

Monroe County Board of Commissioners

Minutes of January 07, 2025

Regular Meeting

6:00 P.M.

Present:

Alan Gibbs, Chairman

John Ambrose, Vice-Chairman

Lamarcus Davis, District 1

Eddie Rowland, District 2

Al Turner, District 4

Staff:

Jim Hedges, County Manager

Ben Vaughn, County Attorney

Janet Abbott, County Clerk

Richard Dumas, Public Information Officer

Welcome

Vice Chairman Ambrose welcomed everyone in attendance.

Prayer

Pastor Richard Jelly with Forsyth Methodist Church gave the invocation.

Pledge

Vice Chairman Ambrose led the Pledge.

Oath of Office

Judge Donna Robins issued the Oath of Office to District 1 Commissioner Lamarcus Davis, District 2 Commissioner Eddie Rowland and Chairman Alan Gibbs.

Roll Call

County Clerk Janet Abbott called roll.

Call to Order

Chairman Gibbs called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Citizen Service Awards

- District 1 Lamarcus Davis presented the Citizen Service Award to Kelly Vandevusse
- District 2 Eddie Rowland presented the Citizen Service Award to Virginia Remick
- District 3 John Ambrose presented the Citizen Service Award to Lorri Robinson-Byrd
- Former District 4 George Emami presented the Citizen Service Award to Chuck de Vries
- Former Chairman Greg Tapley presented the Citizen Service Award to Sloan Oliver

Proclamation-Dana Renaud's Retirement

Chairman Gibbs read the proclamation honoring Dana Renaud for her 38 years of employment with Monroe County and proclaiming January 9th as Dana Renaud Day in Monroe County. Chairman Gibbs presented the proclamation to Mrs. Renaud and her husband Dale.

New Business

Approve Agenda

Chairman Gibbs presented the agenda for approval with the addition of the District Attorney Resolution, Library Discussion and Executive Session for litigation.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve the agenda with said changes.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and the motion passed 5-0.

Approve Minutes

Chairman Gibbs presented the minutes of the December 17, 2024, Regular Meeting and the December 27, 2024, Called Meeting for approval.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve with the normal 30 days for changes.

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

Forsyth-Monroe County Chamber of Commerce

Monroe County's appointed representative to the Forsyth-Monroe County Chamber of Commerce is Former Chairman Greg Tapley. His term expires on December 31, 2024, and a new representative is required.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to appoint Chairman Allen Gibbs as the new representative on the Forsyth-Monroe County Chamber of Commerce.

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

Hospital Authority of Monroe County

Mac Brown was reappointed to the Hospital Authority of Monroe County on January 2, 2024, to serve a four-year term. Mr. Brown submitted his resignation on December 16, 2024, to be effective on

December 31, 2024. Mr. Brown has served on the Hospital Authority of Monroe County for seven years.

Mr. Brown recommended Lisa Goodwin, a nurse practitioner for Internal Medicine Associates, for over 10 years. She has her undergraduate degree from the University of Georgia and her MSN from Georgia College.

A replacement will need to be appointed to serve the remaining three years of Mr. Brown's appointment. Commissioner Ambrose motioned to appoint Dianne Soule to the Hospital Authority.

Commissioner Turner seconded the motion.

Following a board discussion, the motion to appoint Dianne Soule carried 5-0.

Central Georgia Joint Development Authority

The Board of Commissioners' representative on this Authority is Commissioner Lamarcus Davis and his term expires on December 31, 2024. Reappointment or replacement is necessary.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to reappoint Lamarcus Davis to the Central Georgia Joint Development Authority.

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

Library Board of Monroe County

There are thirteen appointees to the Library Board of Monroe County, eleven members are appointed by the Monroe County Board of Commissioners, one appointed by the Monroe County Board of Education, and one appointed by the City of Forsyth. Three appointees' terms expire on December 31, 2024, as follows:

- Margie Bryant
- Bob Harris
- Lovenia Trammel

All three have term limits and cannot be reappointed.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to appoint Nathan Jackson to the Library Board for a four-year term. Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to appoint Amisha Moore to the Library Board for a four-year term. Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to appoint Julie Hoots to the Library Board for a four-year term.

Commissioner Turner seconded the motion, and the motion carried 3-2 with Chairman Gibbs, Commissioner Ambrose, and Commissioner Turner in favor and Commissioner Davis and Commissioner Rowland opposed.

Planning & Zoning Board

Each Commissioner appoints a representative to the Planning & Zoning Board. These are one-year appointments. Current appointments are as follows:

- Jim Rollins-Chairman appointee
- David Hunter-District 1 appointee
- Chuck Benson-District 2 appointee
- Richard Ezelle-District 3 appointee
- Jason Dorsey-District 4 appointee

Commissioner Ambrose nominated Richard Ezelle for District 2.

Commissioner Davis nominated Shamika Myrick Morgan for District 1.

Commissioner Rowland nominated Chuck Benson for District 3.

Commissioner Turner nominated Jim Peters for District 4.

Chairman Gibbs nominated Mitchell Bunce for Chairman.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to appoint all five nominees to the Zoning Board.

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

Recreation Board

Each Commissioner appoints a representative to the Recreation Board. These are two-year appointments. Current appointments are as follows:

- Kenneth Mantle-Chairman appointee
- Marecha Gaines-District 1 appointee
- Ron Shipman-District 2 appointee
- Adam Ham-District 3 appointee
- Josh Ridley-District 4 appointee

Commissioner Davis nominated Marecha Gaines.

Commissioner Rowland nominated Ron Shipman.

Commissioner Ambrose nominated Stan Starr.

Commissioner Turner nominated Douglas Lekness.

Commissioner Davis motioned to appoint all five nominees to the recreation board.

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

Tax Assessor Board

There are five members of the Tax Assessors' Board and the term for Ms. Gina Davies, Vice-Chairperson, expires on February 15, 2025. The Tax Assessors' Board requests Ms. Davies be reappointed.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to reappoint Gina Davies to the Tax Assessors' Board for a three-year term.

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

Two Rivers RC&D

Historically, Monroe County representatives have included the Chairman and the Public Works Director. These are one-year appointments, and it is recommended Kimble Stokes be reappointed as Monroe County's voting member, and in lieu of the Chairman, Gary Futch be appointed as the second Monroe County representative.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to reappoint Kim Stokes as Monroe County's voting member and to appoint Gary Futch as the second representative for Monroe County to the Two Rivers RC&D.

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

DA Resolution

County Manager Jim Hedges read a *Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of Monroe County, Georgia for the purpose of designating the District Attorney's Office pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 15-10-62 (A) for the prosecution of certain county ordinance violations; to authorize the Chairman to sign the resolution on behalf of the Board of Commissioners; to authorize the Clerk of Monroe County to Attest all documents and for other related purposes.*

The County Manager read further in the resolution stating *The Monroe County Board of Commissioners desires to designate the Office of the District Attorney of the Towaliga Judicial Circuit, including but not limited to the District Attorney and any Assistant District Attorneys in that office, to prosecute any pending or future violations of Monroe County ordinances by Kimberly S. Dial and/or Eric Dial.*

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve the resolution and to authorize the Chairman to sign.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion.

Chairman Gibbs asked County Clerk Janet for a roll call vote from the Board.

County Clerk Janet Abbott asked Commissioner Al Turner if he approved or disapproved.

Commissioner Turner stated he approved.

County Clerk Janet Abbott asked Commissioner Ambrose if he approved or disapproved.

Commissioner Ambrose stated he approved.

County Clerk Janet Abbott asked Commissioner Rowland if he approved or disapproved.

Commissioner Rowland stated he approved.

County Clerk Janet Abbott asked Commissioner Davis if he approved or disapproved.

Commissioner Davis stated he approved.

County Clerk Janet Abbott asked Chairman Gibbs if he approved or disapproved.

Chairman Gibbs stated he approved.

The motion carried 5-0.

Library

Commissioner Ambrose stated he would like to remove the Monroe County Library from the Flint River Regional Library system and bring them fully under the county's control. Commissioner Ambrose stated he is willing to do what is needed to have the controversial books placed in the age-appropriate sections.

Chairman Gibbs stated he agrees there are books that he believes are in the wrong sections, the Board of Commissioners have never formally asked the Library Board to make any specific changes.

Commissioner Rowland stated we can't just remove books from the library or move books to different sections without a formal process. He stated the Board had to make sure there was no discrimination towards protected classes. Commissioner Rowland stated he would like to wait until the new members of the Library Board were in place and had a chance to meet.

Commissioner Davis stated removing the Monroe County Library from the Flint River Regional Library system is a long-drawn-out process and the majority of the members of the Flint River Regional Library would have to approve the removal.

Chairman Gibbs stated the Board needs to get a clear picture of how much of the library's funding comes from the county compared to outside funding.

Following an extensive Board discussion, no action was taken.

Public Comments

Russ Edge, resident of Edge Road addressed the board regarding House Bill 581. Mr. Edge stated the residents of Monroe County voted for this and the Board of Commissioners should listen.

Roger McDaniel stated he is the power of attorney for Wanda Williams, the neighbor of Twin Oaks Fun Farm and he has pictures of the driveway with no culvert, and it is not permitted and as of today nothing has been done, and this is a public safety issue.

Commissioners' Comments

District 1 Lamarcus Davis

Commissioner Davis congratulated everyone that received a Service Award and spoke briefly about House Bill 581 stating Commissioner Rowland and himself have been digging deep into the house bill and what was on the referendum is not what you are getting. The schools are projected to lose \$700 to \$1 million dollars, and the schools will have no choice but to raise their millage rate.

District 2 Eddie Rowland

Commissioner Rowland addressed Russ Edge and stated he would like to sit down and have a conversation with him regarding HB 581.

Commissioner Rowland read his statement that he sent out to his fellow Board members on New Years Day that was titled "My commitment to my fellow public servants".

District 3 John Ambrose

Commissioner Ambrose welcomed all of the new board members and Commission members and stated he looks forward to the next four years.

District 4 Al Turner

Commissioner Turner stated there will be three public hearings held in regard to HB 581, January 16th, January 23rd, and February 4th.

Chairman Alan Gibbs

Chairman Gibbs thanked the county for electing him to the chairman seat and asked everyone to be patient with him.

Chairman Gibbs stated HB 581 is an absolute monster.

Chairman Gibbs stated the library issue is not going away, and he doesn't want to see it shut down.

Executive Session-Litigation

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to enter executive session at 7:27 p.m. for Litigation

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

Commissioner Davis motioned to come out of executive session at 7:42 p.m.

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

Action from Executive Session-Litigation

County Manager Jim Hedges stated the Board discussed pending future litigation and no action is needed at this time.

Adjourn

Commissioner Davis motioned to adjourn at 7:44 P.M.

Commissioner Turner seconded the motion, and the motion was carried 5-0.

Respectively Submitted by:

Janet Abbott, County Clerk