

**MACON COUNTY
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday September 5th, 2023, at 6:30 P.M.

Present: Mayor/Chairman Steve Jones, Commissioners Phillip Snow, Todd Gentry, Keith Newberry, Mike Jenkins, Benton Bartley, Ethan Flippin, Billy Wilmore, Justin Dyer, Dan Hill, Tony Wix, Michael Slayton, Jeff Hughes, Barry King, Bobby Ray King, Kyle Petty, Wendell Jones, Helen Hesson, and Larry West.

Absent: Barry Marshall and Jarhea Wilmore

Mayor/Chairman Steve Jones opened the meeting.

Michael Slayton gave the Invocation.

Phillip Snow led the Pledge.

Motion #1 by Petty, 2nd by Flippin to accept minutes as presented from the 8/21/23 Legislative Body meeting, 7/18/23 Planning Commission meeting, 7/18/23 Board of Zoning Appeals meeting, 8/7/23 Special Called meeting (Elementary School), 8/7/23 Special Called meeting (Administrative Building) and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Motion #2 by Slayton, 2nd by Snow to accept Budget Amendments #1-#7 (#1 Parks and Fair Boards, #2 Chancery Court, #3 Election Commission, #4 Workhouse, #5 Sheriff's Department, #6 Drug Fund, and #7 Sex Offender Registry) and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Motion #3 by Petty, 2nd by Newberry to defer 9-8/23 Strategic Plan Resolution and Debt Management Policy to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Motion #4 by West, 2nd by Hesson to defer 9-9/23 Title VI Resolution to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Motion #5 by Petty, 2nd by Newberry to defer 9-10/23 Suicide Prevention Proclamation to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

School Director Shawn Carter updated the Commissioners on the renovation projects going on at the schools. He stated that the gym at the RBS Elementary School is being constructed now along with the addition at MCHS, which is ahead of schedule and hoping to be ready by the beginning of the next school year. He, along with Mayor Jones, have started the funding process for the new Elementary School.

Sheriff Joey Wilburn requested for 2 of the K-9 animals to be retired.

Motion #6 by Dyer, 2nd by Newberry to approve retirement for 2 of the K-9 animals and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Sheriff Joey Wilburn stated that Sgt. William Cherry's family had reached out to him about donating Mr. Cherry's service weapon.

Motion #7 by Snow, 2nd by Gentry to accept donating Sgt. Cherry's service weapon to his family and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Sheriff Joey Wilburn proposed a pay scale increase for the deputies, guards, and clerical employees at the Sheriff Department and Jail. He explained that he had lost 5 officers to higher paying jobs since July and would like to implement a step pay scale depending on rank and years served. He stated that other counties are starting out at \$20-22 per hour. The total cost difference for the pay increases would be approximately \$531,280 for the FY23-24 budget. He stated that this year, he requested to move \$100,000 out of the vehicle budget in 171-Capital Outlay, use some of the Commissary funds and move some of the budget lines around to help fund some of the cost for the FY23-24 budget. He explained that the Commission would have to fund \$205,208 for the rest of the increase. He explained that once the new jail is built that he would have to double the staff at that time to take care of the increase in inmates. The State of TN will pay for state inmates at \$41 per inmate per day once the jail is credited which should happen once the jail addition is completed. He stated that he is hoping this increase will keep the current staff, but he is afraid it will not get new employees. Mayor Jones stated that this funding plan the Sheriff has proposed to pay for raises will take of this year's budget, but taxes will have to be raised to take care of the pay raises next year.

Motion #8 by Slayton, 2nd by B. Wilmore to accept Sheriff's Department & Jail pay scale increase and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Library Director Dana Richardson explained to the Commissioners that the library had moved from a level 3 to a level 4 library due to the growth of the county. Due to this, the State of TN suggested adding an assistant director. Ms. Richardson requested that the FY23-24 budget be increased to include this along with the increased cost of expenses.

Motion #9 by Dyer, 2nd by Newberry to accept the library proposed FY23-24 budget increase and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Motion #10 by West, 2nd by Newberry to defer procurement for architecture firm for the new Health Department to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Discussion on a new vocational school took place with how much the project might cost and the 3-year contract with TCAT ending in 3 years as part of what was discussed. CTE instructor Tony Boles stated that just by moving the nursing program to MCHS the number of students had increased so much that students were having to be turned down and expectations were that it would be that way with all the classes if the vocational school was built at MCHS. Mayor Jones stated that with the recommendation from Raymond James, the county's financial advisor, the county could increase the wheel tax by \$36 to fund this project. Commissioner Benton Bartley stated that he was in favor of the vocational school but was concerned on how the county would fund future projects with all the projects started already, including the new administrative building, jail addition, and new elementary school. The estimation at this time is that a new vocational school would cost approximately \$12M. Mayor Jones stated that unless the commissioners moved forward with the project, there wouldn't be a way to know the actual cost of a new vocational school.

Motion #11 by West, by Hesson to do more research on the cost of a new vocational and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Mayor Jones stated that it had been requested for the county to adopt the State of TN's holiday closure list.

Motion #12 by Hesson, 2nd by West to adopt the State of TN's holiday closure list and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Failed by Roll Call (yes – 10, no – 7)

Motion #13 by Jones, 2nd Hughes to accept Building Codes/Impact Fee Report and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Motion #14 by Slayton, 2nd Hill to accept Animal Control Report and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Motion #15 by Hughes, 2nd by Slayton to accept EMS Operational Report and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Mayor Jones opened the period for public statements, and no one wished to speak.

Motion #16 by Hughes, 2nd by Slayton to adjourn.

Motion Carried