**Oconee County Board of Commissioners Meeting**
**Administrative Building Commission Chambers**
**October 29, 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
Diane Baggett, Communications Manager
Melissa Braswell, Finance Director
Donna Norton, Budget Officer
Christy Bittle, Senior Center Director
Pam Morris, Senior Center
Adam Layfield, Water Resources Director
Lisa Davol, Parks and Recreation Director
Anna Leigh Hardigree, IT Support Specialist

***Call to Order:*** 6:00 p.m.
Chairman John Daniell called the meeting to order.

***Pledge of Allegiance:***
Commissioner Mark Thomas led the Pledge after a moment of silence.

***Approval of Agenda:***
Chairman John Daniell requested to amend the agenda to add item 6:5 Discuss and Consider Parks and Recreation Custodial Services Contract.

**ACTION:**

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| Motion: | Chuck Horton made a motion to approve the October 29, 2024 Agenda with the addition. |
| Second: | Mark Saxon |
| 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:***
Chairman Daniell announced citizen committee applications are still being accepted for MACORTS, Board of Health, Farmland Preservation, and the Oconee County Library Board to be appointed at the December 3, 2024 BOC meeting.
Also, Early Voting continues at the Administrative Building. Currently, 57.75% of Oconee County voters have voted, which is second highest percentage in the State. Early Voting continues Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 8am-5pm with Election Day being November 5, 2024.

***Proclamation Honoring Civic Center Director, Shawn Wheeler:***

Presented by: John Daniell, Chairman

Commissioner Saxon presented a proclamation honoring Shawn Wheeler for his years of excellent service as the Director of the Oconee County Civic Center.

***Discuss Updates to the Alcohol Ordinance:***

Presented by: John Daniell, Chairman

Discussion: Chairman Daniell explained the proposed updates to the Oconee County Alcohol Policy. First, County Attorney Daniel Haygood suggested the allowance of brew pubs, then consider distillery pubs at a later time. A food sale percentage component would still apply, so the rules would be those of a restaurant. Farm Wineries will still be able to operate per State rules. Additionally, administrative changes have been proposed to include changing the licensing process to an administrative process, moving licensing from the County Clerk to the Planning Department, and increasing penalty amounts for late payments in a fee schedule. Other proposed changes include allowing movie theaters to serve in all theaters, allowing a grocery store to have a restaurant inside of their establishment, amending the Service Area Map to include the shops at Malcom Bridge, and potentially changing the start time of Sunday sales. Questions and discussions continued between the Commissioners and County Attorney. Chairman Daniell also reviewed the portion on the Administrative Hearing Officer.

The proposed Ordinance amendments will be reviewed again at the November 5, 2024 Regular Meeting.

***Discuss the Agreement for Court Collection Services between i3 Verticals and Oconee County Probate Court:***

Presented by: John Daniell, Chairman

Discussion: Probate Court is requesting to renew an agreement made three years ago with current vendor, i3 Verticals, for collection services for unpaid fines.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the November 5, 2024 Regular Meeting.

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

***Discuss the ACTS Building Electrical Renovation Bid Award:***

Presented by: Justin Kirouac, County Administrator

Discussion: The ACTS Building is 59 years old, and some existing wiring needs to be replaced. The recommendation is to award the contract to the lowest bidder, Donnelly Electric, for a total amount of $82,500. The request includes all budget amendments for the life of the project not to exceed $87,500 and the funds will come from SPLOST.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the November 5, 2024 Regular Meeting.

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

***Discuss the FY25 Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Aging Services Contract Renewal:***

Presented by: Christy Bittle, Senior Center Director

Discussion: The request is for renewal of the FY25 Aging Services Contract with the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission for services for the elderly and their caregivers, and authorizing Chairman Daniell to sign the contract. The contract period is July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the November 5, 2024 Regular Meeting.

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

***Discuss the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Amended SFT2023 ARPA Contract:***

Presented by: Christy Bittle, Senior Center Director

Discussion: The request is for an extension of the contract end date to September 30, 2025 and authorizing Chairman Daniell to execute the amended contract. There is no change in funding or costs.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the November 5, 2024 Regular Meeting.

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

***Discuss and Consider Parks and Recreation Custodial Services Contract:***

Presented by: Lisa Davol, Parks and Recreation Director

Discussion: Parks and Recreation and the Senior Center have been extremely unsatisfied with their current custodial service after numerous documented complaints and meetings. The request is for termination with cause of the current contract with Tribond, which will result in no penalty, and enter into a new contract with the second lowest bidder, C&C Janitorial for $109,442.34 in FY25 and $164,163.51 annually for the remainder of the contract.

**ACTION**

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| Motion: | Mark Saxon made a motion to terminate the current Custodial Services contract and approve a contract with C&C Janitorial. |
| Second: | Amrey Harden |
| Voted in Favor of Motion: | Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon |
| Voted Against Motion: | None |
| Final Action: | **Motion Passed.** |

***Discuss and Consider FY24 Year End Budget Amendments:***

Presented by: Melissa Braswell, Finance Director

Discussion: Finance Director Melissa Braswell requests these year-end amendments to enable the department to close fiscal year 2024 and produce the final financial statements for the year. She reviewed budget amendments, transfers from the General Fund and the other funds, and revenue neutral amendments. She also reviewed transfers and amendments in the other funds. For multi-year approvals, the request is for budget amendments for the life of these contracts as needed up to the stated amounts.
Commissioner Horton confirmed the transfer amount going to the Capital Fund.
Commissioner Harden confirmed the number of transfers requested is not unusual.
Commissioner Thomas thanked Ms. Braswell for the detail of her presentation.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the November 5, 2024 Regular Meeting.

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

***Discuss a Budget Amendment for Utility Relocation for GDOT Project 0017185:***

Presented by: Adam Layfield, Water Resources Director

Discussion: The roundabout at SR53 and Snows Mill Road/Rocky Branch Road requires a water line relocation by the county. Due to the scope of work, the recommendation is to allow the GDOT low bidder to complete the work with a financial responsibility of $519,095. The request includes all necessary budget amendments up to the contract amount for the life of the project.
Commissioner Saxon confirmed state preparatory work has already begun at the intersection.
Commissioner Thomas asked about county and state specifications.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the November 5, 2024 Regular Meeting.

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

***Discuss Acceptance of the GEMA/Homeland Security Cybersecurity Grant:***

Presented by: Justin Kirouac, County Administrator

Discussion: The request is to approve an agreement with the State for a subgrant of $131,250 to enhance cybersecurity, with 10% matching funds of $13,125. The request includes approval of all future budget amendments as necessary for the life of the project, and authorizing the Chairman to execute the grant documents for the life of the project.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the November 5, 2024 Regular Meeting.

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

***Update on Benefit Program Consultant:***

Presented by: John Daniell, Chairman

Discussion: Chairman John Daniell explained the county has been investigating self-funding insurance possibilities since 2015 due to rising health insurance costs, enhancing employee benefits, and creating a healthier work force. A decision was made to issue an RFP for a Benefits Program Consultant to do deep research into whether self-funding would be advantageous to Oconee County. Since the results showed self-funding would be advantageous, an RFP was issued for a benefit consultant to make that transition for the county. The Consultant/Broker would work directly for Oconee County at a fee and no other commissions. The Consultant would design, create, and manage both the plan and wellness program.
Commission Harden asked if other counties going in this direction has been consulted.
Chairman Daniell did speak with other smaller counties.
Commissioner Harden asked if this would be annual contracting with a consultant.
Chairman Daniell explained this would be a one-year contract with up to four renewals.
Commissioner Thomas asked about catastrophic claims and funding for large claims
Chairman Daniell explained the stop gap coverage and setting up a reserve fund.
Questions and discussions with the Commissioners and County Administrator.

The item will be discussed again at the November 5, 2024 Regular Meeting.

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

***Update of the Sewer Policy as Related to CCRC:***

Presented by: County Attorney Daniel Haygood

Discussion: County Attorney Daniel Haygood explained two proposed changes. First, CCRCs are being changed to Life Plan Communities so all amendments and references are being changed in accordance with State law. The second change is a proposed change that Life Plan Communities can be operated in multiple communities as long as operated by the same operator. For sewer, there is a limit of 30% capacity at any treatment facility, with 16% that can be allocated to Life Plan Communities.

The item will be discussed again at the November 5, 2024 Regular Meeting.

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

***Update on the Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority Treatment Plant Expansion:***

Presented by: John Daniell, Chairman

Discussion: Chairman John Daniell explained the result of a recent UOBWA meeting was approval of a Bond Resolution not to exceed $140 million The interest rate cannot exceed 5.5%, annual debt service cannot exceed $9.5 million, and final maturity cannot go past July 1, 2057. There will be two offerings: the first for $75 million and the second offering will be determined later.

Also, an amendment will need to be made to the IGA for raw water and treatment plant water, along with extending the MOU to match debt service payment.

The item will be discussed further at the November 5, 2024 Regular Meeting.

***Executive Session:***

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| Motion: | Mark Saxon made a motion to adjourn into Executive Session to discuss land acquisition, personnel matters, and litigation. |
| Second: | Mark Thomas |
| 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: | 7:27 p.m. |

**No action was taken in Executive Session.**

Executive Session Adjourned: 8:36 p.m.

***Regular Session:***

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| Motion: | Mark Thomas made a motion to adjourn back into Regular Session. |
| Second: | Mark Saxon |
| 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: | 8:38 p.m. |

***Adjourned:***

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| 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: | 8:38 p.m. |

John Daniell
Chairman John Daniell

Holly Stephenson
Holly Stephenson, County Clerk

11-5-24
Date