

**Minutes**  
**Elbert County Board of Commissioners**  
**June 13, 2016**

**Public Hearing**

The Elbert County Board of Commissioners held a public hearing to allow citizens an opportunity to voice their opinion on the proposed FY2017 budget for Elbert County. Chairman Tommy Lyon opened the meeting. This is the first budget proposal. At this time requested expenditures exceeds the projected revenues by a little over \$300,000. Therefore, each department will have to make necessary changes to their requested budget. With no public comments, Chairman Lyon declared the Public Hearing closed.

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Chairman Tommy Lyon called the meeting to order. Present for the meeting were Chairman Lyon, Vice Chairman Horace Harper, Commissioner Lee Vaughn, Commissioner Chris Alexander, Commissioner Kenneth Ashworth, Commissioner Freddie Jones, County Administrator Bob Thomas, County Attorney Bill Daughtry, County Clerk Tamara Butler and CFO Phil Pitts.

After the pledge to the United States flag, the invocation was given by Bill Daughtry.

**Adoption of Agenda.** Commissioner Ashworth made a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

Subsequently, Chairman Lyon asked for a motion to amend the agenda to add under 4-a) Discussion and approval of a grant renewal application for the Drug Court. Commissioner Ashworth made a motion to amend the agenda. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

**Adoption of the minutes of the May 9, 2016 regular meeting and the May 20, 2016 called meeting.** Commissioner Jones made a motion to adopt the minutes. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

**Discussion and approval of the renewal application for the Drug Court Grant.** Judge Chris Phelps came before the board to request their approval for this grant application and to introduce T.J. Bement to give an overview of the Drug Court program. This is a state funded program and has grown in the last several years. The program is made available through an accountability court and in most cases is the individual's last chance to reclaim their lives and remain crime free. The grant

amount is \$110,000 with a \$12,000 match. Commissioner Harper made a motion to approve the grant application. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

**Request from Mr. George Thompson to speak to the board regarding his property located on the Bowman Highway next to the railroad line.** The main issue that Mr. Thompson is having concerns his plat that shows a 50' right-of-way and HRT Railroad 's that states there is a 100' right-of-way. Mr. Thompson came before the board to ask the county to purchase his property that the trees has been cut from. The county did not cut the trees; HRT railroad cut the trees that was on their right-of-way. Mr. Daughtry and Chairman Lyon told Mr. Thompson that the county would not buy the property and that the issue is between him and the railroad company.

**Introduction of Laura Settembrino as the new director of Keep Elbert County Beautiful and to inform the board of some of their activities.** Mrs. Settembrino was not present for the meeting, but talked to board members at the work session and informed them of some activities that are being planned in the future and also looking at working more closely with the school system.

**Request from the Elberton/Elbert County Sister City Program for \$1,500 to assist with expenses for our students to visit Japan and likewise.** The program was started almost 35 years ago. The county has donated money for the last several years to help with expenses. Funds will come from the hotel/motel tax fund. Commissioner Vaughn made a motion to approve the request of \$1,500. Commissioner Harper seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

**Discussion and approval of a Resolution to adopt the 2016-2017 budget for the Public Defender's Office.** This is a Resolution approving the Indigent Defense Agreement for the Northern Judicial Circuit. Elbert County's share will be \$80,296.36. Commissioner Ashworth made a motion to approve the budget of the Public Defender's office. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

**Discussion and approval of a recommendation of the Elbert County Planning Commission to make changes to the Zoning map.** This is actually not a change to the Zoning Map; but a recommendation to combine separate parcels owned by one person into one parcel. Commissioner Ashworth made a motion to approve the recommendation. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

**Discussion and approval to purchase a used van for the additional inmate crew from Whitworth Detention Facility.** This past year Elbert County has shared a detention crew with the City of Elberton; using a van provided by them. This year Elbert County will have 2 full-time crews therefore needing to purchase a van to transport them. The crews will be working around the county government buildings and at Bobby Brown Park. Mr. Thomas asked for approval to look for a used van, estimated to be below \$25,000. Funding will come from the existing budget. Commissioner Vaughn made a motion to approve the purchase. Commissioner Harper seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

**Discussion and approval to declare as surplus property: 24-400 watt metal halide light fixtures with accessories that were in the Senior Center gym.** The metal halide fixtures were replaced with florescent fixtures to help reduce utility cost and the need for replacement parts and bulbs. Commissioner Ashworth made a motion to approve the surplus property. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

**Discussion and approval of a grant application for the Georgia DOT for an Off-System Safety Improvement Project for county road striping and new signs.** The proposed amount of \$541,800 will be awarded in May 2017 and is a 100% federally funded project and the third that we have received in the last 10 years. Commissioner Ashworth made a motion to approve the grant application. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

**Discussion and approval of the contract to purchase land and authorization to have the Chairman sign the contract.** This is a motion to approve the purchase of 36.61 acres of land on the Bowman Highway for \$65,000 from Massoud Besharat and for Chairman Lyon to execute the contract. Commissioner Jones made a motion to authorize the Chairman to sign the contract. Commission Harper seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.

**Finance Report.** Mr. Pitts stated there are sufficient funds in the hotel/motel tax fund to cover the amount just approved for the Sister City Program. Through the end of May the General Fund is under budget by 3.9%. Most departments have done well in staying within their budget. Revenues are well above last year at this time. Also, SPLOST revenues are up a little from May.

**Public Comments.** There were no public comments.

**Adjournment.** Commissioner made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Ashworth seconded the motion. Upon voting the motion carried 5-0.