

CHARLTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
COMMISSIONERS CONFERENCE ROOM
68 KINGSLAND DRIVE, SUITE B
FOLKSTON, GA 31537
THURSDAY, APRIL 3RD, 2025
6:00 PM

4/3/2025 - Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 6:04 PM.

Present was Chairwoman Benefield, Commissioner Crews, Commissioner Everett, Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Gowen, County Administrator Glenn Hull, County Attorney John Adams, and County Clerk Madeline Nettles.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

Invocation was led by Commissioner Everett.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Crews motioned to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Everett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. MOTION TO ADOPT THE MARCH 20TH, 2025 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

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

PRESENTATIONS

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PETITIONS

1. MOTION TO APPROVE THE VARIANCE REQUEST FROM GREGORY GARNER

Donald Glover with Building Inspection and Code Enforcement was present to discuss the variance request. The property has been cleaned and meets setback requirements. Mr. Glover recommends granting the variance request.

Commissioner Crews motioned to approve the request. Commissioner Gowen seconded the request. The motion carried unanimously.

2. MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR HULL TO EXECUTE EASEMENT AGREEMENT WITH JOHN CALVIN DAVIS

County Attorney Adams had prepared the easement for previous meetings. County Administrator Hull summarized the on-going situation and recommended the county enter the agreement for the easement.

Commissioner Jones motioned to authorize County Administrator Hull to execute the easement agreement. Commissioner Crews seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

PURCHASING ITEMS

1. MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR HULL TO PURCHASE VEHICLE DIAGNOSTIC MACHINE

Director of Infrastructure and Development, Ronnie Pollock, was present to discuss the item.

Commissioner Jones motioned to authorize the purchase of the vehicle diagnostic machine. Commissioner Crews seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Everett asked about the life of the equipment. Mr. Pollock informed the board that the equipment comes with a 2-year warranty.

2. MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO PURCHASE HEAD-TO-TOE BUNKER GEAR

Director of Fire and Rescue, Chief CL Lewis, was present to discuss the item.

The purchase has been recommended by the Fire Board and would be funded by SPLOST.

Commissioner Crews motioned to authorize the purchase of head-to-toe bunker gear. Commissioner Gowen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO PURCHASE EXTRICATION EQUIPMENT (JAWS)

Director of Fire and Rescue, Chief CL Lewis, was present to discuss the item.

The purchase has been recommended by the Fire Board and would be funded by SPLOST.

Chief Lewis recommends buying two sets of equipment, one for the north side of the county and one for the south side. Commissioner Gowen voiced his opinion that the equipment is a necessity.

Commissioner Jones motioned to authorize the purchase of the extrication equipment. Commissioner Gowen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

GRANTS AND SPLOST PROJECT

1. MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR HULL TO APPLY FOR THE HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN GRANT

Director of Emergency Management, Bruce Young, was present to discuss the grant.

The grant would allow for the county to update the current Hazard Mitigation Plans. There would be two public hearings that would allow for participation in the grant process. Mr. Young had received intent to participate letters from the Cities of Folkston and Homeland.

There is a 12% in-kind grant match of roughly \$5,000 required, that staff and community volunteer hours could be used to towards.

Commissioner Jones motioned to approve the application for the grant. Commissioner Gowen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

AGREEMENTS

1. MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR HULL TO EXECUTE AMENDMENT TO ACCG PENSION PLAN DOCUMENTS

Director of Administrative Services, Becky Harden, was present to discuss the item.

The amendment to the current plan stated that anyone who retires from the county cannot return to the county for employment while drawing retirement benefits. Three employees will be grandfathered in. This amendment was previously discussed by the board in the planning retreat in 2024 and would align the benefit plan to the current personnel policy.

After discussion, Commissioner Gowen motioned to table the item until the next meeting, as well as table the resolution on the agenda that accompanies this item. Commissioner Crews seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR HULL TO EXECUTE A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE FOLKSTON ICE PROCESSING CENTER

County Administrator Hull discussed the memorandum of understanding, which serves as a mutual aid agreement between the ICE Processing Center, the County, the Sheriff's Office, and the Coroner's Office. County Administrator Hull recommends approval.

Commissioner Crews motioned to authorize the execution of the memorandum of understanding. Commissioner Everett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR HULL TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH JOC CONSTRUCTION FOR THE SENIOR CENTER ROOF

Charles "Bubba" Smith present to discuss the item. Also present were Jason Pope and Bob Bowers from JOC Construction.

The new agreement includes work to the ventilation system and soffits.

Commissioner Crews asked for a timeline of the project. Mr. Pope stated that the roof will take 3-4 days to complete, and the soffits will take an additional 3-4 days.

Commissioner Gowen asked about competitive bids. County Administrator Hull explained that JOC is on a state contract, which allows for the county to award them the work without the bidding process. Commissioner Gowen voiced opinions that the county should be seeking competitive local bids as well.

Commissioner Crews motioned to authorize the agreement with JOC Construction. Commissioner Everett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Gowen raised concerns about the cost of state contracts being more expensive than local competitors, and asked County Administrator Hull to ensure that competitive bids are received in the future.

Commissioner Crews asked Sheriff Phillips, Mr. Pollock, and Chief Lewis about using state contracts.

Mr. Bowers informed the board that this is the third cycle of their state contract, which is rebid and vetted every few years. The price book, which they use to provide these agreements, is updated twice a year. This allows for projects to start quicker, does not require the county to use their resources to manage the projects, and eliminates the bidding process as the state has already done so.

Commissioner Jones asked about the built-in premiums for using a state contract.

Mr. Bowers and Mr. Pope informed the board that they also use county preferred vendors, when possible, on larger projects.

County Attorney Adams asked about a bond and suggested that the county administrator and county clerk review ordinances to ensure that bid requirements are met. County Clerk Nettles read the current code that allows for exemptions for state contracts.

The board asked for JOC to secure a bond, which JOC agreed to return to County Administrator Hull by Friday.

4. MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR HULL TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH JACOB ADAMS FOR IT SUPPORT DURING ELECTIONS

Will Nance, Superintendent of Elections, was present to discuss the agreement. Lenora Dube of the Board of Elections was also present.

Commissioner Jones made a motion to authorize the execution of the agreement. Commissioner Everett seconded the motion.

County Attorney Adams commented about the expenses and reimbursement section of the agreement, which he believes should be capped.

Mrs. Dube discussed the frequency and length they expect these services to occur for.

County Administrator Hull asked the board to set a spending authority level for this contract, as some funds were budgeted for these services, but they do not account for the number of elections planned this year.

Commissioner Jones amended his motion to authorize the execution of the agreement, contingent on the addition of a clause that expenses are not to exceed \$15,000 annually. Commissioner Everett seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

5. MOTION TO AUTHORIZE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR HULL TO EXECUTE SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENTS WITH CIVIC PLUS FOR AGENDA AND MEETING MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE AND ONLINE CODE HOSTING SOFTWARE

County Clerk Nettles presented on the software.

Commissioner Crews motioned to authorize the execution of the supplemental agreements. Commissioner Everett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Jones asked what would happen if we ceased the agreements in the future. County Administrator Hull explained that the county would retain their data, which is outlined in the master agreement.

ORDINANCES

RESOLUTIONS

1. MOTION TO ADOPT THE RESOLUTION AMENDING ACCG PENSION PLAN DOCUMENTS

This item was tabled until the next meeting during discussion of Item 1 of the Agreements section.

2. MOTION TO ADOPT THE PROCLAMATION DECLARING APRIL "DONATE LIFE MONTH" IN CHARLTON COUNTY TO SUPPORT ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION INITIATIVES

Commissioner Jones motioned to adopt the proclamation. Commissioner Gowen seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

MISCELLANEOUS

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S ACTION ITEMS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Elaine Bailey discussed the month of April being Sexual Assault Awareness Month and asked that the board wear the color teal on Friday to represent the Awareness Month.

Connie Bass, Senior Center Manager, updated the board. The Senior Center helped 36 clients with their cooling and gas bill, worked with Harbor Worship Center to give 300 meals in total, and received a grant from Coastal Community Health Services to purchase iPads for client telehealth needs. The Senior Center has also been working with the library and having movies and popcorn with them regularly. The next Farmer's Market will be on April 23rd. Mrs. Bass asked to use the fire station in St. George. Both Chief Lewis and County Clerk Nettles confirmed that the date was free.

County Administrator Hull read an email from a citizen to the board and Mrs. Bass, commending her for her work with the Senior Center. Donald Glover also shared his appreciation for Mrs. Bass.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS

County Administrator Hull notified the board that bids were opened on the Easton Prescott Road project. It was a sole bidder. County Administrator Hull will gather documents and bring it to the board soon.

County Administrator Hull asked for more clarification on statewide contracts and whether the board will want to utilize them for future projects or send it for bid.

County Administrator Hull is getting the financial comparisons together to present to the board.

County Administrator Hull has talked to the Sheriff, and both are willing to bring the dog ordinance forward at the next meeting.

County Administrator Hull informed the board that the POW WOW is this weekend.

County Administrator Hull is in the middle of working on the comprehensive plan. Staff are working on putting together a work plan. The board will be asked to review these at a later date.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Crews thanked Mr. Smith for everything he has been doing for the county. Commissioner Crews also congratulated Mr. Nance on his new position.

Commissioner Gowen asked for financial comparisons ready for the next meeting. Commissioner Crews agreed that they need to be ready.

Commissioner Gowen thanked everyone for being there and thanked the citizens for caring about the county. Commissioner Jones seconded that .

Commissioner Everett mentioned the SGRC transportation system the county participates in. Mrs. Bass stated that there are some issues with the transportation system, including having to wait up to several hours to be picked up, the cost associated after the first 10 miles, and the high turnover rate for drivers.

Commissioner Gowen recognized Abbi Taylor, Executive Director of the Development Authority and thanked her for her presence.

County Attorney Adams reminded Chairwoman Benefield about the item from executive session that she would like to read on the record. Chairwoman Benefield stated the board met on April 3rd, 2025 to review and discuss the process for the review of the county administrator. No action was taken during executive session. Chairwoman Benefield asked for all the commissioners to sign the affidavit.

Chairwoman Benefield thanked everyone in attendance and thanked the board for voting to carry the county forward.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be April 17th, 2025, in the Board of Commissioners Meeting Room. The workshop will be held at 5:00 PM and the regular meeting will be held at 6:00 PM.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Crews motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Everett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Madeline Nettles, County Clerk