

**Oconee County Board of Commissioners Meeting
Administrative Building Commission Chambers
May 7, 2024 – 6:00 p.m.
Minutes**

Members Present:

Chairman John Daniell
Commissioner Mark Thomas
Commissioner Chuck Horton
Commissioner Amrey Harden
Commissioner Mark Saxon

Staff Present:

Daniel Haygood, County Attorney
Justin Kirouac, County Administrator
Holly Stephenson, County Clerk
Melissa Braswell, Finance Director
Donna Norton, Budget Officer
Guy Herring, Planning and Code Enforcement Director
Kyle Stephens, Planner
Ethan Perry, Planner
Merry Howard, Senior Center Director
Christi Bittle, Senior Center Assistant Director
Lisa Davol, Parks and Recreation Director

Call to Order: 6:00 p.m.

Chairman John Daniell called the FY25 Budget Public Hearing to order.

FY25 Proposed Budget Public Hearing:

Finance Director Melissa Braswell presented the proposed FY25 Budget, stating the Budget supports the mission of Oconee County and is designed to achieve the strategic goals set forth for the county.

The proposed FY25 General Fund Budget is a balanced budget of \$40,733,328, which is an increase of 4.89% over the FY24 General Fund Budget. She discussed the FY25 General Fund proposed revenues and expenditures, while outlining some planned expenses for each category.

The total proposed budget for FY25 is \$76,834,919 to include capital, SPLOST, special revenue, and enterprise funds. This is a 2.42% increase from prior year. Proposed revenues and expenses by fund were presented.

The FY25 Budget supports the strategic goals of the county with a commitment to public safety, transportation maintenance and improvements, water and sewer infrastructure plan, and the fleet phase replacement program.

The 2nd Budget Hearing is scheduled for May 21, 2024 at 6pm and the Budget Adoption scheduled for June 4, 2024. The full presentation will be posted on the Finance page of the Oconee County website, along with the proposed fee schedule.

Commissioner Harden asked about the impact of the cost of health insurance benefits. Ms. Braswell responded that a 10% increase was budgeted for health benefits.

The Public Comment Period was opened.

Suzannah Heimel asked how departments make their budget requests and whether it is done publicly.

Chairman Daniell explained the budget submittal plan and process.

Pam Hendrix questioned the assigned fund balance, budget amendments, and personnel count.

Chairman Daniell responded to all questions explaining the difference in full-time employee lists and other lists that include seasonal and part-time workers. He stated the General Fund budget is the budget discussed at State of the County because it is what affects property taxes. The other funds are restricted, not discretionary, as they are voted on by citizens. He also explained that all budget amendments are discussed and approved at Board of Commission meetings, and that Enterprise fund expenses are not funded by property taxes but by users.

County Administrator Justin Kirouac added that grant funds received throughout the year require budget amendments, along with year-end amendments for uncompleted projects to move funds to the next fiscal year for project completion.

Jeff Hood asked about the revenue received from housing inmates from other counties in the jail.

Chairman Daniell advised he would research that amount and get back to Mr. Hood.

The Public Hearing was closed.

Call to Order: 6:00 p.m.

Chairman John Daniell called the meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Commissioner Chuck Horton led the Pledge after a moment of silence.

Approval of Agenda:

ACTION:

Motion:	Chuck Horton made a motion to approve the May 7, 2024 Agenda.
Second:	Mark Thomas
Voted in Favor of Motion:	Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon
Voted Against Motion:	None
Final Action:	Motion Passed.

Statements and Remarks from Citizens:

Jeff Hood, Julian Drive, expressed concerns with GDOT's plans for Highway 316 and Julian Drive. He requested the commissioners support leaving the right in, right out access at that intersection.

Statements and Remarks from Commissioners:

Chairman Daniell advised early voting is ongoing through May 17, 2024 in the Administrative Building.

Chairman Daniell announced the following openings on Citizen Advisory Boards: three positions on the Animal Services Advisory Board, five positions for the Keep Oconee Beautiful Commission, one position on the Family and Children's Services Board, and three positions on the Tourism and Visitors Bureau Board. Application deadline is May 15, 2024.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes of April 2, 2024 Regular Meeting, April 16, 2024 Town Hall Meeting, and April 30, 2024 Agenda Meeting:

ACTION:

Motion: Mark Saxon made a motion to approve the April 2, 2024 Regular Meeting minutes, April 16, 2024 Town Hall Meeting minutes, and the April 30, 2024 Agenda Meeting minutes.

Second: Chuck Horton

Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon

Voted Against Motion: None

Final Action: **Motion Passed.**

Proclamation Honoring Senior Center Director, Merry Howard:

Presented by: John Daniell, Chairman
Commissioner Thomas presented a proclamation honoring Merry Howard for her years of excellent service as the Director of the Oconee County Senior Center.

Rezone No. P24-0067:

Applicants:	The Oconee County Industrial Development Authority
Owners:	The Oconee County Industrial Development Authority
Location:	Aiken Road
Acreage:	±45.685
Zoning:	OBP (Office Business Park District)
Request:	Rezone modification to amend the concept plan, architectural elements, and landscaping buffers

Presented by: Guy Herring, Planning & Code Enforcement Director

Discussion: Mr. Herring briefed the Board regarding the request for the property, which is currently zoned OBP (Office Business Park District) in the Workplace Center Character Area. The Board of Commissioners has initiated a rezone modification to amend the concept plan, architectural elements, and landscaping buffers for the unincorporated portion in Oconee County. The Planning Commission and Staff recommend approval of this request with six conditions.

The Public Hearing was opened.

Tom Klein, representing IMI, had no comments to add.

There were no further comments in favor of the request.

Sharon Thelen requested the Board of Commissioners adopt all the additional conditions and buffers recommended by staff.

There were no further comments against the request.

The Public Hearing was closed.

Commissioner Harden questioned the location of the parking, access to the rear of the buildings, lighting, and proposed hours of operation.

Guy Herring and Tom Kline answered his questions.

ACTION:

Motion: Mark Thomas made a motion to approve Rezone No. P24-0067 for The Oconee County Industrial Development Authority, ±44.685 acres, Aiken Road with six conditions.

Second: Amrey Harden

Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon

Voted Against Motion: None

Final Action: **Motion Passed to approve Rezone #P24-0067 with six conditions.**
(See documentation in Ordinance and Resolutions Book No. 24.)

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Discuss and Consider a Budget Amendment for the District Attorney's Office:

Presented by: John Daniell, Chairman

Discussion: Chairman John Daniell explained that the District Attorney's Office normally receives two grants for staffing, along with county match of additional funds required. The DA's Office failed to apply for a grant by the deadline, and thus will not be receiving funding for two current employees. This grant funding will not be available again until 2026. Chairman Daniell requests and recommends for the county to cover the staffing expenses through June 30, 2024 so those two employees do not lose their jobs, with a budget amendment not to exceed \$87,060 from fund balance.

A discussion continued between Commissioners about the time frame and amount of the missed grant opportunity.

The Public Hearing was opened.

Jeff Hood asked who exactly was responsible for filing the application for the grant.

Chairman Daniell explained the DA's Office was responsible for filing for the grant, but he would not know which staff are involved with that submission.

The Public Hearing was closed.

ACTION:

Motion: Mark Saxon made a motion to approve the budget amendment not to exceed \$87,060 for the DA's Office.

Second: Amrey Harden

Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon

Voted Against Motion: None

Final Action: **Motion Passed.**

Consent Agenda:

There were no items removed from the Consent Agenda.

ACTION

Motion: Chuck Horton made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Second: Mark Thomas

Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon

Voted Against Motion: None

Final Action: **Motion Passed.**

- 1) Approval of the Parks & Recreation FY25 Concession Services Contracts with Oconee Futbol Club and Oconee County Little League.
- 2) Approval of Additional FY24 Law Enforcement Vehicles.
- 3) Approval of GEMA/HS Matching Grant Opportunity.
- 4) Approval of New Alcohol License for Killer Crust Pizza, LLC.
- 5) Approval of Red Sky Service Agreement for the Call manager Upgrade Project.
- 6) Approval of North High Shoals SPLOST Donation.

Adjourned:

Motion:

Second:

Voted in Favor of Motion:

Voted Against Motion:

Action/Motion:

Meeting Adjourned:

Mark Saxon made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

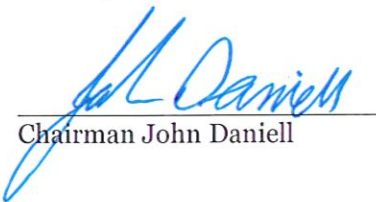
Mark Thomas

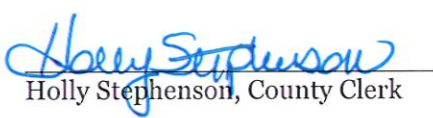
Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon

None

Motion Passed.

7:03 p.m.


Chairman John Daniell


Holly Stephenson, County Clerk

6-4-24
Date