

Monroe County Board of Commissioners

Minutes of the May 17, 2022

Regular Commissioners Meeting

9:00 A.M. Meeting

Present:

Greg Tapley, Chairman

Lamarcus Davis, Vice Chairman

Eddie Rowland, District 2

John Ambrose, District 3

George Emami, District 4

Staff:

Jim Hedges, County Manager

Ben Vaughn, County Attorney-entered 9:55 am

Janet Abbott, County Clerk

Richard Dumas, Public Information Officer

Kelsey Fortner, Zoning Officer

Welcome

Chairman Tapley welcomed everyone in attendance.

Prayer

Commissioner Davis led the invocation.

Pledge

Chairman Tapley led the Pledge.

Roll Call

County Clerk Janet Abbott called roll.

Call to Order

Chairman Tapley called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

New Business

Approve Agenda

Chairman Tapley presented the agenda for approval with the following changes, move item c to the bottom of the agenda, and the Towaliga Judicial Circuit budget removed from this agenda and moved to the next agenda.

Commissioner Davis motioned to approve the agenda with revisions.

Commissioner Ambrose seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Approve Minutes-BOC Meeting-May 3, 2022

Commissioner Rowland motioned to approve the minutes of the May 03, 2022, Regular meeting with the usual 30 days for changes. Commissioner Emami requested the addition to the minutes that his recusal from the Rezoning/Conditional Use application for Ward was due a potential conflict of interest.

Commissioner Emami seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Towaliga Judicial Circuit Budget

This item was removed from the agenda.

Hazard Mitigation Plan Resolution

Every five years, Monroe County and the municipal governments are mandated by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 to complete a Hazard Mitigation Plan. This update has been completed and the counties and municipalities will remain eligible for federal mitigation funding. The updated plan for Monroe County has been presented for public comment, reviewed by federal, state, and local agencies, and approved.

By Resolution, the Monroe County Board of Commissioners must formally adopt the Monroe County Hazard Mitigation Plan 2021 update.

Dean Nelson with the Regional Commission presented the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Mr. Nelson stated FEMA/GEMA are now reviewing the third draft of the Hazard Mitigation Plan and have requested inserting language that the EMA and Chief Jackson will have periodic listening sessions with the public to determine if we are on the right track.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve the resolution.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Industrial Development Authority Appointments

All appointees to the Industrial Development Authority terms will expire on June 7, 2022. The appointed term is for five-years.

Appointees are as follows:

- Wendell Horne
- Phil Ham
- Barry Peters
- Jim Cole
- Tom Baugh

Commissioner Emami motioned to re-appoint all, Chairman Tapley seconded for discussion.

Following a board discussion, the motion failed 1-4 with Chairman Tapley in favor and Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Ambrose, Commissioner Emami and Commissioner Rowland opposed.

Commissioner Davis stated he would be interested in serving on this board.

Commissioner Ambrose stated he would like to put Commissioner Emami on the board.

Commissioner Emami stated while he appreciated the gesture he would respectfully decline.

County Manager Jim Hedges asked if there is language that prohibits a County Commissioner from being on the industrial development Authority.

County Attorney Ben Vaughn stated there is a general prohibition against Commissioners holding a plurality of offices and he believes this board falls in that prohibition. He stated he would research further and bring back to the next meeting.

Following the Board discussion, the Board decided to postpone the appointments to allow the County Attorney to research whether a member of the Board of Commissioners could serve on this Board.

GSP Lasers

Chairman Tapley has been contacted by the Georgia State Patrol, Post 44, Post Commander SFC Brad Walker requesting the donation of six (6) lasers. AS information, revenue resulting from citations issued by the GSP in Monroe County end up in the Monroe County General Fund. Over the past 3-4 years, the GSP's citations have generated approximately \$700,000. Currently, the GSP has a need for 12 lasers, and the recommendation is for Monroe County to donate 6 lasers at a cost of \$12,468.00, funding from the contingency budget.

Commissioner Emami motioned to approve the purchase.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

COLA

County Manager Jim Hedges, Finance Director Lorri Robinson, and County Clerk/Human Resource Director Janet Abbott presented a recommendation for a cost-of-living allowance to the Board.

County Manager Jim Hedges stated originally, he was asked by Sheriff Brad Freeman to propose a 5% increase for E-911 operators to be effective July 1, 2022. This would follow the 8% increase granted to POST certified members of the Sheriff's Department and 8% increase granted to Monroe County Emergency Services professional staff. These increases were granted to approximately 48% of Monroe County employees.

Following a Board discussion, the Board instructed the County Manager to identify the positions that are we are having problems hiring and get them evaluated at market value and bring the numbers back to a meeting.

Request for Qualifications/Bids

County Manager Jim Hedges stated at the April 5, 2022, Board of Commissioners' meeting, various water and building projects were discussed. Mr. Hedges stated the county has 10.6 million remaining in the bonded funds as well as state and federal recovery funds that must be used either for water projects or building projects. He presented six potential building projects that could be completed using the available funds. He proposed appointing Monroe County Maintenance Director Ray White and Monroe County Building Consultant Bentley Cox as co-project managers for all the proposed building projects.

Mr. Hedges stated a preliminary cost estimate for the High Falls fire station ranges from \$1.2 million to about \$1.3 million. Mr. Hedges proposed taking bids by advertising in the newspaper for four weeks and posting on the Georgia Procurement Registry.

Mr. Hedges also proposed taking RFQ's for a new Smarr fire station to be located off Rumble Road, for a new reinforced cement block training facility for the Monroe County Sheriff's Office, for a cement block addition to the existing Monroe County Animal Services building that will be used to house a storage cooler for deceased animals, space for food storage and an HVAC unit, and for a 5 x 12 feet coverage patio that will provide shelter for a propane incinerator.

Following a Board discussion, Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve the County Managers request to request bids and RFQ's for all projects as presented.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to authorize the County Attorney Ben Vaughn to cancel the contract for the High Falls fire station with Warren Associates, Inc.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Revised Subdivision Ordinance-moved to the end of the agenda after new business

MCBOC Minutes of May 17, 2022, Meeting

MCBOC approved June 7, 2022 Meeting

At the May 3, 2022, Board of Commissioners meeting, it was agreed that a standalone Subdivision Ordinance would be adopted while we go through the Unified Development Ordinance. Brandon Bowen's proposed Subdivision Ordinance is being presented.

County Attorney Ben Vaughn reviewed the proposed changes with the Board. Mr. Vaughn stated a minor subdivision is defined as three or fewer lots, which does not involve the construction of a new street. Five or fewer lots, each five acres or more, which does not involve the construction of a new street. All minor subdivisions will be processed administratively through the Monroe County Planning & Zoning Office without the requirement of full board approval.

Major subdivisions are defined as any subdivision which does not meet the definition of a minor subdivision. Major subdivisions will require full Board approval and will be processed through multiple steps, including preliminary plat approval, approval of construction plans with the development of a new public or private street, and final plat approval.

Mr. Vaughn also stated the county's curb and gutter requirements were also changed as part of the updated ordinance. The updated ordinance states curbs and gutters shall be installed for all major subdivisions in accordance with the standards and specifications of the state department of transportation. A subdivision shall be exempt from providing curbs and gutters if all lots exceed three acres per lot. Where curb and gutter are not provided pursuant to this exception, those lots may not thereafter be subdivided. Minimum spacing for curb cuts on the same side of the street will be based on the speed limit of the county road.

Following a board discussion, Commissioner Emami motioned to approve the revised Subdivision Ordinance as submitted.

Commissioner Ambrose seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Emami motioned to remove the moratorium on major subdivisions.

Commissioner Ambrose seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Old Business

There was no old business discussed.

Commissioners' Comments

Commissioner Ambrose asked where we stand on the RV enforcement for the ones that have been given a warning.

County Attorney Ben Vaughn stated direction will be needed in the Unified Development Ordinance on how to proceed.

Commissioner Ambrose stated the Board needed a called meeting to finalize these items.

Commissioner Ambrose stated in Cross Creek Subdivision there are four roads with very similar names and there are two addresses with the same numerical address and similar road name. He stated the mail and packages are getting mixed up and somehow this needs to be fixed.

Zoning Officer Kelsey Fortner stated she was aware of the situation, and this happened when the subdivision was originally created and at that time it was addressed properly. The developer came back to the Board and asked for a variance and made the lots smaller and the addresses then got messed up. Ms. Fortner stated she contacted the property owner that has the issue and asked could the address be changed, and he replied absolutely not.

Public Comments

Steve Coleman spoke stating he cannot believe the subdivision ordinance does not require a public hearing.

Josey Road resident Regina Morris stated she is concerned about the number of subdivisions coming into Monroe County and the loss of the small-town feel.

Executive Session-Litigation

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to move into executive session for litigation at 10:50 a.m.

Commissioner Emami seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to move out of executive session at 11:03 a.m.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Action from Executive Session

County Attorney Ben Vaughn gave a summary of executive session. Mr. Vaughn stated the items discussed were two matters of litigation one is a current and active litigation, and the other is a potential litigation, but no action is needed at this time.

Adjourn

Commissioner Emami motioned to adjourn at 11:05

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Respectively Submitted by:

County Clerk, Janet Abbott