

**Oconee County Board of Commissioners Meeting
Administrative Building Commission Chambers
May 21, 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
Adam Layfield, Water Resources Director
Christi Bittle, Senior Center Director
Lisa Davol, Parks and Recreation Director
Justin Milligan, IT Director
Anna Leigh Hardigree, IT Support Specialist

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 \$40,736,394, which is an increase of 4.89% over the FY24 General Fund Budget. She discussed the FY25 General Fund proposed revenues and expenditures, while pointing out updates since the first public hearing on the FY25 budget.

The total proposed budget for FY25 is \$76,634,635 to include capital, SPLOST, special revenue, and enterprise funds. This is a 2.15% 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 full presentation with updated changes will be posted on the Finance page of the Oconee County website, along with the proposed fee schedule.

Commissioner Harden asked about whether the proposed budget included the proposed probation contract impact which Chairman Daniell confirmed it did.

The Public Comment Period was opened.

Stephen Aleshire, questioned the definition of “smart” government. Also stated depreciation and amortization can be defined as revenues not expenses.

Pam Hendrix questioned the anticipated property tax revenue increase and how it was derived. She pointed out an \$18 million budget increase in four years in Oconee County and asked that spending be controlled.

The Public Hearing was closed.

Call to Order: 6:29 p.m.

Chairman John Daniell called the meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Commissioner Amrey Harden led the Pledge after a moment of silence.

Approval of Agenda:

ACTION:

Motion: Mark Saxon made a motion to approve the May 21, 2024 Agenda.

Second: Chuck Horton

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:

None.

Statements and Remarks from Commissioners:

None.

Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Update:

Presented by: Courtney Bernardi, President of Oconee County Chamber of Commerce
Chamber President Courtney Bernardi gave an update on economic development in Oconee County, explaining that retail growth led by COSTCO is bringing in increased sales tax revenues for Oconee County. She discussed the medical community moving into the county which brings additional visitors who also visit local businesses. Also, she discussed manufacturing expansion with the example of IMI relocating and expanding.

Commissioner Horton explained how he sees the Epps Bridge area as a great example of smart growth.

Commissioner Harden requested an update on The Varsity.

Ms. Bernardi responded that The Varsity does own two parcels in Oconee County but no immediate plans to start construction at this time due to an Atlanta project they are working on.

Discuss and Consider Confirmation of Senior Center Director:

Presented by: Justin Kirouac, County Administrator

Discussion: County Administrator Justin Kirouac presented Christi Bittle for consideration as the new director of the Senior Center.

ACTION:

Motion: Mark Saxon made a motion to confirm Christi Bittle as the new Senior Center Director.

Second: Mark Thomas

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

Voted Against Motion: None

Final Action: **Motion Passed.**

Discuss an Ordinance to Amend the Human Resources Policies and Procedures of Oconee County:

Presented by: Daniel Haygood, County Attorney

Discussion: County Attorney Daniel Haygood explained a request made by a Constitutional Officer for an amendment to the policy due to a marriage which affects the nepotism portion of the policy. He explained proposed new language in the policy to allow exceptions due to marriage when requested of the Board of Commissioners by a constitutional officer.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the June 4, 2024 Regular Meeting.

The Public Comment Period was opened.

Victoria Cruz, asked for clarification.

Chairman Daniell explained and directed her to the policy on the website.

The Public Hearing was closed.

Discuss Change Order for Phase II Construction of Calls Creek WRF Upgrade to 3MGD:

Presented by: Adam Layfield, Water Resources Director

Discussion: Water Resources requests a change order to transfer leftover Phase I contingency money to Phase II of the Calls Creek project. The original budget of \$17,885,782 for Phase II would increase by \$785,315 for a total contract price of \$18,671,097. The request is for the revision of the original budget to include all necessary budget amendments to that contract amount for the life of the contract.

Commissioner Horton asked where money comes from for these projects.

Chairman Daniell explained the money comes from GEFA loans and operational funds from Water Resources in preparation for future economic development.

Commissioner Harden asked if expenditures of the project would come back before the Board. County Administrator Justin Kirouac explained the approval process.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the June 4, 2024 Regular Meeting.

The Public Comment Period was opened and there was no Public Comment.

Discuss Oconee County Parks and Recreation Department Insurance Proceeds for Damaged Property:

Presented by: Melissa Braswell, Finance Director

Discussion: The Parks and Recreation Department is pending receipt of insurance proceeds in the amount of \$25,000 for damages to Herman C. Michael outdoor fencing and lighting. The request is for a budget amendment of \$25,000 to complete these repairs.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the June 4, 2024 Regular Meeting.

The Public Comment Period was opened and there was no Public Comment.

Discuss the Oconee County Probation Contract:

Presented by: John Daniell, Chairman

Discussion: Chairman John Daniell explained the probation process and its intentions. The county currently uses a private provider at no cost to tax payers with no complaints. He discussed the cost of services for a public probation system, addressing case counts, arrest powers, site visits, pre-trial monitoring, and indigent cases under each system. A kick-off meeting with all judges would be held, along with annual meetings with judges for updates and evaluation. Charges would be in line with the current contract. This draft contract will be reviewed and discussed again at the June 4, 2024 BOC meeting.

Commissioner Horton and Chairman Daniell discussed the costs of going with a public probation system.

Commissioner Harden asked the length of the proposed contract.

Chairman Daniell explained it would be five years like the current contract, with a clause to end the contract earlier if necessary.

Discuss the OCPRD/Senior Center Custodial Services Contract:

Presented by: Lisa Davol, Parks and Recreation Director

Discussion: An RFP for annual custodial services for the Parks and Recreation and Senior Center resulted in five bids. A review committee ranked the bidders and is recommending Tribond for these services beginning July 1, 2024. The request is approval to award the contract to Tribond for \$123,676 for Parks and Recreation and \$30,564 for the Senior Center with up to four renewal terms per the RFP.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the June 4, 2024 Regular Meeting.

The Public Comment Period was opened.

Pam Hendricks, questioned the contract amount.

Lisa Davol responded \$123, 676 which is an increase in price, but the current contractor is not meeting expectations.

The Public Hearing was closed.

Discuss the FY25 ACCG-IRMA Property and Liability Insurance Renewal:

Presented by: Holly Stephenson, County Clerk

Discussion: County Clerk Holly Stephenson requests approval of the FY25 Property and Liability Insurance proposal with ACCG-IRMA (Association County Commissioners of Georgia – Interlocal Risk Management Agency) in the amount of \$416,108 after a \$21,900 safety credit applied from FY24.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the June 4, 2024 Regular Meeting.

The Public Comment Period was opened and there was no Public Comment.

Executive Session:

Motion: Mark Saxon made a motion to adjourn into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters and litigation.

Second: Chuck Horton

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

Voted Against Motion: None

Action/Motion: **Motion Passed.**

Adjourn into Executive Session: 7:08 p.m.

No action was taken in Executive Session.

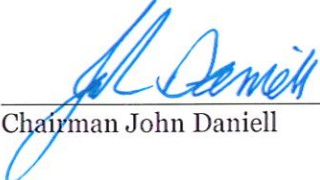
Executive Session Adjourned: 7:23 p.m.

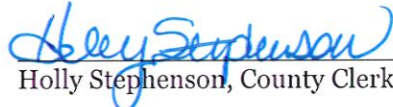
Regular Session:

Motion: Chuck Horton made a motion to adjourn back into Regular Session.
Second: Mark Thomas
Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon
Voted Against Motion: None
Action/Motion: **Motion Passed.**
Adjourned into Regular Session: 7:24 p.m.

Adjourned:

Motion: Mark Saxon made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Second: Mark Thomas
Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon
Voted Against Motion: None
Action/Motion: **Motion Passed.**
Meeting Adjourned: 7:24 p.m.


Chairman John Daniell


Holly Stephenson, County Clerk

6-4-24
Date