

NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
1124 Clark Street
Covington, Georgia
Regular Meeting
April 4, 2023

MINUTES

Present: Chairman Marcello Banes, Commissioners' Stan Edwards, Demond Mason, Alana Sanders, J.C. Henderson, County Attorney Patrick Jaugstetter and Clerk Jackie Smith
Commissioner Cowan was out of town and did not attend the meeting.

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 Henderson, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Edwards.

AMEND THE AGENDA

Chairman Banes asked the Agenda be amended to include the following:

- Ms. Kennedy Shannon - update on ARPA.
- City of Covington would like for county to contribute \$10k for July 4th Fireworks show. They want to use the Judicial Center rooftop for fireworks discharge. Received a letter from Judge Layla Zon with their approval.
- Commissioner Sanders would like to discuss ARPA funds
- Would like to move Employee Insurance to the last agenda item.

AGENDA ADOPTION

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason, to adopt the Agenda dated April 4, 2023 to include the changes made by the Chairman.
Motion carried unanimously

CITIZEN COMMENTS (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)

Thomas Buckner
Covington

- Suggested more funding for repairing roads.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

- Proclamation: Proclaiming April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.
- LaTonja Hamp read the proclamation.
- Chairman noted events would take place all during the month of April.

Sheriff Brown presented a PowerPoint presentation to the board with recommendations on what could be possible e safety solutions for Fairview Park.

- PowerPoint is attached and made part of these minutes.
- Chairman & members of the board expressed appreciation for Sheriff Brown's recommendations.

Old Business (See zoning)

CONSENT AGENDA

- a. County Clerk: BOC Minutes dated March 21, 2023
Executive Session Minutes dated March 21, 2023
- b. Sheriff's Office: Requesting approval to apply for the 2023 State Criminal Alien Assistant (SCAAP) Grant.
 - Funding Source: Department of Justice/Federal Dollars
 - No match
- c. Sheriff's Office: Requesting approval to accept 2 RSAT grant awards through CJCC.
 - Award # R19-8-008
 - Amount: \$30,404 (total)
 - Funding Source: CJCC, Federal: \$22,803
 - Match: \$7,601
 - Budgeted: Yes
 - Award # R20-8-004 - \$88,163 (total)
 - Funding Source: CJCC, Federal: \$66,122
 - Match: \$22,041
 - Budgeted: Yes
- d. Juvenile Court/Family Treatment Court requesting approval to accept the 2023 CACJ Technology Award for Family Treatment Court.
 - Amount: \$3200
 - Founding Source: Council of Accountability Court Judges
 - Match: No
- e. Fire Services: Requesting approval to accept \$500 stipend grant from The Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition.
 - Amount: \$500
 - Funding Source: Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition
 - No match

- f. Superior Court/Alcovy Veterans Treatment Court: Requesting approval to accept the FY23 State Accountability Court Grants.
- FY23 Emergency Award
 - Amount: \$15,266
 - Funding Source: CACJ
 - No match
 - FY23 Technology Award
 - Amount: \$2,076
 - Funding Source: CACJ
 - No match

Motion by Commissioner Mason, second by Commissioner Sanders, to approve the Consent Agenda as printed.
Motion carried unanimously

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION

*Note the next two requests from the Tax Commissioner's Office was unanimously tabled earlier in the meeting because Commissioner Jordan was not present; however, he came into the meeting later on and Chairman used his Point of Privilege for the board to consider these requests.

TAX COMMISSIONER/PURCHASING: REQUESTING APPROVAL OF Q-MATIC CORPORATION CONTRACT, NEW QUEUING SYSTEM FOR TAX COMMISSIONERS OFFICE.

Tax Commissioner Marcus Jordan presented this request to the board for his office.

- Information is attached and made part of these minutes.

Cost: \$40,000 (FY23 - \$20,000; FY24 \$20,000 - paid quarterly)

Funding Source: \$20,000 ARPA, \$20,000 General Fund

Budgeted: Yes

Motion by Commissioner Henderson, second by Commissioner Sanders, to approve the Q-MATIC Corporation Contract as presented.
Motion carried unanimously

TAX COMMISSIONER: CONSIDERATION TO WAIVE PENALTIES & INTEREST FOR WILLIAM & LEAH KEMP.

Tax Commissioner Marcus Jordan presented this request to the board for his office. He advised the board that the citizen said that he never received the tax bill in question.

- Information is attached and made part of these minutes.
- Map CO11A-00000-090-000
- Penalty: \$708.12
- Interest: \$221.10

Motion by Commissioner Henderson, second by Commissioner Sanders, to approve the request to remove the penalty and interest for William & Leah Kemp in the amount of \$929.22.

Motion carried unanimously

RECREATION/PURCHASING: REQUESTING APPROVAL OF CONTRACT WITH LOSE DESIGN FOR DESIGN SERVICES FOR COMMUNITY WATERPARK.

Presented by Project Manager Jeff Prine.

Cost: \$68,750

Funding Source: SPLOST 2023

Budgeted: Yes

Match: No

- Assist with property assessment process.
- Assist with meetings regarding project.
- 3 Projects will go through same process.
- Confirmed that water park will be available to all five districts.
- Information is attached and made part of these minutes.

Motion by Commissioner Mason, second by Commissioner Edwards, to approve the contract with Lose Design as presented by Mr. Prine.

Motion carried unanimously

RECREATION/PURCHASING: REQUESTING APPROVAL OF CONTRACT – LOSE DESIGN FOR DESIGN & ASSESSMENT SERVICES FOR WESTSIDE AND SOUTHSIDE COMMUNITY PARK.

Presented by Project Manager Jeff Prine.

- Same process as Water Park.
- Information is attached and made part of these minutes.
- Both park will be similar.
- Public Information meeting will be held

Cost: Westside Park - \$30,000

Southside Park - \$30,000

Funding Source: SPLOST 2023

Budgeted: Yes

Match: No

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason to approve the contract with Lose Design for design and assessment services for the Westside and Southside Community Parks as presented by Mr. Prine.

Motion carried unanimously

INFORMATION SERVICES/PURCHASING: REQUESTING RENEWAL OF CLOSED PORT EMAIL SECURITY AGREEMENT WITH JSCM GROUP.

IT Director Greg Mann presented this request to the board.

- Annual renewal
- Cost: \$7452
- Funding Source: FY23 Information services Budget
- Budgeted: Yes Funding Source: FY23 Information services Budget
- Budgeted: Yes
- Information is attached and made part of these minutes.

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason to approve the Closed Port Email Security Agreement with JSCM Group as presented by Mr. Mann.

SENIOR SERVICES/PURCHASING: REQUESTING APPROVAL OF CONTRACT – SUNBELT BUILDERS FOR DESIGN AND ASSESSMENT FOR SENIOR SERVICES ENRICHMENT CENTER.

Presented by Project Manager Jeff Prine.

- Same process as Water Park.
- Information is attached and made part of these minutes.

Cost: \$159,500

Funding Source: SPLOST 2023

Budgeted: Yes

Match: No

Motion by Commissioner Henderson, second by Commissioner Edwards to approve the contract with Sunbelt Builders for design and assessment for the Senior Services Enrichment Center as presented by Mr. Prine.

Motion carried unanimously

7:30 PM: ZONING/PUBLIC HEARING

The applicant and those in favor of the petition are allowed ten-minutes to address the board. In addition, ten-minutes are allotted for those in opposition to the petition. This ten-minute allotment does not include a response.

Development Services director Shena Applewhaite appeared before the board presenting the petition. Ms. Applewhaite went over the information pertaining to this request.

Appeal – APP23-000001 (Tabled March 21, 2023)

Original Case #FP22-000011

Location: 65 Papas Talk, Social Circle, GA 30025

Applicant: Jared Roundy

Map & Parcel Number: 124-95

FLUM: RR (Rural Residential)
Zoning: AR (Agricultural Residential)
Acreage: 4.88 ac
District One

Request: To subdivide the parent parcel in an existing subdivision.
Planning Commission recommended denial with a unanimous vote of 5/0 on
February 14, 2023 meeting.
Information is attached and made part of these minutes.

Director Applewhaite stated they sent out a survey to the home owners and their
responses are below:

24/149 (16.11%), including the applicant, gave their consent.
12/149 (8.05%) did not consent.
113/149 or (75.88%) have not responded at this time.

Chairman Banes opened the public hearing @ 7:36 p.m.

In Favor

Jared Roundy
65 Papas Talk
Social Circle

- Requesting to subdivide acreage into 2 lots to build a house for parents.
- We have met staff requirements.
- Over 149 residents live in subdivision.
- We enjoy the rural area
- We are not requesting any changes.
- Request meets the 2-acre minimum requirement.
- Will change density by less than 1%.

Opposition

Geoff Spencer
30 Old Blue Point
Social Circle

- Read a statement.
(attached and made part of these minutes)

Chairman Banes closed the public hearing @ 7:47 pm.

Commissioner Edwards clarified that GDOT rescinded approval for a driveway
on Hwy. 278. Ms. Applewhaite said that was correct.

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason to deny
APP23-000001.

Motion carried 3/2 with Commissioners Edwards and Mason voting in favor of
the motion. Commissioners Sanders and Henderson voting in opposition to the
motion. Chairman Banes voting to break the tie in favor of the motion.

Update On ARPA

Ms. Shannon updated the board on how the ARPA programs were progressing.

- Recommendation to close the Emergency Rental Assistance April 30th.

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason to close the Emergency Rental Assistance Program as of April 30, 2023 as stated by Ms. Shannon.

Motion carried unanimously

ARPA APPLICATION ASSISTANCE:

- Approve 3 part-time employees to assist with ARPA applications.
- Patterning with Laura Bertram to offer assistance in completing applications.
- Launch date is May 15 – June 1st
- Small Business Assistance Grant Program – June 15th launch date.
- Approve IGA between NC & Family Connections to authorize Laura Bertram to hire 3 part-time employees to assist with ARPA applications.
- Locations: NC Library on Floyd Street, Porter Memorial Library on Hwy. 212 & NC Administrative Building on Usher Street.
- Will work mostly with Senior Repairs to housing and non-profits.
- Work: 3 days per week
- Time: 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and from 5:00 pm – 8:00 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Sanders, second by Commissioner Edwards to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with Family Connection/Laura Bertram to hire part-time workers to assist with completing ARPA applications.

Motion carried unanimously

NON-PROFIT ASSISTANCE

- Presently received 6 applications.
Youth Commission Non-Profit Grant – Received 8 applications. – Extend deadline to end of April.
Food Panty Non-Profit Assistance Grant
- Projecting Non-Profits will remain open until the end of April.

Ms. Shannon noted that quite a few people have attempted fraud and would like to use a website that verifies who you say you are.

- Cost: \$1.20 per application

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Henderson to approve the \$1.20 cost per application as stated by Ms. Shannon.

Motion carried unanimously

GRANTS

- \$4 million dollar grant from Representative Hank Johnson – attended webinar.
- We have to have a site and budget to turn in.
- Would like to have it by December 31, 2023.
- We don't have a site or what it will be used for.
- We would have until 2031 to spend the money.
- CFP Grant from Representative Johnson...we submitted \$1 million dollar grant for Brown Bridge Road.
- Working with Public Works Director Chester Clegg.
- We are creating an electronic form to send to all department heads to find out what needs are and identify them.
- We will also send form to the BOC.
- Reminded the board that iParametrics is paid by the hour.

JULY 4TH FIREWORKS SHOW

Chairman Banes presented this request to the board.

- City of Covington wants the County to contribute \$10k for the July 4th Fireworks show.
\$10,000 is the same amount we provided last year.
- Received a letter from Judge Layla Zon they would like to use the roof of the Judicial Center to launch the fireworks. (letter is attached and made part of these minutes)
- We received an IGA from the City Attorney to be executed between NC & City of Covington.

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason, to approve the IGA between Newton County and the City of Covington for \$10,000 for the July 4th Fireworks Show.

Motion carried 3/1 with Commissioner Sanders abstaining. (Wants to make sure we are funding June 10th event.)

COMMISSIONER SANDERS WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS ALLOWING ARPA FUNDS TO BE UTILIZED FOR BROADBAND SERVICES (MT. ZION ROAD COMMUNITY)

Commissioner Sanders presented this request to the board.

- Constituents are requesting broadband in the area.

Motion by Commissioner Sanders, second by Commissioner Mason, to allow ARPA Funds for Broadband in the Dial Mill area as requested by Commissioner Sanders.

Motion carried unanimously

R040423, A RESOLUTION PROVIDED FOR THE INSTALLATION OF STREET LIGHTS AND THE ASSESSMENT OF THE ANNUAL COSTS OF MAINTAINING AND OPERATING SAID LIGHTS AGAINST PROPERTY SERVED BY THOSE LIGHTS.

- SUBDIVISION: THE VALLEY AT TWIN RIVERS PHASE 3

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Henderson to approve Resolution R040423, A Resolution provided for the installation of streetlights and the assessment of the annual costs of maintaining and operating said lights against property served by those lights.

Motion carried unanimously

HUMAN RESOURCES/RISK MANAGEMENT: FY '24 EMPLOYEE MEDICAL INSURANCE PROPOSAL.

Human Resource director Amanda Shoemaker and Gary Massey, Massey Insurance Agency addressed the board regarding the FY24 Employee Medical Insurance.

- Mr. Massey expressed appreciation to serve.
- Recommending a carrier change this year.
- 4 years with CIGNA
- Updated Loss Information
- CIGNA – 9.8% increase
- BCBS – 19% increase
- ATENA – reduced it to flat.
- Assuming enrollment stays around 520 people the cost will be \$733,218 per month.
- Savings of \$30,189.00
- \$280,000 savings over last year's plan.
- Aetna will continue with the donation of \$50,000 towards NC's Wellness Program.
- Negotiated a cap with Aetna of 13.8%.
- Criteria is equal to what we now have.

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason to approve FY'24 Employee Medical Insurance Proposal as presented by Gary Massey and authorize the Chairman to execute all documents.

Motion carried unanimously

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Wendy ?

- Questioned if money would be better spent by hiring a grant writer for the county.
- Suggested that county hire more residents than consultants with our tax dollars.

Denise Williams
Covington

- Comments about Banes Trucking
- Questioned vendor process
- Information is attached

Archie Shepherd
Covington

- Expressed appreciation to Chairman Banes for attending a meeting last week.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS (TOPIC OF CHOICE)

With there being no further business, a motion by Commissioner Henderson, second by Commissioner Sanders, the meeting adjourned @ 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Smith, County Clerk

Marcello Banes, Chairman