Oconee County Board of Commissioners Meeting
Administrative Building Commission Chambers
February 25, 2025 – 6:00 p.m.
Minutes

Members Present:
Chairman John Daniell
Commissioner Mark Thomas
Commissioner Chuck Horton
Commissioner Amrey Harden

Staff Present:
Daniel Haygood, County Attorney
Justin Kirouac, County Administrator
Holly Stephenson, County Clerk
Diane Baggett, Communications Director
Melissa Braswell, Finance Director
Donna Norton, Budget Officer
Adam Layfield, Water Resources Director
Lisa Davol, Parks and Recreation Director
Anna Leigh Hardigree, IT Support Specialist
Sarah Baird, Front Desk Receptionist

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:
ACTION:

Motion:	Chuck Horton made a motion to approve the February 25, 2025 Agenda.
Second:	Mark Thomas
Voted in Favor of Motion:	Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden
Voted Against Motion:	None
Final Action:	**Motion Passed.**

Statements and Remarks from Citizens:
None.

Statements and Remarks from Commissioners:
Chairman Daniell gave an update on Dawson Park, stating negotiations are underway for plans to proceed with Option B for the Phase One portion of the new park.
Leveling work for the resurfacing of Dials Mill Road and Antioch Church Road will start as early as tomorrow. Also, patching crews will begin on Cooper Gin and Choyce Johnson Roads soon. Many miles of roadways are being paved this year thanks to TSPLOST funding.

Government Communicators Day Proclamation Presentation:
Presented by: John Daniell, Chairman
Commissioner Mark Thomas presented a proclamation for Government Communicators Day to Diane Baggett, Communications Director for Oconee County.

Discuss Updated to the Fiscal Ordinance:

Presented by: Melissa Braswell, Finance Director

Discussion: Finance Director Melissa Braswell requests approval of revisions to the Fiscal Ordinance, last updated in January of 2022, to align with current environment and goals of the County. The desired effect of the revisions is to encourage quotes and bids from a variety of vendors and to relieve departmental restrictions resulting from increasing costs of goods and services.

Commissioner Harden discussed the table on page 16 with Ms. Braswell and agreed to one change.
Commissioner Horton confirmed the Board would still vote for an RFP on banking.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the March 4, 2025 Regular Meeting.

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

Discuss the Final Budget for Utility Relocation at SR53 and Snows Mill/Rocky Branch Road:

Presented by: Adam Layfield, Water Resources Director

Discussion: Water Resources Director Adam Layfield requests approval of the final budget of $593,150 for the utility relocation at SR 53 and Snows Mill/Rocky Branch Road for roundabout construction. The original request of $519,095 was based on an estimate with $593,150 being based on the actual final bid. The request includes all necessary budget amendments up to the contract amount for the life of the project.

Commissioner Thomas confirmed that the payment would go to DOT who will secure the contractor.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the March 4, 2025 Regular Meeting.

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

Discuss the Reallocation of Funds for the Clotfelter Bridge at Barber Creek Project:

Presented by: Adam Layfield, Water Resources Director

Discussion: Water Resources Director Adam Layfield requests approval to reallocate unused capital project funds into the operation budget to fund the water line relocation at Barber Creek for the Clotfelter Bridge Project. The total request is for $329,965. The request includes all necessary budget amendments up to the contract amount for the life of the project.

Commissioner Horton asked about reallocating money for FY26 budget.
County Administrator Justin Kirouac explained that reallocation should not be needed.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the March 4, 2025 Regular Meeting.

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

Discuss SPLOST Farmland Preservation Funding:

Presented by: John Daniell, Chairman

Discussion: The Farmland Preservation Committee recommended the Nedza Farm for conservation easement in an amount not to exceed $100,000 in October 2021. The closing date is tentatively planned for March 2025. The request is for approval of a SPLOST disbursement for the Nedza Farm from the 2021 SPLOST farmland protection project, including budget amendment approval, in the amount for $100,000, and authorization for the Chairman to execute the necessary documents.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the March 4, 2025 Regular Meeting.

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

Discuss RFP for Health Insurance Broker Services to Explorer Self-Funded Coverage:

Presented by: John Daniell, Chairman

Discussion: Chairman Daniell explained that a brokerage firm was brought in last year to review data to see if self-funding the county health insurance would be beneficial while still maintaining the level of health benefits that employees expect. After an RFP, a firm was selected to analyze extensive claims data and be able to go to market for complete pricing on moving to a self-funded program. During this investigative period, there would be no coverage liability and zero impact to the employees. The result would produce final numbers for the Board to review and decide on moving to self-funded or remain fully insured for health benefits.
The RFP results will be presented again at the March 4, 2025 meeting for a decision on whether to continue exploring self-funded health insurance or to remain fully funded. If the decision is to remain full funded, another RFP will be issued for brokerage services for fully funded.

Commissioner Harden questioned the current cost of health benefits for employees which is $400,000 per month. Chairman Daniell explained standard brokerage fees are around 5% or $250,000 per year. The cost for the broker under this RFP would be approximately $100,000-$150,000 as a contracted rate as opposed to a percentage. The company chosen by this RFP would provide full brokerage services, changing our broker of record, while they evaluate claims data to present numbers with a recommendation to move to self-funded or remain fully insured. The final decision will rest with the Board of Commissioners.
Commissioner Thomas asked if the new broker would provide full services if the county remains fully funded. Chairman Daniell explained the new broker would take over full services during this process.

Executive Session:

Motion:	Mark Thomas made a motion to adjourn into Executive Session to discuss litigation, land acquisition and personnel matters.
Second:	Amrey Harden
Voted in Favor of Motion:	Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden
Voted Against Motion:	None
Action/Motion:	**Motion Passed.**
Adjourn into Executive Session:	6:29 p.m.

No action was taken in Executive Session.
Executive Session Adjourned: 6:58p.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
Voted Against Motion:	None
Action/Motion:	**Motion Passed.**
Adjourned into Regular Session:	6:59 p.m.

Adjourned:

Motion:	Mark Thomas made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Second:	Amrey Harden
Voted in Favor of Motion:	Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden
Voted Against Motion:	None

Action/Motion: **Motion Passed.**
Meeting Adjourned: 7:00 p.m.

John Daniell
Chairman John Daniell

Holly Stephenson
Holly Stephenson, County Clerk

3-4-25
Date