

NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**1124 Clark Street
Covington, Georgia
Regular Meeting
March 7, 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 and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Pastor Mark Burgess, First United Methodist Church

AMEND THE AGENDA

Chairman Banes asked to amend the agenda to include the following:

- A. To add and consider Resolution R030723, A Resolution of the BOC Authorizing Iparametrics, LLC to apply for Grants on behalf of Newton County.
- B. Remove Item #7 Old Business from the agenda.
Discussion/Consideration: To Change the Newton County Board of Commissioners Meeting Calendar from Bi-monthly meetings to a single (1) monthly meeting beginning March 2023. (Previously tabled at the February 21st BOC meeting)

AGENDA ADOPTION

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason, to adopt the Agenda for March 7, 2023 with duly noted changes.

Motion carried unanimously

Chairman Banes extended an apology to everyone who wanted to speak under citizen comments at the last meeting, but due to circumstances was unable to speak.

CITIZEN COMMENTS (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)

- There were no citizen comments.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

- No report

OLD BUSINESS

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION: TO CHANGE THE NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING CALENDAR FROM BI-MONTHLY MEETINGS TO A SINGLE (1) MONTHLY MEETING BEGINNING MARCH 2023. (TABLED AT THE FEBRUARY 21ST BOC MEETING)

- Removed from the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Elections/Purchasing: Requesting approval to deem 13 laptops as surplus.
- b. County Clerk: BOC Minutes dated February 21, 2023
- c. County Clerk: SCM Mtg. Minutes dated February 23, 2023
- d. County Clerk ES Mtg. Minutes dated February 23, 2023

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason, to approve the consent agenda as printed.
Motion carried unanimously

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES: NEWTON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE BY GMC CONSULTANTS

Chairman recognized Development Services director Shena Applewhaite who introduced Glenn Coyne and Kalanos Johnson from GMC Consultants.

- Mr. Coyne and Mr. Johnson gave an overview of what has taken place to date regarding public meetings, citizen participation, priorities & goals, stakeholder interview results, community surveys and public open house results.
- Newton County Comprehensive Plan Update PowerPoint presentation is attached and made part of these minutes.
- Project will be completed within the next few months.
- Chairman Banes expressed thanks to Ms Applewhaite, Mr. Coyne and Mr. Johnson for their presentation.
- No action necessary.

RESOLUTION R030723 – A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF NEWTON COUNTY GEORGIA AUTHORIZING IPARAMETRICS, LLC TO APPLY FOR GRANTS ON BEHALF OF NEWTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

CA Jaugstetter presented this request to the board for their consideration and approval.

- Resolution authorizes the grant writer to submit grant applications on behalf of the county without having to come back to the board for approval. However, the board does not have to accept the grant.
- iPARAMETRICS cannot accept grants on behalf of the county.
- The board must approve or deny the acceptance of all grants.
- Attorney Jaugstetter read into the record portions of the resolution.
- Resolution R030723 is attached and made part of these minutes.
- Commissioner Sanders mentioned the \$4-million-dollar grant that she worked on and the CA said it will go through the same process as all other grants.
- CA stated the county is not obligated to accept any grant money or undertake any of the projects.
- As with all grant projects, after Iparametrics submits the grant application, and if the county is awarded the grant, it will come back to the board for approval to accept the grant.
- CA said that this resolution will give the county the best opportunity to take advantage of grant opportunities and will provide a less burdensome methodology for Iparametrics.
- Commissioner Sanders clarified that this will include the \$4-million-dollar grant she has been working on.
- CA stated it applies to all grants.
- Commissioner Henderson asked the cost for this service by the consultant.
- CA stated it will be capped at \$10,000 per project?
- CA noted this is a separate contract with Iparametrics than the ARPA contract we currently have with them.

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason, to approve Resolution R030723 – A Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of Newton County Georgia authorizing Iparametrics, LLC to apply for Grants on behalf of Newton County as stated by the county attorney.

Motion carried unanimously

COUNTY ATTORNEY: REQUESTING APPROVAL OF A MODIFICATION TO THE SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY OF AN EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE CITY OF OXFORD AND THE NEWTON COUNTY WATER & SEWERAGE AUTHORITY AS REQUIRED BY THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

This request was presented by CA Jaugstetter and NCW&SA director Mike Hopkins.

- Small change in service area
- Displayed area map for BOC & public.
- DCA (Department of Community Affairs) requires approval by BOC.
- City of Covington approved on February 21st.
- City of Oxford approved on February 20th.
- 3 parcels on Airport Road to be transferred to Oxford.
- Director Hopkins said this transfer will work out better for the citizens and all parties involved.
- PowerPoint is attached and made part of these minutes.

Motion by Commissioner Mason, second by Commissioner Cowan, to approve the Modification to the Service Deliver Strategy of an exchange between the City of Oxford and the Newton County Water & Sewerage Authority as required by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

Motion carried unanimously

INFORMATION SERVICES: REQUESTING APPROVAL OF A NETWORK SECURITY ASSESSMENT AND BUSINESS PROCESS REVIEW

This request was presented by IT director Greg Mann.

- Contractor: JSCM Group
- Cost: \$24,875.00
- Budgeted: Yes
- Funding Source: IT FY22 budget
- Information is attached and made part of these minutes.

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason, to approve the Security Assessment Agreement between Newton County and JSCM Group as presented by IT director Mann.

Motion carried unanimously

INFORMATION SERVICES: REQUESTING BOC TO AUTHORIZE CHAIRMAN'S SIGNATURE OF SECURITY CONSULTING AGREEMENT WITH JSCM FOR TRIAL OF INCIDENT RESPONSE PLANNING & THREAT MODELING SERVICES

This request was presented by IT director Greg Mann.

- Contractor: JSCM Group
- Cost: None - will be using support block hours already paid for in FY22 budget.
- Budgeted: Yes
- Funding Source: IT FY22 budget
- Information is attached and made part of these minutes.

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason, to authorize Chairman's signature as requested by IT director Mann.

Motion carried unanimously

PUBLIC WORKS: REQUESTING APPROVAL FOR THE CHAIRMAN TO EXECUTE A PROJECT FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT (PFA) WITH GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (GDOT) TO BEGIN THE ENGINEERING PHASE ON THE WIDENING OF BROWN BRIDGE ROAD FROM SALEM ROAD TO JACK NEELY ROAD.

Transportation director Chester Clegg addressed the board regarding this request.

- ARC has programmed federal funds to begin scoping and preliminary design phase on the widening of Brown Bridge Road from Salem Road to Jack Neely Road.
- Required to sign a Project Framework Agreement with GDOT.
- Total Project Cost: \$350,000
- Funding Source: 80% funded by ARC.
- RFQ: to select engineering firm
- Request BOC to authorize Chairman to execute PFA with GDOT
- Information is made part of these minutes.

Motion by Commissioner Mason, second by Commissioner Cowan, to approve the Project Framework agreement between Newton County and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) for \$350,000 with 80% to be funded by the ARC as presented by Transportation director Chester Clegg.

Motion carried unanimously

PUBLIC WORKS: REQUESTING APPROVAL TO CONTRACT WITH ATLAS TECHNICAL CONSULTANTS TO PROVIDE CONSTRUCTION DRAWINGS FOR THE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS @ BROWN BRIDGE ROAD AND CROWELL ROAD.

Transportation director Chester Clegg addressed the board regarding this request and went over the information in his memo to the BOC.

- Brown Bridge & Crowell Road is the most congested County owned intersection in the county.
- In 2014, minor lane improvements designed by Atlas (MA) were constructed. Needed widening & realignment were not designed at the time due to lack of construction funds.
- Atlas has provided a concept of intersection improvements that includes additional turning lanes & a major realignment.
- They have been working with our department in negotiating the donation of the required ROW from The Oaks Developer.
- A significant amount of additional ROW is needed for this project.
- Estimated construction cost: \$3.5 million
- Information is attached and made part of these minutes.
- Contract with Atlas is attached and made part of these minute.
- Recommendation is to contract with Atlas Technical Consultants to provide construction drawings for the proposed Intersection Improvements @ Brown Bridge Road & Crowell Road.
- Cost: \$385,000.00
- Budgeted: Yes
- Funding Source: 2017 SPLOST (100%)

Motion by Commissioner Henderson, second by Commissioner Edwards, to approve the contract between Atlas Technical Consultants and Newton County to provide construction drawings for the Intersection Improvements @ Brown Bridge Road and Crowell Road as presented by Transportation director Chester Clegg.

Motion carried unanimously

COUNTY ATTORNEY: REQUESTING APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT TO PURCHASE REAL PROPERTY.

CA Jaugstetter addressed the board and noted the parcel is needed for the intersection improvements.

- Intersection Improvements @Crowell Road & Harold Dobbs Road.
- Parcel #4
- Tax Parcel ID #0025 037
- FMV: \$18,709.68
- Funding: 2017 SPLOST

Commissioner Sanders asked if the land had been appraised and Attorney Jaugstetter replied that it was appraised in 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Cowan, to approve the Agreement to Purchase Real Property for the Crowell Road & Harold Dobbs Road Intersection Improvements from Cathy B. Dobbs as outlined by the County Attorney.

Motion carried unanimously

COUNTY ATTORNEY: REQUESTING APPROVAL OF A RIGHT-OF-WAY EXCHANGE AGREEMENT.

CA Jaugstetter addressed the board and noted these parcels are also needed for the intersection improvements. They, too, were appraised in 2021.

- Related to Project Parcel Nos. 1, 2, 5 & 6
- Intersection Improvements @Crowell Road & Harold Dobbs Road
- Property owner is donating the property for an exchange
- of the old ROW area left over following the realignment construction.
- County will exchange Parcel No. 6 for Parcel Nos. 1, 2 & 5
- Appraised value of property exchange is higher than property that is given up by the county.
- County FMV: \$20,100.00
- Owner FMV: \$56,243.00
- No funding needed.
- Funding: 2017 SPLOST for project as a whole.

Motion by Commissioner Cowan, second by Commissioner Edwards, to approve the Right-of-Way Property Exchange between Newton County and Two Packard Covington, LLC as presented by the Attorney Jaugstetter.

Motion carried unanimously

ALCOHOL BEVERAGE LICENSE

First Reading

Wadhvaniya USA LLC
3633 Salem Road
Covington, GA 30016
Licensee: Sahil Wadhvaniya
District 2

- Read into the Record by LaTonja Threats-Hamp

CITIZEN COMMENTS (TOPIC OF CHOICE)

Thelma Starr
Covington

- Suggested the county provide someone to assist citizens with completing the ARPA requests.
- Concerned that many seniors do not have access or know how to use a computer.

- Encouraged the board to work together to get things done.

Archie Shepherd

Covington

- Encouraged board to hire an in-house attorney.

Annette Alston

Covington

- Suggested when planning new subdivision that off street parking areas be considered.
- Commercial vehicles are an eyesore in the subdivision.
- Expressed disappointment in last BOC meeting and stated she hopes to never see anything like that again.
- Expressed her support of Commissioner Sanders putting forth ideas that BOC can support.

Fredrick Johnson

Covington

- Expressed thanks for the new mics and sound is much better.
- Would like to see movement on aligning Mote Road and Hwy. 162 that was approved in 2021.
- Would like to see movement on the Spring Hill Park
- Would like for BOC to consider lowering the speed limit on Hwy. 162 near the churches.

Tiffany Benton

Covington

- Spoke in support of a park and appreciates all Commissioner Sanders is trying to do in district three.
- Spokesperson for the community and the community wants a park.

Karla Hooper

- Expressed her feelings that no commissioner is against building a park.
- Would like to see a clean slate for the BOC to work together.
- Citizens want transparency.
- No one is in disagreement for a youth center. We need narrative to be clear.
- If it has to be a YMCA...let it be a YMCA.
- Citizens do not want any more hyperbole.
- We don't need any racist statements being put out there.
- Get community partners.
- Let it be a Boys & Girls Club or YMCA...
- Suggested people stay off social media.
- Would like to see board have one agenda.

Debbie Harper

President, Chamber of Commerce

- Expressed thanks to the BOC for earlier work session regarding residents' concerns and helping out our business people.
- Offered assistance to anyone who needs help filing for a business license. Asked that they be directed to her for assistance. Glad to help.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Edwards: No comments

Commissioner Mason: No comments

Commissioner Sanders

- Expressed appreciation to everyone who attended the Health & Wellness Fair.
- Thank you to the people of district three for their support.

Commissioner Henderson

- Stated he agreed with Ms. Hooper that we need to do something for our kids and seniors too.
- Would like to see programs free to all to attend.
- Appreciated the recreation department and their employees...best in the world!

Commissioner Cowan: No comments

Chairman Banes: No comments

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No executive session needed.

With no further business, a motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie B. Smith, County Clerk

Marcello Banes, Chairman