

CHARLTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
COMMISSIONERS CONFERENCE ROOM
68 KINGSLAND DRIVE, SUITE B
FOLKSTON, GA 31537
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5TH, 2024
6:00 PM

12/5/2024 - Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 5:59 PM.

Present was Chairman Jesse Crews, Commissioner Alpha Benefield, Commissioner James Everett, Commissioner Drew Jones, Commissioner Luke Gowen, HR/Finance Coordinator Rebecca Harden, County Administrator Glenn Hull, and County Clerk Madeline Nettles.

Absent was County Attorney John Adams.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

Invocation was led by Commissioner Benefield.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Jones made a motion to enter executive session to discuss personnel and real estate per O.C.G.A. Code § 50-14-1. Commissioner Benefield seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board of Commissioners, HR/Finance Coordinator Harden, County Administrator Hull, and County Clerk Nettles entered executive session at 6:01 PM.

Commissioner Jones was excused from the meeting while in executive session and is no longer accounted for in the motions or votes throughout the remainder of the minutes.

The Board of Commissioners, HR/Finance Coordinator Harden, County Administrator Hull, and County Clerk Nettles exited executive session at 6:40 PM.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Gowen motioned to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Benefield seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Commissioner Gowen motioned to adopt the minutes as presented. Commissioner Everett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS

1. PRESENTATION FROM MELODEY MARTINDALE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mrs. Melodey Martindale discussed upcoming and pending community events that the Chamber of Commerce will be hosting or assisting with.

Chairman Crews asked Mrs. Martindale to have the upcoming events listed in the newspaper. Mrs. Martindale also stated that a list of the events can be found on the Chamber of Commerce website and official Facebook page.

Chairman Crews introduced Mr. Glenn Hull as the new County Administrator following Mrs. Martindale's presentation.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

No items were discussed.

PURCHASING ITEMS

No items were discussed.

GRANTS AND SPLOST PROJECT

1. MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO APPLY FOR ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT (AFG)

Fire Chief CL Lewis discussed the grant application, including the price and the proposed truck that the grant funds would purchase if awarded. The county would be required to match \$43,700.

Commissioner Gowen has questions about the truck replacement. Fire Chief Lewis stated that if awarded, the new truck would replace the current truck 31 due to failing the pump test.

Commissioner Gowen motioned to authorize the County Administrator to apply for the AFG grant on behalf of the Board of Commissioners for possible replacement of a fire pumper truck for the Charlton County Fire and Rescue Department. Commissioner Benefield seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO OBLIGATE REMAINING ARPA FUNDS

HR/Finance Coordinator Harden discussed the remaining ARPA funds that must be obligated by the end of the year. HR/Finance Coordinator recommends obligating the remaining \$949.76 to the purchase of the EMS ambulance.

Commissioner Benefield made a motion to authorize the County Administrator to obligate the remaining

ARPA funds based on the Board's recommendations and county project needs. Commissioner Gowen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO ADVERTISE THE 2025 COUNTY BUDGET

HR/Finance Coordinator Harden discussed the budget advertising requirements in order to have the budget ready to be voted on during the next meeting.

Commissioner Benefield made a motion to authorize the advertisement of the county budget with a 2% pay increase to all employees excluding elected officials, appointed board members, UGA extension office employees. Commissioner Everett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. DISCUSS THE ABANDONMENT OF WOLFGANG ALLEY

County Administrator Hull recommended that the commissioners table items #3, #4, and #5 under the "MISCELLANEOUS" section of the agenda until the January 16th, 2025, meeting.

Commissioner Benefield made a motion to table the items. Commissioner Everett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. DISCUSS BIDDING OUT FOOD FOR RECREATION

Item tables until January 16th, 2025, meeting.

5. DISCUSS PROPOSED ANIMAL FEES

Item tabled until January 16th, 2025, meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Antwon Nixon provided updates on the park he previously purchased from the county. Since April, they have been putting new lighting, landscaping, new benches, and updated basketball equipment in the park. Mr. Nixon reported that they are raising funds to continue making progress, and they were recently awarded the Georgia Power grant for Community Development and Revitalization. Mr. Brent James, from GA Power, was present to discuss the grant, which was awarded in the amount of \$20,000 to purchase equipment for the park. In order to be awarded the grant, there must be a sweat equity match. Mr. Nixon plans to hold a community event in the future to show the community the improvements that have been made to the park.

Mrs. Elaine Baily informed the commissioners of the Champ Bailey Foundation Youth Christmas Party that will be held in the Old Bethune Gym at 5:30 PM on December 18th. Mrs. Bailey discussed the Foundation's several community partners and asked for public participation both during the toy drive prior to the event and at the event itself.

Mrs. Bailey discussed the new agenda format for the meeting and asked why the executive session was first on the agenda instead of last. Chairman Crews stated that there was a need for discussion prior the remainder of the meeting.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Benefield thanked everyone for their support. Commissioner Benefield thanked County Administrator Hull and HR/Finance Coordinator Harden for helping find funds to provide small raise to employees. Commissioner Benefield talked about the stipulations outside the county's control that has since changed in the county's favor and allowed funding to be available to provide employee raises without raising the millage rate.

Commissioner Gowen asked to elaborate further on the pay raise and HR/Finance Coordinator Harden explained the previous requirement to increase salaries in certain positions and the funds saved by switching the county insurance provider.

Commissioner Gowen mentioned how the commissioners did not raise the millage rate, is able to give their staff and raise, and will now have money in the contingency funds. Commissioner Gowen thanked HR/Finance Coordinator for her hard work to find the funds.

Commissioner Everett stated that the other counties had approved the county vulnerability study grant that had previously been presented.

Commissioner Everett mentioned the annual South Georgia Regional Commissioner meeting on December 12th at 5:30 PM at the Old Depot in Homerville. Commissioner Everett stated that it was previously cancelled due to a storm.

Chairman Crews again welcome County Administrator Hull to the organization.

County Administrator Hull announced Rebecca Harden as the new Director of Administrative Services, CL Lewis as the Director of Fire and Rescue, and Ronnie Pollock as the Director of Infrastructure and Development.

NEXT MEETING:

The next Board of Commissioners Regularly Scheduled Meeting is on December 19th, 2024, at 6:00 PM in the Board of Commissioners Meeting Room.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Benefield motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Gowen seconded the motion.

Chairman Crews explained that Commissioner Jones absence for the remainder of the meeting.

The motion to adjourn carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Madeline Nettles, County Clerk