



CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

NC Board Chairman Marcello Banes



#OneNewton Family,

The Newton County Board of Commissioners approved the County's Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Tuesday after months of hard work by our dedicated staff.

I am proud of the work our employees, county manager and commissioners have done to reach this point. A herculean effort was accomplished in producing a budget that provides an abundance of services to the public, enables the County to hire and retain top-level employees and keeps in mind the tax burden to our residents.

Newton County will be operating with a total of \$104,587,269 through June 30 of 2021. This is an increase of 5.8 percent from the previous year, enabling us to offer even more services to you the resident.

[Newton County Fiscal Year 2021 Budget](#)

This year's budget will see Newton County staff two brand new fire stations – No. 8 in the north side of the county and No. 4 in the east side of the county – and a renovated station in station No. 2 in southern Newton County.

The new budget allows for the hiring of 18 new firefighters. Additional Sheriff's deputies were also included in the budget to continue to ensure Newton County is a safe and secure community, in line with our strategic plan.

In the coming year Newton County will see an expanded Animal Services Shelter and Senior Services Center. The new budget ensures we can staff those facilities accordingly in order to maintain a solid infrastructure, also detailed in our strategic plan that was created in 2019.

Our county manager and finance director worked hard to continue improving services to residents while also keeping in mind the tax burden of those who live and do business in Newton County. The new budget is funded, in part, by a millage rate of 12.917 (other areas of revenue include things like SPLOST, business licenses and permits, fines and forfeitures, charges for services, etc.). This millage rate, the figure that is used to calculate the amount of taxes taken from an assessed value of a property, is the lowest it has been since 2014.

In fact, I am proud to say, our millage rate has not increased since I took office and has been reduced the last two years. This has come from a combined effort of our great staff and all of our commissioners.

To clarify any confusion, a lower millage rate does not mean taxes will necessarily be lowered but it does mean that we are doing everything in our power to ensure that the services continue while keeping in

mind the burden of the tax payer and some will not see an increase caused by their County's Maintenance and Operations tax.

Please, I encourage everyone reading this to look at the FY2021 Budget linked above and see what your county is doing and where the money is being spent. The Board of Commissioners held several public hearings on the budget, participated in many budget workshops that were open to the public and have had our proposed budget on the website for months.

We are working as transparent as possible and I encourage you to take advantage of this transparency.

Career Opportunities

The latest number of unemployed workers in Newton County is showing promise from just a few months ago but there is still room to return to where the workforce was prior to the outbreak of COVID-19.

Newton County had a reported 8.4 percent unemployment for June 2020. While the workforce is returning from the COVID-19 pandemic, there still is a need for jobs in our community. Of Newton County's 50,140 workers in the labor force, 4,228 were unemployed for the month of June, according to the Georgia Department of Labor.

A great opportunity is approaching with the annual Regional Job Fair, which this year will be a Virtual and Regional Job Fair sponsored by Georgia Piedmont Technical College, the Newton County Industrial Development Authority, the Development Authority of Walton County, the Covington-Newton County Chamber of Commerce and nifty Hire.



The poster for the 2020 Regional Virtual Job Fair features a group of diverse people silhouettes against a background of a globe and network lines. The text on the poster includes: '2020 REGIONAL VIRTUAL JOB FAIR', 'JULY 30, 2020 10 AM - 2 PM', 'BE A PART OF EPIC'S FIRST-EVER VIRTUAL JOB FAIR!', and 'REGISTER BY CLICKING LINK BELOW' with the URL 'http://www.careereco.com/events/GeorgiaPiedmont'. It lists 'INDUSTRY PARTNERS ATTENDING' such as Electrical Contracto, Inc., Express Employment Professionals, Flexo Converters, Haver & Boecker USA, Hitachi Automotive Systems Americas, Inc., Human Technologies, Inc., Michelin, Minerva Beauty, Inc., Nisshinbo Automotive Manufacturing, Inc., SRG Global, and Tiresouth, Inc. It also lists 'GOVERNMENT/EDUCATION' partners like City of Covington, Emory University, Newton County Sheriff's Office, and Georgia Piedmont Technical College. Sponsors include Georgia Piedmont Technical College, Newton County Industrial Development Authority, Covington Newton County Chamber of Commerce, and Walton County. The poster highlights 'FREE WORKSHOPS & FEATURES' including Resume Update, Mock Interviews, The Art of Follow-Up, and Interview Skills in a Virtual Environment. A footer note says 'For more information, please contact Mr. Kelly Pollard at GoMetroCorporateCollege@gptc.edu'.

To register, go to <http://www.careereco.com/events/GeorgiaPiedmont>.

This event is designed to connect job seekers with local employers in the fields of manufacturing, film, entertainment, public safety, local government, bio-pharma, high-technology and distribution.

Some of the industry partners attending are: Electrical Contracto, Inc., Express Employment Professionals, Flexo Converters, Haver and Boecker USA, Hitachi Automotive Systems Americas, Inc., Human Technology, Inc., Michelin, Minerva Beauty, Inc., Nisshinbo Automotive Manufacturing, Inc., SRG Global and Tiresouth, Inc.

This will be a great event, featuring workshops and other information sessions to hone your skills.

Please join me at this fantastic annual event.

PRAYERS NEEDED



I also want to talk about something personal this week.

Someone who is a close personal friend and has been a mainstay in our community along with a Newton County employee for 12 years is in need of our prayers.

I recently found out that Lisa Conner, who is the County's special projects coordinator and has previously served as executive administrative assistant to myself and my predecessor, along with other positions within the county is ill.

I will respect her privacy and not go into details on her condition but she will be glad to know that everyone who can is praying for her and her family.

Please, please pray for Lisa Conner and her entire family as they go through this time. She has not only meant much to me but has meant a lot to our county. She has a great love for this county and the people who make up our community and now is our chance to show her that great love back with our positive thoughts, energy and prayers.

Marcello Banes

Chairman, Newton County Board of Commissioners