

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

Monday October 2nd, 2023, at 6:30 P.M.

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

Absent: Todd Gentry, Michael Slayton, and Kyle Petty

Mayor/Chairman Steve Jones opened the meeting.  
Jeff Hughes gave the Invocation.  
Keith Newberry led the Pledge.

Motion #1 by Jenkins, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Newberry to accept minutes as presented from the 9/18/23 Legislative Body meeting, 8/15/23 Planning Commission meeting, 8/15/23 Board of Zoning Appeals meeting, and 9/5/23 Emergency Services Meeting and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Motion #2 by King, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jenkins to accept Budget Amendments #1-#12 (#1 General Purpose School, #2 Sheriff's Department – VCIF Grant, #3 Capital Projects – Sheriff's Department, #4 General Fund – Sheriff's Department, #5 Sheriff's Department – SRO Grant, #6 Sheriff's Department, and #7 Sheriff's Department, #8 Library, #9 Library, #10 Library, #11 Animal Control, and #12 Election Commission) and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried with Snow voting No

Motion #3 by West, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Hughes to defer 10-11/23 Sgt. William Cherry Proclamation to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

4-H Members Logan West, Ella Flynn, and Jaden Hesson came before the Commissioners thanking them for the support, they receive from them and explaining all the benefits they have learned due to the 4-H programs.

Motion #4 by Hesson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jones to defer 10-12/23 4-H Week Proclamation to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

School Director Shawn Carter stated that USDA's interest rate would now be 3.75% for the new Elementary School. Mayor Jones stated that he and Mr. Carter would be working with architects soon to move forward on the design of the new Vocational School.

Mayor Jones stated that Road Supervisor Audie Cook couldn't be present at the meeting but requested that the \$1M note, currently being paid for by the Highway Department would be paid off this year and he would like to renew it.

Motion #5 by King, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Wilmore to accept renewing the \$1M note paid for by the Highway Department and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Sheriff Joey Wilburn stated that he had applied for an Evidence Based Grant to help with recidivism. This grant is a 3 year fully funded grant, where Sheriff Wilburn would like to hire 2 full time employees that would manage evidence base, work based, and drug court program. He also would like to, with the help of the Chamber of Commerce, implement a work release program to also help with recidivism. This program would be offered to certain ones incarcerated using a long application process and would start off with a small group consisting of 5 males and 5 females that would be allowed to come back and forth from work to the jail. These in the work release program would be required to wear ankle monitors while working. A portion of the funds they earn will pay their fines and fees while the other portion would be put in a trust set aside for when they are released. He stated that he hopes this will help to set them up to succeed by already having an established job when they are released. Sheriff Wilburn stated that he had received a Body Armor Grant for \$18,000-\$20,000 to purchase lighter body armor for the deputies to wear daily. Sheriff Wilburn stated that the matching funds for this grant would come out of the Drug Fund.

Motion #6 by Newberry, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Snow to defer the Drug Fund budget amendment for body armor to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Sheriff Wilburn stated that the Sheriff's Department wanted to use an exchange program to transition from 40 caliber handguns to 9mm.

Motion #7 King, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Snow to look into the Sheriff's Department to use an exchange program to transition from 40 caliber handguns to 9mm and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Sheriff Wilburn stated the Sheriff's Department had been approved for a Mental Health Transport Grant and would be able to hire a service to transport the individuals instead of the Sheriff's Department making those. He stated that this is a recurring grant. Mayor Jones stated a budget amendment would have to be brought back to put the funds in the budget.

Motion #8 by Snow, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Newberry to accept bringing a budget amendment back for Mental Health Transport and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Evan White with Mid-Tenn Engineering explained the difference in the amounts received at the bid opening for the water tank using the ARC Grant. There were 2 bids that came in, one being for rehabbing the existing tank and the other would be building a new steel ground storage tank. The cost of the new tank would be \$517,817, which is \$48,567 over the original budgeted amount. The cost of rehabbing the existing structure would be \$281,200. This cost would be \$187,450 under budget which would be returned to the Appalachian Regional Commission. Mr. White stated that this tank is used only for fire suppression and is more than 20 years old. Mayor Jones stated that he is going to meet with BabyNov tomorrow regarding the difference in cost and see if they would like to pay the additional \$48,567.

Motion #9 by King, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Hill, to approve Mayor Jones to meet with BabyNov and discuss the additional cost of the water tank and bring back recommendations and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Jacob McClard with the Lafayette Little League came before the Commissioners requesting approval to build another field at the fairgrounds to be used as a softball field. He stated that Mid-Tenn Engineering had already engineered it. He stated that they had volunteers to get the sitework done for a field and that all that would be needed additionally is lights and fencing installed. The cost estimate for lights would be approximately \$150,000 and the approximate cost of a fence would be \$50,000, which he was hoping to get through grants and donations.

Motion #10 by Jones, 2<sup>nd</sup> by West to accept the Lafayette Little League to build another field at the fairgrounds and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried with Dyer voting No

Motion #11 by King 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jones to defer ratification of Tonia Butler to the fair board to the Legislative Body meeting for approval.

Motion Carried

Mayor Jones updated the Commissioners about the County's building projects. He explained that the contractors had started the Administrative Building, procurement had been done for the architects on the Health Department and that the Jail project was being refigured and possibly would be rebid in January. He also updated them regarding the TDEC Waterline grant, explaining that the County had gotten approval for the procurement for engineering services. The next step will be to get approval to let bids. He also explained that there had been some problems occurring with public access and individuals camping out on the Courthouse lawn and would like recommendations from County Attorney Guy Holliman on how to proceed.

Motion #12 by Jones, by Newberry to accept discussion on public access to County Buildings and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval and/or recommendations from Attorney Guy Holliman.

Motion Carried

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

Motion Carried

Motion #14 by Hughes, 2<sup>nd</sup> Wilmore to accept Animal Control Report and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval. Mayor Jones stated that the County currently has one Animal Control Officer and would be posting the additional position soon.

Motion Carried

Motion #15 by Marshall, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Wilmore to accept EMS Operational Report and defer to the Legislative Body meeting for approval. Mayor Jones requested that the Commission review the Emergency Services meeting minutes in the packet. He explained that EMS was currently short 5 paramedics and they were requesting a \$4 per hour pay increase to help get those positions filled.

Motion Carried

Mayor Jones opened the period for public comments. A Macon County High School student in the nursing program at the vocational school asked to speak. She explained how the program had helped her and all of the knowledge she had gained from being offered this course in high school. She stated that she was able to intern at Macon Community Hospital and the hands-on experience she was able to take away from there. She stated that most nursing programs now require a CNA certification to get into the program and with this Vocational Training she would have that when she graduated.

Motion #16 by Hesson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Hill to adjourn.

Motion Carried