

NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
1124 Clark Street
Covington, Georgia

Regular Meeting
MINUTES
January 5, 2021

7:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Marcello Banes, Commissioners' Stan Edwards, Demond Mason, Alana Sanders, J.C. Henderson, Ronnie Cowan, County Manager Lloyd Kerr, Attorney Megan Martin, and County Clerk Jackie Smith

Chairman Banes called the meeting to order, extended a welcome to all present, and read the thought for the day. The invocation was given by Rev. Dr. Robert Hughes, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to our great flag led by Commissioner Stan Edwards.

AGENDA ADOPTION

Chairman Banes asked that item #13 be removed from the agenda. He also requested to add the extension of the Mask Ordinance currently in place to June 30, 2021.

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason, to adopt the agenda for January 5, 2021 with the removal of item #13 and add the extension of the Mask Ordinance as requested by the chairman.

Motion carried unanimously (5/0)

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Barbara Morgan
Covington

- Questioned the tax resolution on the agenda and would like to have more information regarding this request.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

- Recognized and congratulated newly elected Tax Commissioner Marcus Jordan, and newly elected Coroner Bailey-Butts.
- Serra Hall & Jerry Silvio (Economic Development Office) provided the board a quarterly update regarding the JDA.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT:

- Recognized and honored the 2020 Georgia Outstanding Young Farmer of the Year, Lewis Banks from Mansfield. Group photo with board members.
- Recognized and honored Doster Harper for being named President of the National FFA Association. Group photo with board members.
- County Manager Lloyd Kerr read proclamation by Chairman Banes that was presented to Mr. Banks and Mr. Doster.

- Highlighted PowerPoint presentation.
- PowerPoint is attached and made part of these minutes.

MASK ORDINANCE EXTENSION

Motion by Commissioner Henderson, second by Commissioner Sanders, to extend the current Mask Ordinance to June 30, 2021.

Motion carried unanimously (5/0)

OLD BUSINESS:

WATER RESOURCES: REQUESTING APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION R120120 AND ASSOCIATED CONTRACT DOCUMENTS TO UPDATE PROJECT COMPLETION DATE AND LOAN AMOUNT OF GEFA LOAN

County Manager Kerr reminded the board this was approved in September and that GEFA had requested we put it in the form of a resolution.

Motion by Commissioner Mason, second by Commissioner Edwards, to approve Resolution 120120 and associated contract documents to update the project completion date and amount of GEFA loan.

Motion carried unanimously (5/0)

CONSENT AGENDA

Appointment – JDA – Marcello Banes

Appointment – District One – Planning Commission – Ernie Smith

Appointment – District One – Zoning Board of Appeals – Larry Corban

Appointment - District Three - Zoning Board of Appeals - Victoria Redding

Appointment – District Three - Planning Commission – Lloyd Jackson

Appointment – District Three - 2017 SPLOST Committee – Dawn Smith

Public Facilities Authority – Alana Sanders

Appointment – District Four – Planning Commission – James Russell

Appointment – District Four – Zoning Board of Appeals – Vivian Richardson

County Clerk: Approval of BOC Minutes – July 7, 2020

County Clerk: Approval of BOC Minutes – August 4, 2020

County Clerk – Approval of ES Minutes – July 7, 2020

EMA: Approval of MOU between Gwinnett, Newton, Rockdale Health Departments and Newton County EMA for COVID 19 testing.

No cost to Newton County

4-H & Purchasing: Requesting approval to surplus property.

Sheriff’s Office: Requesting permission to accept the 2021 Accountability Court Surveillance Grant.

Grant Amount: \$36,693.00

Motion by Commissioner Mason, second by Commissioner Edwards, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion carried unanimously

FINANCE: MONTHLY FINANCIAL PRESENTATION – NOVEMBER 2020

Finance Director Brittany White presented the November 2020 financials to the board.

- Power Point attached and made part of these minutes.
- No action was necessary.

APPOINTMENT OF THE VICE-CHAIRMAN – 2021

- Rotating appointment.
- Some expressed concern that it would be difficult for a new commissioner to serve as vice-chair during their first year in office, noting they had no doubt Commissioner Sanders was capable and not questioning her capability. Commissioner Sanders assured the board she felt very comfortable serving as the 2021 vice chair.

Motion by Commissioner Cowan, second by Commissioner Henderson, to appoint Alana Sanders as the vice-chairman for the year 2021.

Motion carried (3/2) with Commissioner Edwards and Mason voting in opposition to the motion.

APPOINTMENT OF COUNTY CLERK – TERM: ONE YEAR

Motion by Commissioner Henderson, second by Commissioner Mason, to appoint Jackie Smith as the County Clerk for the year 2021.

Motion carried

RESOLUTION R010521 – A RESOLUTION OF THE NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONER REGARDING APPROVAL OF CHANGES TO ARTICLE IV OF CHAPTER 12 OF THE NEWTON COUNTY CODE REGARDING MOTION PICTURE, TELEVISION, AND PHOTOGRAPHIC PRODUCTIONS.

Note: This item was removed from the agenda.

RESOLUTION R010521A – A RESOLUTION OF NEWTON COUNTY, GEORGIA TO AUTHORIZE THE NEWTON COUNTY TAX COMMISSIONER TO WAIVE CERTAIN AMOUNTS OF TAXES OWED.

Newly elected tax commissioner Marcus Jordan appeared before the board requesting approval.

- The board chose to leave the current process in place.
- Requests for a waiver will still come before the Board of Commissioners for action.

Motion by Commissioner Sanders, second by Commissioner Cowan, to deny Resolution R010521a – A Resolution of Newton County, Georgia to authorize the Newton County Tax Commissioner to waive certain amounts of taxes owed.

Motion carried unanimously (5/0)

TAX COMMISSIONER: DISCUSSION CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZATION TO ACCEPT CHECKS, CASH, DEBIT CARDS, & CREDIT CARDS FOR PAYMENT ON BEHALF OF NEWTON COUNTY.

Motion by Commissioner Henderson, second by Commissioner Sanders, to approve the authorization to accept checks, cash, debit cards, & credit cards for payment on behalf of Newton County.

Motion carried unanimously (5/0)

TAX COMMISSIONER: DISCUSSION/CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZATION TO CORRECT OBVIOUS CLERICAL ERRORS IN ACCORDANCE WITH O.C.G.A. § 48-5-380 (C)

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason, to approve the authorization to correct obvious clerical errors in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 48-5-380 (C).

Motion carried unanimously (5/0)

TAX COMMISSIONER: DISCUSSION/CONSIDERATION OF AUTHORIZATION TO DISBURSE PROPERTY & TITLE AD VALOREM TAXES ON A MONTHLY BASIS & AUTHORIZE THE DISBURSEMENTS FOR MOTOR VEHICLES ON A BI-WEEKLY BASIS.

Motion by Commissioner Sanders, second by Commissioner Mason, to deny the authorization to disburse property & title ad valorem taxes on a monthly basis & authorize the disbursements for motor vehicles on a bi-weekly basis.

Motion carried unanimously (5/0)

INFORMATION SERVICES: DISCUSSION/CONSIDERATION OF REQUESTING APPROVAL OF SECURITY VENDOR SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

County Manager Kerr asked to table request to January 19th meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Sanders, second by Commissioner Mason, to table the Security Vendor Service Level Agreement as requested by Mr. Kerr.

Motion carried unanimously (5/0)

IGA: DISCUSSION/CONSIDERATION OF AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF COVINGTON FOR INSTALLATION FIBEROPTIC CABLE FOR PUBLIC SAFETY PURPOSES.

County Manger Kerr told the board this is part of the 911 Upgrade system. City of Covington is partnering with us. They will be extending the fiber.

Total Cost: \$95,021.25

City's Cost: \$28,000

County's Cost: \$57,121.25

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Sanders, to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Covington for installation fiberoptic cable for public safety purposes with a not to exceed amount of \$57,121.25.

Motion carried unanimously (5/0)

IGA: DISCUSSION/CONSIDERATION OF AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF COVINGTON FOR HARVESTING AND SALE OF TIMBER ON JOINTLY OWNED PROPERTY NEAR THE COVINGTON AIRPORT

County Manager Kerr told the board the city will bid out and manage the timber cutting. Profits will be split between the City of Covington and Newton County. Property is located near airport runway.

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Sanders, to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Covington for harvesting and sale of timber on jointly owned property near the Covington Airport.

Motion carried unanimously (5/0)

BEAR CREEK PROPERTY: DISCUSSION/CONSIDERATION OF AGREEMENT FOR SALE OF REALTY AND RELEASE OF EASEMENTS WITH JAMES A. SMITH REGARDING REPURCHASE 0.0183-ACRE EASEMENT AREA TO BE RELEASED FROM THEIR PROPERTY AT TAX PARCEL 0121003 FOR \$700.00

County Attorney Martin told the board this is part of the repurchase option of Bear Creek property.

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Henderson, to approve the agreement for sale of realty and release of easements with James A. Smith regarding repurchase 0.0183-acre easement area to be released from their property at tax parcel 0121003 for \$700.00

Motion carried unanimously (5/0)

ALCOHOL LICENSE:

First Reading

Flash Foods LLC dba. Circle K Store #2745127

4175 Salem Road

Covington, GA 30016

Owner: Circle K Stores Inc/David Radar

District: 2

Chairman Banes read request into the record.

Final Reading

JIC Investments LLC dba. Maverick at the Hub
2708 Hwy 278
Covington, GA 30014
Owner: MS United LLC/Roshan Dosani
District: 1

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason, to approve the alcohol license for the Maverick at the Hub located in District 1.
Motion carried unanimously (5/0)

Final Reading

FSD Enterprise LLC dba. Hub Marathon
12752 Hw2y 278
Social Circle, GA 30025
Owner: Jones Petroleum Co/Yousuf Dosani
District: 1

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Henderson, to approve the alcohol license for the Hub Marathon located in District 1.
Motion carried unanimously (5/0)

2021 ALCOHOL LICENSE RENEWALS

- 2021 Renewals are attached and made part of these minutes.

Motion by Commissioner Sanders, second by Commissioner Henderson, to approve the 2021 alcohol license renewals as presented.
Motion carried unanimously (5/0)

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Edwards

- Happy New Year!
- Our previous board was great and I am looking forward to working with new board.
- Expressed appreciation to all public safety personnel as well as our community as we continue to experience an unprecedented health crisis.

Commissioner Mason

- Happy New Year!
- Congratulations to all newly elected officials.
- Welcome to Commissioner Sanders.
- Echo Commissioner Edwards comment that we had a great previous board and looking forward to working with new board.

- Celebrating 200 year Bi-Centennial this year and hoping every district will have a celebration in their district.

Commissioner Sanders

- Expressed thanks to everyone for being so helpful.
- Commented that it's an honor to serve and looking forward to a great four years.

Commissioner Henderson

- Thanking God for allowing him to see things in his lifetime that he never thought possible.

Commissioner Cowan

- Gave honor to former fire chief & EMA director Steve Biggers who passed away with COVID-19. His service is tomorrow at Caldwell & Cowan.
- Looking forward to a new year.

Chairman Banes

- Good to be back.
- Looking forward to working with everyone.
- Mr. Kerr & I are working on scheduling a retreat.
- Congrats to everyone who won their election.
- Congratulations again to our newest member, Commissioner Sanders, I think she will do a great job.
- I will continue to strive and work for One Newton!
- Excited about all the opportunities before us.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Time: 8:45 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Mason
to enter executive session for the purpose of land acquisition and personnel.

Motion carried unanimously (5/0)

Chairman Banes announced there will not be a vote after the executive session.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Smith, County Clerk

Marcello Banes, Chairman