

NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
1124 Clark Street
Covington, Georgia
Regular Meeting
Agenda
June 6, 2023

MINUTES

Present: Chairman Marcello Banes, Commissioners' Stan Edwards, Demond Mason, Alana Sanders, J.C. Henderson, Ronnie Cowan, County Attorney Patrick Jaugstetter and Clerk Jackie Smith

Others Present: Citizens, Covington News and the Newton Citizen

Chairman Banes called the meeting to order, extended a welcome, and read the thought for the day. The invocation was given by Commissioner Mason, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Cowan.

AMEND THE AGENDA

Commissioner Cowan requested the agenda be amended to move items 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 to the consent agenda. He noted the contracts are funded by State grants and on the consent agenda to be accepted.

Motion by Commissioner Cowan, second by Commissioner Edwards to move items 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, & 16 to the consent agenda.

Motion carried unanimously

AGENDA ADOPTION

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason, to adopt the agenda dated June 6, 2023.

Motion carried unanimously

CITIZEN COMMENTS (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)

Rosie Crawford and Archie Shepherd.

Item #7, County Manager's Report

ARPA Projects.

Voiced their concerns that many seniors are having difficulty applying for the Senior Home Repair Program.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

- Invited the Dwayne Mask, Kale Curtis (NC Recreation) and Mike Hopkins (Miracle League) to the platform.
- Miracle League All Star Weekend.
- Showed a very touching video of the wonderful Miracle League kids enjoying life with the Miracle League.

- 16 months to go before we host the Miracle League event...October 2024.
- City of Covington has donated \$25,000 to help with expenses and challenged the county to do the same.
- Each board member one after the other spoke on how wonderful this program is and would like to see the county do that and more, if possible.
- Unanimous support
- Chairman commented that we are asking our county manger to find the dollars to make this happen.
- Mike Hopkins said it's not only the momentary support, but hopes all will come out and support this event.

COUNTY MANAGERS REPORT:

- Provided PowerPoint presentation that is attached to these minutes.
- Mr. Cooper highlighted his time in the county thus far.
- He reiterated his "People, Purpose, Process" philosophy.
- Very busy meeting people and attending meetings.
- Expressed thanks to Commissioner Henderson and Commissioner Cowan for inviting him to the Town Hall Meeting at Good Hope Church.

OLD BUSINESS – NONE

CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Finance/Superior Court: Requesting acceptance of the FY24 CACJ Adult Drug Court Grant.
Presenters: The Honorable Judge Ken Wynne, Wes Long, Cathy Davis
Grant Amount: \$289,584
Funding Source: The Council of Accountability Courts.
Match: \$39,489
Funding Source: FY24 Budget & Court Fees paid by participants

- b. Finance/Superior Court: Requesting acceptance of the FY24 CACJ Mental Health Court Grant.
Presenters: The Honorable Judge Layla Zon, Robert Fox, Cathy Davis
Grant Amount: \$308,719
Funding Source: The Council of Accountability Courts
Match: \$42,098
Funding Source: FY24 Budget

- c. Finance/Superior Court: Requesting acceptance of FY24 CACJ Veterans Court Grant.
Presenters: The Honorable Judge Cheveda McCamy, Richard Kringer, Cathy Davis
Grant Amount: \$92,431
Funding Source: The Council of Accountability Courts

Match: \$12,604
Funding Source: FY24 Budget

- d. Finance/Juvenile Court: Requesting acceptance of FY24 CAJC Juvenile Court Grant.
Presenters: Jennifer Warren, Cathy Davis
Grant Amount: \$59,895
Funding Source: Council of Accountability Courts
Match: \$8,168
Funding Source: Funding Source: FY24 Budget
- e. Finance/Juvenile Court: Requesting acceptance of FY24 CAJC Juvenile Behavioral Health Court Grant
Presenter: April Robinson, Court Coordinator
Grant Amount: \$96,567
Funding Source: Council of Accountability Courts
Match: \$13,168
Funding Source: Funding Source: FY24 Budget
- g. Finance/Sheriff's Department: Requesting acceptance of the FY23 LEO Surveillance Assistance Grant.
Presenters: Deputy Underwood, Deputy Major
Grant Amount: \$21,067
Funding Source: Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC)
Match: \$2,873
Funding Source: FY23 General Fund Budget
- h. Fire Services: Requesting acceptance of Walmart Community Grant.
Presenter: Chief Mike Conner
Grant Amount: \$1,000
Funding Source: Walmart
No Match Required
- i. Fire Services: Requesting acceptance of the Publix Community Grant.
Presenter: Chief Mike Conner
Grant Amount: \$1,000
Funding Source: Publix
No Match Required
- j. County Clerk: BOC Work Session Minutes dated January 17, 2023, March 29, 2023, Regular Minutes May 16, 2023, Executive Session Minutes May 16, 2023.
- k. Finance/Public Works: Requesting approval to sell (4) surplus vehicles

- l. Library Board Appointment – District 4 – Bobbie Shepherd
Term Expires: June 30, 2026

- m. Library Board Appointment – District 5 – Carol Moss
Term Expires: June 30, 2026

- n. Superior Court: Requesting Approval of the Fy24 View Point Health Contract for the Adult Felony Drug Court.
Contract Amount: \$222,247.72
Funding Source: State Grant.
Budgeted: Yes
Match: Yes
Funding Source: Court Fees paid by participants

- o. Finance/Superior Court: Requesting approval of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Alcovy Veterans Court & Accountability Lab Services.
Funding Source: State Grant.
Budgeted: Yes
Match: Yes
Funding Source: General Fund
The MOU will be covered by the FY24 CJCC Veterans Court Award
Contract attached and made part of these minutes.

- p. Finance/Superior Court: Requesting Approval of the Fy24 Southeastern Psychological Associates Contract.
Funding Source: State Grant.
Budgeted: Yes
Match: Yes
Funding Source: General Fund
The contact will be covered by the FY24 CJCC Veterans Court Award

- q. Finance/Superior Court: Requesting Approval of the Fy24 View Point Health Contract for the Alcovy Veterans Court.
Funding Source: State Grant.
Budgeted: Yes
Match: Yes
Funding Source: General Fund
The contact will be covered by the FY24 CJCC Alcovy Veterans Court

- r. Juvenile Court: Requesting Approval for Professional Services Contracts for Dependency Court-Appointed Attorneys and Court Reporter.
Contract Amounts: \$195,600
Funding Source: Juvenile Court Annual Budget
Budgeted: Yes
No Match Requirement

- a. Cindy McCranie
 - b. Giget C. Johnson
 - c. Pemberton Law (Titus Pemberton)
 - d. Pemberton Law (Titus Pemberton)
 - e. DeVona Roseberry
- s. Juvenile Court: Requesting Approval of the Fy24 Southeastern Psychological Associates Contract for Family Treatment Court.
 Presenter: Jennifer Warren, Cathy Davis
 Contract Amount: Not to exceed \$46,800
 Funding Source: State Grant.
 Budgeted: Yes
 Match: Yes
 Funding Source: General Fund
 The contact will be covered by the FY24 Southeastern Psychological Associates Contract for Family Treatment Court Award
- t. Juvenile Court/Finance: Requesting Approval of the Fy24 Juvenile Behavioral Health Court Treatment Contract.
 Contract Amount: \$62,000
 Funding Source: Council of Accountability Court Judges (CACJ)
 Budgeted: Yes
 Match: Yes
 Funding Source: FY24 Budget

Motion by Commissioner Mason, second by Commissioner Edwards, to approve the consent agenda with the additional items as listed.
 Motion carried unanimously

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION

SHERIFF’S OFFICE: DISCUSSION

Presenter: Sheriff Ezell Brown

1. Language change for vehicle purchasing (ARPA) funds
2. Issues of the HVAC System in the Jail and potential solutions.

Chairman Banes recognized Sheriff Brown who addressed the board with his concerns about being able to order different types of vehicles. He questioned if the verbiage could be changed to say “vehicles” on the SPLOST information. County Attorney Patrick Jaugstetter stated that one issue with the SPLOST Law is that we are bound by language on the SPLOST ballot. He said he would like to look into this and feels something can be worked out. After researching he will provide the board his conclusions. He feels there will be a way to order different types of vehicles and not just cars and doesn’t think it will require board action. He said that he will get a response to the board by the end of the week.

Regarding the HVAC System, Sheriff Brown, expressed his feelings of the difficulty in getting a purchase order. He said that he has already spoken with the county manager about the purchasing policy.

He questioned if using ARPA funds are we bound by the county's purchasing policy or are there rules/regulations required by the federal government.

He said it takes so long to get a purchase order approved and that getting bids is very time consuming and troublesome.

He commented that it has already cost money unnecessarily. He said the past county manager did not put any money into the budget for repairs.

Attorney Jaugstetter said that ARPA funds do not excuse us from following our own county purchasing policy. He said he will look into this.

Commissioner Cowan commented there are gaps in our purchasing policy and would like to see it reviewed. Mr. Jaugstetter suggested identifying potential areas. He also said the county could have an on-call contractor approved.

Mr. Cooper said he would look into this and review the federal guidelines as well.

**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES. APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 20230606
– ADOPTION OF THE FY22 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT
ELEMENT/SHORT TERM WORK PROGRAM REPORT (FY22
CIE/STWP REPORT)**

Presenter: Shena Applewhaite

- DCA approved the FY22 CIE & STWP for the next five years on May 31, 2023.
- This resolution is a requirement and part of the process.
- Updated is required annually and allows the County to maintain its Qualified Local Government Status.

Motion by Commissioner Cowan, second by Commissioner Edwards, to approve Resolution R-2023-0606 – Adoption of the FY22 Capital Improvement Element/Short Term Work Program. (CIE/STWP Report)

Motion carried unanimously

**FIRE DEPARTMENT/PURCHASING: REQUESTING APPROVAL TO
PURCHASE HOSES AND NOZZLES FOR NEW FIRE STATIONS FROM
TEN-8.**

Presenter: Chief Brad Stapp

Cost: \$64,864.50

Funding Source: ARPA

Budgeted: Yes

Match: No

Motion by Commissioner Henderson, second by Commissioner Cowan, to approve the request to purchase hoses and nozzles for the new fire stations from Ten-8 Fire & Safety, LLC.

Motion carried unanimously

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INFORMATION SERVICES: REQUESTING APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT WITH JSCM FOR RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PENETRATION TESTING AGAINST COUNTY NETWORK ASSETS.

Presenter: Greg Mann, Director

Cost: None (Cost for assessment already approved by the BOC)

Funding Source: FY23 Budget

Motion by Commissioner Cowan, second by Commissioner Mason, to approve the Agreement with JSCM as presented.

Motion carried unanimously

LANDFILL/PURCHASING: REQUESTING APPROVAL TO PURCHASE VEHICLE SCALE FOR SWMA FROM ATLANTA SCALES.

Presenter Matt Dolan, Director

Cost: \$84,531

Funding Source: SPLOST 2017

Approved by the Solid Waste Authority

Commissioner Henderson asked Mr. Dolan to be sending him a copy of the quarterly reports and Mr. Dolan said he would.

Motion by Commissioner Mason, second by Commissioner Edwards, to approve the request to purchase a vehicle scale for the SWMA from Atlanta Scales.

Motion carried unanimously

HUMAN RESOURCES: REQUESTING APPROVAL OF COMMUNITY LIAISON EMPLOYMENT POSITION.

Presenter: Amanda Shoemaker, Director

Cost: \$6,694.09 (remaining salary & benefits for FY23)

Cost: \$87,023.15 (Salary & Benefits for FY24)

Position is needed in many areas.

Example: Miracle League, Senior Citizens ARPA assistance, Youth Commission, Planning events, etc. under the chairman's office.

Salary: \$53,450 annually

Benefits takes the compensation to \$87,012

Commissioner Sanders voiced her concerns stating it sounds like we could use two part-time people. Heard from community and they questioned why someone in the community could not apply for the position.

Commissioner Henderson voiced his concern on how taxes continually increase and keep creating jobs. He stated...the people want the taxes to go down.

Commissioner Sanders commented about how the county needs a Procurement Department and stated we are out of compliance. She said she felt like we needed a procurement department before we hire anyone else.

Commissioner Cowan spoke in favor of the need for the position and thanked Ms. Shoemaker for bringing it to the board for consideration.

Motion by Commissioner Cowan, second by Commissioner Edwards to approve the Community Liaison Employment position as requested.

Motion carried 3/2 with Commissioners Sanders and Henderson voting in opposition to the motion.

EXTENSION OFFICE: REQUESTING APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION R2023-0606 A RESOLUTION APPROVING A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA ON BEHALF OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION AND NEWTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

Presenter: Patrick Jaugstetter, County Attorney

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Cowan, to approve Resolution R2023-0606 A Resolution approving a Memorandum of Understanding between the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia on behalf of the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension and Newton County, Georgia

Motion carried unanimously

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Thelma Starr
Covington

- Voiced disappointment in the ARPA process for Senior Repair Program
- \$15,000 is not enough to have repairs completed and suggested to change the amount to \$30,000 - \$40,000.

Fredrick Johnson
Covington

- Reminded the board that MLK day is usually the day the cemeteries are cleaned up where they cut bushes and either burn or pick-up & haul off the debris.
- Requesting that funding be allocated to purchase weed killer and have county workers cut one time and apply the weed killer so the cemetery would be clean all summer.
- In respect for the dead would like to see this addressed.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Mason

- Great time at the annual Movie in the Park Series at Denny Dobbs Park
- On June 19th at Denny Dobbs Park we will be showing the “Princess and the Frog movie.
- Everyone is invited for a great evening out with family and friends.

Commissioner Cowan

- Today is D-Day...my dad was a WWII Veteran. Would like to remind everyone to take a moment and remember what happened 79 years ago today.

Commissioner Sanders

- Expressed thanks to all the volunteers and appointees for engaging in the community.
- Concerned about the growing homeless population in the county.
- Suggested a speaker's list so that people who would like to speak could sign in and not have their address spoken out loud in the meeting.

Commissioner Edwards

- Congratulations to Newton County School Superintendent Samantha Fuhrey on her retirement this month. Wanted to express thanks publicly for her service.
- Reiterated concern (email sent to BOC this week) regarding neighborhood pool parties and the community.
- Understand that admission is being charged to attend the party.
- Clog up the streets
- People disturbing the community.
- Reached out to the Sheriff's Office and suggested that Mr. Cooper might have some dialogue with the Sheriff to see what can be done.

Chairman Banes

- Commented that we will have a speaker's sheet for people who want to speak.
- Congratulations to Commissioner Mason on his appointment as Vice Chairman of the Association County Commissioners Revenue & Finance Committee.
- Expressed thanks to the board members for attending the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner held at Turner Lake last night. Thanks for letting our volunteers know that you appreciate what they do and their sacrifice of time given.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (IF NEEDED)

No Executive Session

With there being no further business, a motion by Commissioner Mason, second by Commissioner Edwards, the meeting adjourned @ 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Smith, County Clerk

Marcello Banes, Chairman