

**Oconee County Board of Commissioners Meeting
Administrative Building Commission Chambers
March 25, 2025 – 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 Director
Melissa Braswell, Finance Director
Guy Herring, Planning and Code Enforcement Director
Adam Layfield, Water Resources Director
Bruce Thaxton, Fire Rescue Chief
Justin Milligan, IT Director

Call to Order: 6:00 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:	Chuck Horton made a motion to approve the March 25, 2025 Agenda.
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:

None.

Discuss the Award of ISO Fire Hydrant Flow Testing and Inspections Program:

Presented by: Adam Layfield, Water Resources Director
Discussion: Water Resources Director Adam Layfield requests approval of the award of RFQP 25-01-009 to perform fire flow testing, GPS locating, and general service and painting of the county's fire hydrants to Elves Co. Inc. The contract is for one year with four annual renewal options, and is not to exceed \$200,000 annually over the next five years. The request includes all necessary budget amendments up to the contract amount for the life of the project.

Commissioner Harden asked how many hydrants the county has.
Mr. Layfield responded approximately 2,700 hydrants.

Commissioner Horton asked about schedule.

Mr. Layfield said maintenance would be done each year, while flow would be done at 20% per year over the five years.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the April 1, 2025 Regular Meeting.

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

Discuss the Design Services Contract for Dawson Park:

Presented by: Justin Kirouac, County Administrator

Discussion: County Administrator Justin Kirouac explained that the county contracted with Lose to do design for Dawson Park, presenting three options. After discussion, the county expectations would not be met within the pricing structure. The recommendation now is to terminate with Lose and move ahead with Carter Engineering for \$759,900 to cover all design services aside from the gymnasium and field services building. The time schedule includes bids in by the second quarter of 2026 and move quickly from there with contracts.

Commissioner Horton asked about exploring financing options.

Chairman Daniell discussed the current SPLOST reallocation and looking ahead to the next SPLOST.

On consensus, this item will be placed on the Consent Agenda at the April 1, 2025 Regular Meeting.

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

Discuss an RFP for Audit Services:

Presented by: John Daniell, Chairman

Discussion: Chairman Daniell explained the proposals are being reviewed and a recommendation will be presented at the April 1, 2025 meeting.

National EMS Annual Report Presentation:

Presented by: John Bandzul, Vice President of Operations, National EMS

Discussion: National EMS presented their annual report with a brief history of their company and stating they became the county ambulance provider in 2009. In 2024, National responded to 4,111 calls with 2,812 transports with a 9:06 average response time for priority one calls. Oconee County is guaranteed paramedic-level trucks 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In 2024, medical protocols were updated to provide more robust care. He discussed the financial soundness of National EMS with a current focus on growth, ambulance replacement, and new equipment. He presented their current rates, encouraging patients to contact them for discounts and payment plans if needed.

Commissioner Horton asked if billing is the same for Oconee and Clarke counties.

Mr. Bandzul stated they bill the same for all their counties; however, Medicare/Medicaid pay different rates.

Commissioner Thomas asked if revenue is better in Oconee County.

Mr. Bandzul explained there is better revenue due to less Medicare/Medicaid recipients. National EMS does respond to all calls regardless of insurance coverage.

Commissioner Harden asked if they accept all insurance.

Mr. Bandzul explained they do accept almost all insurance, but payment differences result when National EMS is "in network" or "out of network" with insurance companies.

Commissioner Harden asked what percentage of patients are self-pay.

Mr. Bandzul responded approximately 8-10% of calls are self-pay.

Commissioner Harden asked if they track the percentage of patients that are not county residents.

Mr. Bandzul responded they do not track what percentage of patients are actual county residents.

Commissioner Horton asked if the bill is the same if the patient is deceased.

Mr. Bandzul explained bill amount for a deceased patient is based on whether treatment was provided or not. Billing costs are also based on national standards.

Commissioner Saxon questioned "in" or "out" of network when National EMS is the only option for the county.

Mr. Bandzul responded that insurance companies make their own policies and procedures.

Executive Session:

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

Second:

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: 6:49 p.m.

No action was taken in Executive Session.

Executive Session Adjourned: 7:58 p.m.

Regular Session:

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: 8:00 p.m.

Adjourned:

Motion: Mark Saxon made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

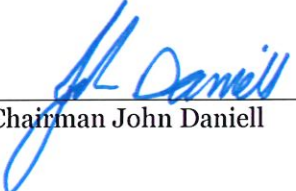
Second: Chuck Horton

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

Voted Against Motion: None

Action/Motion: **Motion Passed.**

Meeting Adjourned: 8:00 p.m.


Chairman John Daniell


Holly Stephenson, County Clerk

4-1-25
Date