

PUTNAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



117 Putnam Drive, Suite A ♦ Eatonton, GA 31024

Minutes

Friday, September 8, 2017 ♦ 9:00 AM

Putnam County Administration Building – Room 203

The Putnam County Board of Commissioners met on Friday, September 8, 2017 at approximately 9:00 AM in the Putnam County Administration Building, 117 Putnam Drive, Room 203, Eatonton, Georgia

PRESENT

Chairman Stephen Hersey
Commissioner Kelvin Irvin
Commissioner Daniel Brown
Commissioner Alan Foster
Commissioner Trevor Addison

STAFF PRESENT

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

Opening

1. Welcome - Call to Order

Chairman Hersey called the meeting to order at approximately 9:03 a.m. (Copy of agenda made a part of the minutes on minute book page _____.)

2. Invocation

The invocation was given by Rev. Garland Hart, Eatonton Presbyterian Church.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Hersey.

Mill Rate Public Hearing

4. Presentation of Proposed 2017 Mill Rate

County Manager Van Haute presented information regarding the proposed 2017 mill rate. (Copy of presentation made a part of the minutes on minute book pages _____ to _____.)

5. Comments from the Public

None

6. Comments from Commissioners and/or Staff

Commissioner Foster commented that it was hard to match up revenues and expenditures and we tried to keep a lower mill rate to help people recover from the recession. He also commented the closing of Plant Branch made us unable to keep that lower rate and thanks to the good stewardship of staff, department heads, and elected officials we have a healthy fund balance, but that won't last much over a couple years.

Commissioner Addison commented that small tax increases can be justified, but prefers a method of projecting out as far as possible and staying on a steady mill rate for four to five years. He further remarked that waiting until next year before considering a tax increase will give a better understanding of revenues.

Chairman Hersey commented that a five year plan is an excellent idea but hard to forecast. He also commented that the TSPLOST money is for capital transportation costs only and not for general operations. He explained that the proposed mill rate is a 5% increase in the unincorporated area and a 1.7% increase in the incorporated area and that the tax digest is a three year rolling average so it will take a while to catch up to the improved market. He also remarked that a small tax increase this year and maximum preservation of reserves is the main priority this year.

Budget Public Hearing

7. Presentation of Proposed FY18 Budget

County Manager Van Haute briefly went over the advertised budget. (Copy of budget made a part of the minutes on minute book page _____.)

8. Comments from the Public

None

9. Comments from Commissioners and/or Staff

Commissioner Foster commented that the cultural and recreation parts of the budget may seem high but large revenues are also taken in. He also questioned where additional revenues could come from and commented on the hotel/motel tax money that some neighboring counties are getting.

Chairman Hersey commented that a large portion of the budget increase is due to health insurance and that the original requested budget was \$23 million with the proposed down to \$18.8 million. He also advised that any commission wishing to make changes to the budget should get with the County Manager.

Commissioner Irvin commented that the budget should be set before the mill rate.

Called Meeting

10. Public Comments

None

11. Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Commissioner Addison, seconded by Commissioner Irvin, to approve the agenda. Motion carried with Commissioners Irvin, Brown, Foster, and Addison and Chairman Hersey voting yes.

12. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Minutes - August 15, 2017 Public Hearing & Regular Meeting (staff)
- b. Approval of Minutes - August 31, 2017 Mill Rate PH #1 (staff)
- c. Approval of Minutes - August 31, 2017 Mill Rate PH #2 (staff)
- d. Authorization for Chairman to sign letter to Middle Georgia Regional Commission requesting technical assistance for Coal Communities grant (PDA)
- e. Authorization for Chairman to sign letter to Middle Georgia Regional Commission regarding technical assistance for OneGeorgia grant (PDA)
- f. Authorization for Chairman to sign Resolution and Proxy Appointment form for Middle Georgia Consortium Representative (staff)
- g. Authorization for Chairman to sign documents related to ACCG-Group Health Benefit Program (staff)
 - i. Group Adoption Agreement
 - ii. Business Associate Agreement
- h. Authorization for Chairman to sign Letter of Intent for Underwriting Services to Refinance SWA Loan (SH)

Motion made by Commissioner Foster, seconded by Commissioner Irvin, to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion carried with Commissioners Irvin, Brown, Foster, and Addison and Chairman Hersey voting yes. (Copy of documents made a part of the minutes on minute book pages _____ to _____.)

13. Discussion of the Georgia Heart program in support of rural hospitals (AF)

Commissioner Foster briefly explained the Georgia Heart (Helping Enhance Access to Rural Treatment) program. Dr. Bob Betzel from the Putnam General Hospital Authority thanked the board for including this on the agenda and went over the program in more detail. He explained that you can contribute to your rural hospital organization, Putnam General Hospital in our case, and receive a federal charitable income tax deduction and a 90% Georgia income tax credit. No action was taken.

14. Discussion and possible action on Retirement Watch Policy (staff)

Motion made by Commissioner Foster, seconded by Commissioner Irvin, to table this item. Motion carried with Commissioners Irvin, Brown, Foster, and Addison and Chairman Hersey voting yes.

15. Discussion and possible action regarding a Roundtable and Lunch with local manufacturing businesses (DB)

Commissioner Brown explained that some of the local manufacturing businesses had approached him wanting to be able to talk to the commissioners. He thought it would be a good idea to talk with them and see how the BOC can help and hear their plans and projections. He was thinking about a lunch (on him) and discussion after a Friday Commissioner meeting.

Commissioner Addison commented that the PDA already does several lunches a year with local businesses and maybe the commissioners could attend one of those.

EDD Schwindler advised that the PDA does Business & Industry meeting once or twice a year with sponsors paying for lunch and that she would be glad to help set this up.

Chairman Hersey advised that no action is needed on this item; Commissioner Brown will get together with EDD Schwindler to organize this event. He further advised that commissioner attendance will be voluntary and attendance by three or more commissioners does not constitute a meeting.

16. Ratification of the Board of Education Mill Rate

Motion made by Commissioner Foster, seconded by Commissioner Addison, to ratify the Board of Education 2017 mill rate of 14.269. Motion carried with Commissioners Irvin, Brown, Foster, and Addison and Chairman Hersey voting yes. (Copy of documents made a part of the minutes on minute book pages _____ to _____.)

17. Resolution setting 2017 mill rate for incorporated county maintenance and operation

Motion made by Commissioner Addison, seconded by Commissioner Brown, to set the 2017 incorporated mill rate at 8.846.

After much discussion, **motion made by Commissioner Foster, seconded by Commissioner Addison, to end debate. Motion carried with Commissioners Irvin, Brown, Foster and Addison voting yes and Chairman Hersey voting no.**

Original motion to set the 2017 incorporated mill rate at 8.846 carried with Commissioners Irvin, Brown and Addison voting yes and Commissioner Foster and Chairman Hersey voting no. (Copy of documents made a part of the minutes on minute book pages _____ to _____.)

18. Resolution setting 2017 mill rate for unincorporated county maintenance and operation

Motion made by Commissioner Addison, seconded by Commissioner Irvin, to set the 2017 unincorporated mill rate at 8.277. Motion carried with Commissioners Irvin, Brown and Addison voting yes and Commissioner Foster and Chairman Hersey voting no. (Copy of documents made a part of the minutes on minute book pages _____ to _____.)

Reports/Announcements

19. County Manager Report

County Manager Van Haute reported the following:

- Recreation flyer distributed for an Ethan Richardson Foundation event
- EMS Director Nathan Mason announced his retirement as of December 1, 2017
- ACCG is conducting a survey of Sheriff's office compensation statewide
- Legacy Homes has increased production from 4 homes to 11 homes

20. County Attorney Report

None

21. Commissioner Announcements

Commissioner Irvin: none

Commissioner Brown: none

Commissioner Foster: none

Commissioner Addison: none

Chairman Hersey: none

Closing

22. Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner Addison, seconded by Commissioner Irvin, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried with Commissioners Irvin, Brown, Foster, and Addison and Chairman Hersey voting yes.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 11:30 a.m.

ATTEST:

Lynn Butterworth
County Clerk

Stephen J. Hersey
Chairman