

PUTNAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



117 Putnam Drive, Suite A ♦ Eatonton, GA 31024

Minutes

Tuesday, September 19, 2023 ♦ 6:00 PM

Putnam County Administration Building – Room 203

The Putnam County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, September 19, 2023 at approximately 6:00 PM in the Putnam County Administration Building, 117 Putnam Drive, Room 203, Eatonton, Georgia.

PRESENT

Vice Chairman Daniel Brown
Commissioner Gary McElhenney
Commissioner Jeff Wooten

STAFF PRESENT

County Attorney Barry Fleming
County Manager Paul Van Haute
County Clerk Lynn Butterworth
Deputy County Clerk Donna Todd

Opening

1. Welcome - Call to Order

Vice Chairman Brown called the meeting to order at approximately 6:03 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 Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner McElhenney.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten

3. Invocation - Pastor James Smith

Pastor James Smith, from Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church, gave the invocation.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Wooten led the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. Special Presentation - Gatewood Baseball Proclamation

The commissioners presented a proclamation to the 2023 Gatewood Gators Varsity Baseball Team congratulating them on winning the GIAA AA State Championship.

(Copy of proclamation made a part of the minutes on minute book page _____.)

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Regular Business Meeting

6. Public Comments

Mr. Charles Gray commented that the new short term rental ordinance is solid but could be improved by having an enforcement policy and procedure.

Mr. William Vargo requested a policy change regarding campaign signs which provides placement clarification, suggesting the policy specify allowed placement at a minimum distance from the road instead of out of the county right-of-way.

Mr. Mike DePetrillo commented that he thought the short term rental ordinance vote was tonight. He further commented that he hoped there were no changes to the application and that the number of short term rentals has not increased.

Dr. Steve Hersey commented that the 2024 budget and mill rate were passed without commissioner representation from District 3 and the failure to meet the rollback rate created a tax increase for the people whose property values were reassessed.

Mr. Jake Simmons reported that there are problems with mud running into his driveway on Sunnyland Drive and has reported it to the city with no results. He would like the situation remedied.

Mr. James Schreiber requested a list of candidates for the District 3 Commissioner seat. County Manager Van Haute stated that the Eatonton Messenger will publish a qualified list of candidates.

7. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Minutes - September 1, 2023 Regular Meeting (staff-CC)
- b. Approval of Minutes - September 1, 2023 Executive Session (staff-CC)
- c. Authorization for Vice-Chairman to sign letter of support for Oconee Valley Healthcare (BS)
- d. Authorization for Chairman to sign GDOT FY2025 Section 5311 Program Grant Application (staff-Transit)

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Brown.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten
(Copies of letter and grant application made a part of the minutes on minute book pages _____ to _____.)

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8. Approval of Lease Agreements for Convenience Centers
 - a. Brown's Chapel - Marie Lewis & Holt Spivey
 - b. Glades - Charles Pinkerton
 - c. Rabbit Skip - Billy Resseau
 - d. Wards Chapel - Holt Spivey

County Manager Van Haute explained that the lease agreements for the county Convenience Centers are up for renewal.

Motion to approve the Lease Agreements for Convenience Centers (Brown’s Chapel, Glades, Rabbit Skip, and Wards Chapel)

Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.

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

(Copy of lease agreements made a part of the minutes on minute book pages _____ to _____.)

9. Authorization for staff to schedule a Public Hearing on proposed changes to the Putnam County Code of Ordinances - Chapters 28 (Development Regulations), 32 (Fire Protection and Prevention), and 66 (Zoning) (staff-CA)

Dr. Steve Hersey stated that a Public Hearing should not be held until a representative for District 3 is seated.

Motion to authorize staff to schedule a Public Hearing on proposed changes to the Putnam County Code of Ordinances – Chapters 28 (Development Regulations), 32 (Fire Protection and Prevention), and 66 (Zoning).

Motion made by Commissioner Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner McElhenney.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten

(Copy of proposed changes made a part of the minutes on minute book pages _____ to _____.)

10. Authorize the payment of \$500,000 to the Defined Benefit pension plan and authorize the Vice Chairman to sign the Resolution reducing the county's unfunded pension liability (staff-CM)

Motion to authorize the payment of \$500,000 to the Defined Benefit pension plan and authorize the Vice Chairman to sign the Resolution reducing the county’s unfunded pension liability.

Motion made by Commissioner McElhenney, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Wooten

(Copy of resolution made a part of the minutes on minute book page _____.)

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Reports/Announcements

11. County Manager Report

County Manager Van Haute reported the following:

- Eatonton Police Department and Chief of Police are working with us concerning acts of criminal trespass at the newly constructed Fire/Coroner/EMS building. The incident was caught on security cameras.
- A minor, with outstanding charges in Baldwin County, was apprehended with five weapons at Jimmy Davis Park. There was minor damage to the property. The City has been helpful in trying to provide additional security.

12. County Attorney Report

No report.

13. Commissioner Announcements

Commissioner McElhenney: none

Commissioner Wooten: commented that he was appreciative of all that everyone does and believes we have good people working for us; also advised that one of the recycle center lessors chose to build his home next to the recycle center after it was already operating.

Vice Chairman Brown: spoke about the Butler Baker project, an effort to preserve the legacy of this school that was state-of-the art at the time of its construction in the 1950’s. The building has been purchased by alumni who are working to preserve it. A recent water line break will cost \$7,000 to repair and donations are needed. If anyone would like to donate, please contact Sandra Parham, Secretary, at 706-473-0508. He also commented that Jimmy Davis Park is coming back to life thanks to the hard work of our county, County Manager Van Haute, and Recreation Director Scott Haley.

Executive Session

14. Enter Executive Session as allowed by O.C.G.A. 50-14-4 for Personnel, Litigation, or Real Estate

Executive session not needed.

15. Reopen meeting following Executive Session

Executive session not held.

16. Authorize Chairman to sign Affidavit concerning the subject matter of the closed portion of the meeting

Executive session not held.

17. Action, if any, resulting from the Executive Session

Executive session not held.

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Closing

18. 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 6:51 p.m.

ATTEST:

Lynn Butterworth
County Clerk

Daniel W. Brown
Chairman

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