follows:

11. Cornish Creek-James Brown, Director-requesting to grant permission to allow Newton County Water & Sewerage use of easement. Paine Crossing Transmission Main Project #N2075.026

Motion: Commissioner Mason motioned to approve, Commissioner Cowan seconded.
PASSED 5-0.

10a Discussion of Interim County Manager position. **None action item**

Amanda Shoemaker, Director of Human Resources gave an update on the current status and processing of the Interim County Manager position. An addition of 6 applications were received since last reported. Interviews are planned to be scheduled next week. There has been a total of 16 applications received for the position.

Copies of applications submitted by potential candidates will be provided to the Board prior to meeting them for review or selection.

The applications are reviewed by Chairman Banes, Amanda Shoemaker and Attorney Patrick Jaugstetter.

The appointment of Interim County Manager will be selected as process states.

10b Discussion of COVID measures and safety measures in Newton County.

None action item

The location of Gaither's Plantation has been submitted to the state for consideration of a mass COVID testing site.

Newton County ranks high in positive test results which brings great concern for the community.

It was reported there are currently no home test available for local citizens.

Vacant parking lots were suggested as potential testing sites.

Mobile Quick lab for COVID testing - Commissioner Mason to be provide more information.

A tornado touched down in western Newton County December 31, 2021 and concerns of citizens reporting they did not receive a message to alert nor hear a sound alert.

Suggestion that more methods of safety measures be available to better alert citizens of tornados and other potential disastrous weather.

EMA provided the following information via email:

Newton County uses Code Red for Emergency alert notification.

Citizens must register for this service to receive warnings via home phone and or cell phone, citizens can select to receive text warnings or via email or text messages to their phone. **Newton County has 23 weather sirens in operation**

12. Tim Lawrence, Director- Presented a PowerPoint presentation and discussed the Newton County Commission and School Board "Redistricting Map".

None action item

13. Approval of **INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE COUNTY OF NEWTON, GEORGIA AND THE COUNTY OF ROCKDALE, GEORGIA FOR PROVISION OF PUBLIC WORKS SERVICES.**

Motion: Commissioner Edwards motioned to approve, seconded by Commissioner Mason. Vote 5-0. PASSED

14. **Alcohol Beverage License**

1st Reading CVS 4192 Salem Road Covington, Georgia 30016 Applicant Tasha Reed District-3

15. 2022 Alcohol License Renewals-Additional Submittals (11 Total)

Motion: Commissioner Mason motioned to approve, Commissioner Edwards seconded. PASSED 5-0

16. Citizen Comments

Barbara Fairman-Thanked the Board for their decision made removal of animals.

Gary Griggs- On behalf of Lyndhurst Subdivision extended compliments and commended Commissioner Mason for his dedicated service and improving the quality of life.

Steven Holzmilller-Extended compliments and commended Commissioner Mason for his service. (Lyndhurst Subdivision)

Annette Austin-Trelawney Subdivision-commended Lloyd Kerr for all of his efforts in expediting a drainage problem. Expressed concern of county management.

Fred Johnson-No cemetery cleanup on MLK Day due to COVID concerns. Commented on the sound quality and acoustics.

John Dobbs-Salaries of county officials

17. Board Comments

Chairman Banes-Excited about the New Year and new opportunities that are coming to Newton County, will make an announcement about a new job initiative for those seeking jobs. Announcement to come at a later date.

Commissioner Edwards-Look forward to working with the Board and a productive year.

Commissioner Mason-Look forward to working with the Board this year, Cleanup Newton project January 15 @ 10:00 AM, seeking Volunteers. This will be a monthly event.

Commissioner Sanders-Looking forward to working with the Board, reached 1-year mark as Commissioner, expressed her appreciation to citizens and the community for kindness shown, DCA Director is seeking to work with non-profits with rental assistance.

Commissioner Henderson-Bike drive was a success, food give away in the community,

18. Executive Session

Enter into Executive Session for possible litigation (No action to be taken)

9:40 P.M.

Motion: Commissioner Mason made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Edwards

19. Adjourn

Motion: Commissioner Edwards motioned to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Sanders.

Adjourned @ 10:07 PM

Submitted by

Susan G. Nolley

Chairman Marcello Banes