

# PUTNAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



117 Putnam Drive, Suite A ♦ Eatonton, GA 31024

## Minutes

**Tuesday, August 16, 2022 ♦ 6:30 PM**

*Putnam County Administration Building – Room 203*

The Putnam County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, August 16, 2022 at approximately 6:30 PM in the Putnam County Administration Building, 117 Putnam Drive, Room 203, Eatonton, Georgia.

### *PRESENT*

Chairman Billy Webster  
Commissioner Gary McElhenney  
Commissioner Daniel Brown  
Commissioner Jeff Wooten

### *ABSENT*

Commissioner Bill Sharp

### *STAFF PRESENT*

County Attorney Adam Nelson  
County Manager Paul Van Haute  
County Clerk Lynn Butterworth

### **Opening**

1. Welcome - Call to Order

Chairman Webster called the meeting to order at approximately 6:35 p.m.

(Copy of agenda made a part of the minutes on minute book page \_\_\_\_\_.)

2. Approval of Agenda

**Motion to approve the Agenda.**

**Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.**

**Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten**

3. Invocation

Pastor David Wofford, Eatonton 1st United Methodist Church, gave the invocation.

4. Pledge of Allegiance (JW)

Commissioner Wooten led the Pledge at the 5:30 p.m. meeting.

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**Zoning Public Hearing**

5. Request by Chad Smith for conditional use at 938 Greensboro Road [Map 103A, Parcel 037, District 1] (staff-P&D)

Mr. Chad Smith spoke in support of this request. No one signed in to speak against this item. Planning & Development staff recommendation was for approval of the proposed conditional use at 938 Greensboro Road [Map 103A, Parcel 037, District 1] with the following conditions:

- 1. There shall be no more than two-boat lifts displayed on the outside.
- 2. The outside display shall not be allowed in the front yard at any time.
- 3. A screened privacy fence shall be erected and maintained along the rear of the property where it abuts S. Hidden Lake Drive.

**Motion to approve the request by Chad Smith for conditional use to operate a dock company with office space and a boat lift display outside on the right when facing the front of the building to be even with the existing structure at 938 Greensboro Road [Map 103A, Parcel 037] with the following conditions:**

- 1. There shall be no more than two-boat lifts displayed on the outside.**
- 2. The outside display shall not be allowed in the front yard at any time.**
- 3. A screened privacy fence shall be erected and maintained along the rear of the property where it abuts S. Hidden Lake Drive.**

**Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.**

**Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten**

6. Request by Adam Schulze for conditional use on Emory Drive [Map 111, Parcel 001045 001, District 4] (staff-P&D)

7. Request by Adam Schulze for conditional use on Emory Drive [Map 111, Parcel 001045 002, District 4] (staff-P&D)

8. Request by Adam Schulze for conditional use on Emory Drive [Map 111, Parcel 001045 003, District 4] (staff-P&D)

Chairman Webster advised that these three items would be handled together.

Attorney Matt Roessing, representing the applicant, spoke in support of this request. Mr. Adam Schulze, Ms. Coni Adams-Barnes, Mr. George Barnes, and Mr. Johnny Pressley also spoke in support of this request.

Ms. Sharon Dickens, Mr. Dick Dickens, Ms. Sue Gentes, Mr. Duane Gentes, Mr. Henry Bowden, Ms. Pamela Tibbitts, and Ms. Marianne Bruhn-Popik spoke against this item.

Planning and Development staff recognized the requested conditional use would result in a less intensive use of the parcels and would otherwise have a less adverse impact on the adjacent property uses. However, staff finds the requested conditional use is not compatible with the existing use of adjacent properties, and, therefore, recommends denial. Nevertheless, in the event the governing authority approves the requested conditional use, staff recommends the following conditions:

- 1. The applicant shall provide certification that the dam was constructed in compliance with all applicable permitting authorities' requirements and is suitable to support the impoundment and associated flow. This certification shall be done by licensed civil engineer specializing in dam design and construction.
- 2. A 100 ft natural undisturbed buffer shall be established and maintained along Emory Drive and where the property abuts the adjacent R-2 parcels

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3. This conditional use shall be limited to 4 horses, 8 goats, 12 chickens, a hayfield and the existing farm pond.
4. Map 111, parcels, 001045 001, 0001045 002 and 001045 003 shall be combined together and cannot be developed, further subdivided or sold as standalone parcels.
5. This rezoning approval shall be conditioned upon the resurveying and recordation in the Superior Court of Putnam County of an accurate plat within 60 days of approval by the board of commissioners. A copy of the recorded plat shall be filed with the planning and development department director. Failure to file a plat pursuant to this subsection shall have the effect of invalidating the rezoning action as stated in Section 66-165(e)(3) of the Putnam County Code of Ordinances.

**Motion to approve the requests by Adam Schulze for conditional use to have four horses, eight goats, twelve chickens, a hayfield, along with a farm pond on Emory Drive [Map 111, Parcels 001045 001, 001045 002, and 001045 003] with the following conditions:**

1. **The applicant shall provide certification that the dam was constructed in compliance with all applicable permitting authorities' requirements and is suitable to support the impoundment and associated flow. This certification shall be done by licensed civil engineer specializing in dam design and construction.**
2. **A 100 ft natural undisturbed buffer shall be established and maintained along Emory Drive and where the property abuts the adjacent R-2 parcels**
3. **This conditional use shall be limited to 4 horses, 8 goats, 12 chickens, a hayfield and the existing farm pond.**
4. **Map 111, parcels, 001045 001, 0001045 002 and 001045 003 shall be combined together and cannot be developed, further subdivided or sold as standalone parcels.**
5. **This rezoning approval shall be conditioned upon the resurveying and recordation in the Superior Court of Putnam County of an accurate plat within 60 days of approval by the board of commissioners. A copy of the recorded plat shall be filed with the planning and development department director. Failure to file a plat pursuant to this subsection shall have the effect of invalidating the rezoning action as stated in Section 66-165(e)(3) of the Putnam County Code of Ordinances.**

**Motion made by Commissioner Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.**

**Voting Yea: Chairman Webster, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten**

**Voting Nay: Commissioner McElhenney**

9. Request by Robert J Haynie III, agent for William & Barbara Vargo to rezone 9.0 acres at 860 Harmony Road from AG to C-2 [Map 102, Part of Parcel 003, District 1] (staff-P&D) Mr. Robert Haynie spoke in support on this request. Ms. Barbara Vargo and Mr. William Vargo also spoke in support of this request. No one signed in to speak against this item. Planning and Development staff recommendation was for approval to rezone 9.00 acres at 860 Harmony Road from AG to C-2 [Map 102, Part of Parcel 003, District 1] with the following conditions:

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1. A 50-foot undisturbed vegetated buffer along the property lines that abut Map 102D, Parcels 018 & 019 and the remaining 5-acre AG tract currently identified as Map 102, Parcel 003.
2. There shall be no entrance on Goose Landing NE.
3. This rezoning approval shall be conditioned upon the resurveying and recordation in the Superior Court of Putnam County of an accurate plat within 60 days of approval by the board of commissioners. A copy of the recorded plat shall be filed with the planning and development department director. Failure to file a plat pursuant to this subsection shall have the effect of invalidating the rezoning action as stated in Section 66-165(e)(3) of the Putnam County Code of Ordinances.

**Motion to approve the request by Robert J Haynie III, agent for William & Barbara Vargo to rezone 9.0 acres at 860 Harmony Road from AG to C-2 [Map 102, Part of Parcel 003] with the following conditions:**

1. **A 50-foot undisturbed vegetated buffer along the property lines that abut Map 102D, Parcels 018 & 019 and the remaining 5-acre AG tract currently identified as Map 102, Parcel 003.**
2. **There shall be no entrance on Goose Landing NE.**
3. **This rezoning approval shall be conditioned upon the resurveying and recordation in the Superior Court of Putnam County of an accurate plat within 60 days of approval by the board of commissioners. A copy of the recorded plat shall be filed with the planning and development department director. Failure to file a plat pursuant to this subsection shall have the effect of invalidating the rezoning action as stated in Section 66-165(e)(3) of the Putnam County Code of Ordinances.**

**Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Brown. Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten**

### **Mill Rate Public Hearing**

10. Presentation of Proposed 2022 Mill Rate (staff-CM & Fin)

County Manager Van Haute gave a PowerPoint presentation on the mill rate history and proposed millage rate for 2022.

(Copy of presentation made a part of the minutes on minute book pages \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.)

11. Comments from the Public

Ms. Karen McGinnis commented that property values were reassessed and raised which will provide more revenue; feels like a double whammy to increase millage as well; income is not going up at that rate; challenged the board to look at alternatives to work with and generate revenue.

Dr. Steve Hersey commented that the fund balance should be used instead of raising the mill rate and asked why show the Board of Education mill rate to make the county mill rate look better.

Mr. Dale Bills commented that he appreciates the board and thanked them for the job they do; Putnam County has seen large growth and has a large fund balance; inflation is at a 40 year high and the country is in a recession; county residents are hurting and the board has an obligation to keep the budget fiscally sound by using some fund balance, cutting some department budgets and keeping the millage rate the same.

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12. Comments from Commissioners and/or Staff  
None

**Budget Public Hearing**

13. Presentation of Proposed FY23 Budget (staff-CM & Fin)  
County Manager Van Haute gave a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed FY23 Budget.  
(Copy of presentation made a part of the minutes on minute book pages \_\_\_\_\_ to  
\_\_\_\_\_.)

14. Comments from Commissioners and/or Staff  
Commissioner Brown requested another budget work session.

15. Comments from the Public  
Sheriff Howard Sills provided a handout from the Jones County Sheriff’s Office advertising for employees and commented on the employee shortage at his office and the desperate situation that is creating.  
(Copy of handout made a part of the minutes on minute book page \_\_\_\_\_.)

**Regular Business Meeting**

16. Public Comments

Dr. Steve Hersey commented on the Highway 441 water line bore and asked if there is really any return on it for the county or is it a gift to the water authority.

Mr. J.D. Jones commented on the status of Jimmy Davis Park and asked why some of the fund balance can’t be used there.

Ms. Patricia Hurt commented on concerns for safety at Jimmy Davis Park and asked what's going to happen to it.

Ms. Carshayla Smith asked what's going to happen to Jimmy Davis Park and what is so bad about it that nobody wants it; also asked what happened to the committee and is it in such bad condition.

Mr. Ryan Bradford provided a handout and commented on school safety and the need for Resource Officers at the schools.

Ms. Wanda Lawson commented that Jimmy Davis Park is an historic site in the community and has never looked so bad.

Ms. Lucinda Monday commented that she is seeking a partnership with the county to revitalize Jimmy Davis Park and help realize its potential.

Ms. Ranada Little commented on Jimmy Davis Park looking so bad.

Ms. Patricia Watkins requested that Jimmy Davis Park be added to a future agenda.

Ms. Alicia Waller commented on taking the fence down around the basketball court at Jimmy Davis Park.

Ms. Karen Evans commented that Mr. Jimmy Davis was a great person in the community, and he did a lot for it and how its not fair for the park named after him to be in the shape it is.

Mr. Richard Garrett commented that there hasn’t been any staff at Jimmy Davis Park in 10 years; that the equipment is in a shameful state and the county gave up on it; it has been systematically neglected by the county for no good reason.

Ms. Shakedra Ellison commented that there isn’t a park here for her kids to play and the county should maximize the potential use for Jimmy Davis Park.

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Mr. John Ellison commented that the community is spending money out of their pockets to keep up Jimmy Davis Park and if the city and county don't want it, it should be sold.

Mr. Glenn Humphries commented on Jimmy Davis Park being in limbo and unable to be used.

Mr. Fred Clemons commented that Jimmy Davis Park should be a place for kids to play and people to exercise.

17. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Minutes - August 5, 2022 Regular Meeting (staff-CC)

**Motion to approve the Consent Agenda.**

**Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.**

**Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten**

18. Approval of 2022 Alcohol License for Georgia Butts BBQ (staff-CC)

Sheriff Howard Sills commented that Georgia Butts BBQ has been a perpetual problem with loud music, illegal drink wagon in the parking lot, open container violations and underage sales.

The owner, Mr. Alex Davidson, has been cited multiple times but has started paying attention as there have been no complaints recently. He further advised that the license should be revoked or suspended if any more complaints come forward.

**Motion to approve the 2022 Alcohol License for Georgia Butts BBQ.**

**Motion made by Commissioner Brown, Seconded by Commissioner McElhenney.**

**Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten**

(Copy of license made a part of the minutes on minute book page \_\_\_\_\_.)

19. Request to begin the Road Abandonment process for Dennis Way and Footpath Road (JW & staff-PW)

Commissioner Wooten explained that he has received a lot of complaints from people about illegal dumping on these roads.

**Motion to begin the Road Abandonment process for Dennis Way and Footpath Road.**

**Motion made by Commissioner Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner McElhenney.**

**Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten**

**Reports/Announcements**

20. County Manager Report

County Manager Van Haute reported that repaving of Pea Ridge Road is progressing nicely with striping and raised pavement markers being added within the next two weeks. He also advised that the board may need to consider some zoning changes to the Highway 44 corridor, looking specifically at C1 and C2 storage issues.

21. County Attorney Report

Attorney Nelson had to leave earlier in the meeting due to an emergency.

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22. Commissioner Announcements

Commissioner McElhenney: none

Commissioner Brown: none

Commissioner Sharp: absent

Commissioner Wooten: thanked the Public Works Department for trimming the trees on Pea Ridge Road and advised that he has received a lot of good calls of appreciation for repaving the road.

Chairman Webster: requested staff to figure out a good time for a budget work session and coordinate with the board and that action is needed regarding Jimmy Davis Park and a work session may be needed for that too.

**Closing**

23. Adjournment

**Motion to adjourn the meeting.**

**Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.**

**Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten**

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:59 p.m.

ATTEST:

Lynn Butterworth  
County Clerk

Billy Webster  
Chairman

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