



UPSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Work Session

Wednesday, January 8, 2025

9:30 A.M.

Thomaston/Upson County Airport Meeting Room

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dan Brue

A motion was made by Commissioner Biggs with a second from Commissioner Jones to move the executive session to the end of the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

II. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Discussion on advertising strategies for open board/committee positions
The Chairman would like to possibly do additional ads to advertise the board vacancies and look into other methods of advertising. He would like to look into the ability to apply for boards online without having to email or print the application.
No action was taken.
- b. Discussion on meeting conduct, location and schedule
The board discussed updating the current ordinance for board meetings with time and location. They would like to consider only having one board meeting on the 4th Tuesday and one work session on the 1st Wednesday of each month. The option to have a second meeting if necessary is available.
The Chairman would like for all of the meetings to be streamed on the County's YouTube page. Other board members would only want work sessions streamed on YouTube if action was being taken.
No action was taken.
- c. Identify Vice Chair candidates
The board discussed potential candidates for vice chair. The appointment will be made at the next meeting.
- d. Discussion on the Ethics Ordinance
The board discussed the current ethics ordinance and considering adding language about interaction with vendors.

Sec. 2-29. Code of ethics and conduct.

- (a) Residents of Upson County as well as persons doing business with the government of Upson County have a right to expect that county officials will behave in a manner conducive to promoting public confidence in the county government. The purpose of this code is to:
 - (1) Establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for all county officials;
 - (2) Establish guidelines for the conduct that is to be expected of county officials at meetings, events, and appearances sponsored by Upson County;
 - (3) Require disclosure of all conflicts of interest, financial or otherwise, by county officials in matters concerning or affecting Upson County; and
 - (4) Set forth disciplinary measures that may be taken against county officials who choose to violate the code of ethics and conduct.
- (b) The provisions of this code of ethics shall be applicable to the following county officials: the chairman and members of the board of commissioners; members of the planning commission, water and sewer authority, the board of tax assessors, and any additional board(s) that may be established and duly appointed by the board of commissioners. The provisions of this code of ethics are also applicable to the county's appointees to the recreation commission, airport authority, industrial authority, and any other board or authority to which the board of commissioners makes appointments.
- (c) No county official shall:
 - (1) Provide reason by his or her conduct for the impression that any person can improperly influence him or her or unduly enjoy his or her favor in the performance of official acts;
 - (2) Use his or her official position to secure or attempt to secure privileges that are not available to the general public;
 - (3) Perform any activity or engage in any transaction that is prohibited by law now existing or hereafter enacted which is applicable to him or her by virtue of being a county official;
 - (4) Directly or indirectly request, exact, receive, or agree to receive a loan, gift, favor, promise, or thing of value for himself or herself or another person if it could reasonably be considered to influence the county official in the discharge of official duties. This shall not apply in the case of an occasional nonpecuniary gift of insignificant value; an award publicly presented in recognition of public service; a commercially reasonable loan or other financial transaction made in the ordinary course of business by an institution or individual authorized by the laws of Georgia to engage in the making of such a loan or financial transaction; and campaign contributions made and reported in accordance with state law;
 - (5) Disclose or otherwise use confidential information acquired by virtue of his or her position for his or her or another person's private gain;
 - (6) Engage in, or accept employment with, or render services for any private business or professional activity when such employment or rendering of services is ~~adverse to~~ and incompatible with the proper discharge of official duties. This shall not apply to a county official who is a licensed professional and appears on behalf of any applicant in such professional capacity so long as disclosures required by subsection (d) are made to the board of commissioners 30 days prior to any action being taken, and the member is associated with the project at the time the initial application is filed;
 - (7) Use his or her position in any way to coerce, or give the appearance of coercing, another person to provide any financial benefit to himself or herself or persons having an interest;
 - (8) Use government property of any kind for other than officially approved activities, nor direct employees to use such property for any purposes other than those officially approved; and
 - (9) Use his or her position to request or require an employee of the county to do clerical work on behalf of the county official's family, business, social club, church, or fraternal interest when such work is not furthering a legitimate county interest; perform any work outside the employee's normal course of employment with the county; purchase goods or services to be used for personal, business, or political purposes; and work for the county official personally without paying the employee just compensation.
- (d) An appointed county official (i.e., members of the planning commission and other boards appointed by the board of commissioners) who has a financial interest that he or she has reason to believe may be affected by his or her official acts or actions shall disclose the precise nature of such financial interest by written or verbal statement 30 days prior to the board of commissioners taking official action on a matter affecting such interest, and shall abstain from discussion and voting. An elected county official (i.e., the chairman and members of the board of commissioners) shall disclose the nature of any financial interest he or she has at the time such matter is presented to the board of commissioners for discussion. Such written or verbal statements shall be recorded into the minutes of the meeting and thus become part of the public record. Following any disclosure made pursuant to this section, the member shall refrain from all ~~ex parte~~ communications with other members regarding the application in which he or she has a financial interest.
- (e) The board of commissioners shall not enter into any contract involving services or property with a member of the board of commissioners or with a business in which a member of the board of commissioners has a significant financial interest. This shall not apply in the case of the designation of a bank or trust company as a depository of county funds; the borrowing of funds from any bank or lending institution which offers the lowest available rate of interest in the community for such loan; contracts entered into in accordance with the Official Code of Georgia Annotated; or contracts entered into under circumstances that constitute an emergency situation, provided that the county manager or his designee prepares a written record explaining the emergency.
- (f) No county official shall:
 - (1) Be found guilty of the county's policy prohibiting the possession or consumption by employees of alcohol or illegal substance in any county facility, vehicle or work site;
 - (2) Treat any member of the general public or other county official or employee in a fashion designed to demean, degrade, or humiliate that individual;
 - (3) Intentionally and/or repeatedly violate Robert's Rules of Order, the general guidelines by which the board of commissioners and appointed boards of the county conduct their meetings.
- (g) This code section is not intended to apply in the following circumstances:
 - (1) County officials are also members of society and, therefore, share the same general personal and economic interests in the decisions and policies of government as all members of the community do;
 - (2) County officials retain their rights to publicly express their views on matters of general public interest, and to express their opinions on the effect of public actions on their personal or economic interests or rights;
 - (3) It is sound public policy for standards of ethical conduct for county officials to distinguish between those minor and inconsequential conflicts that are unavoidable in a free society, and those conflicts which are personal, material, and avoidable;
 - (4) County officials are entitled to engage in employment, professional or business activities, other than official duties, in order to support themselves and their families and to maintain a continuity of professional or business activity, and are entitled to maintain their investments; and

(5) It is possible and reasonable to require county officials to engage in employment, professional or business activities and to maintain investments which do not impede or undermine the integrity of their service to the community.

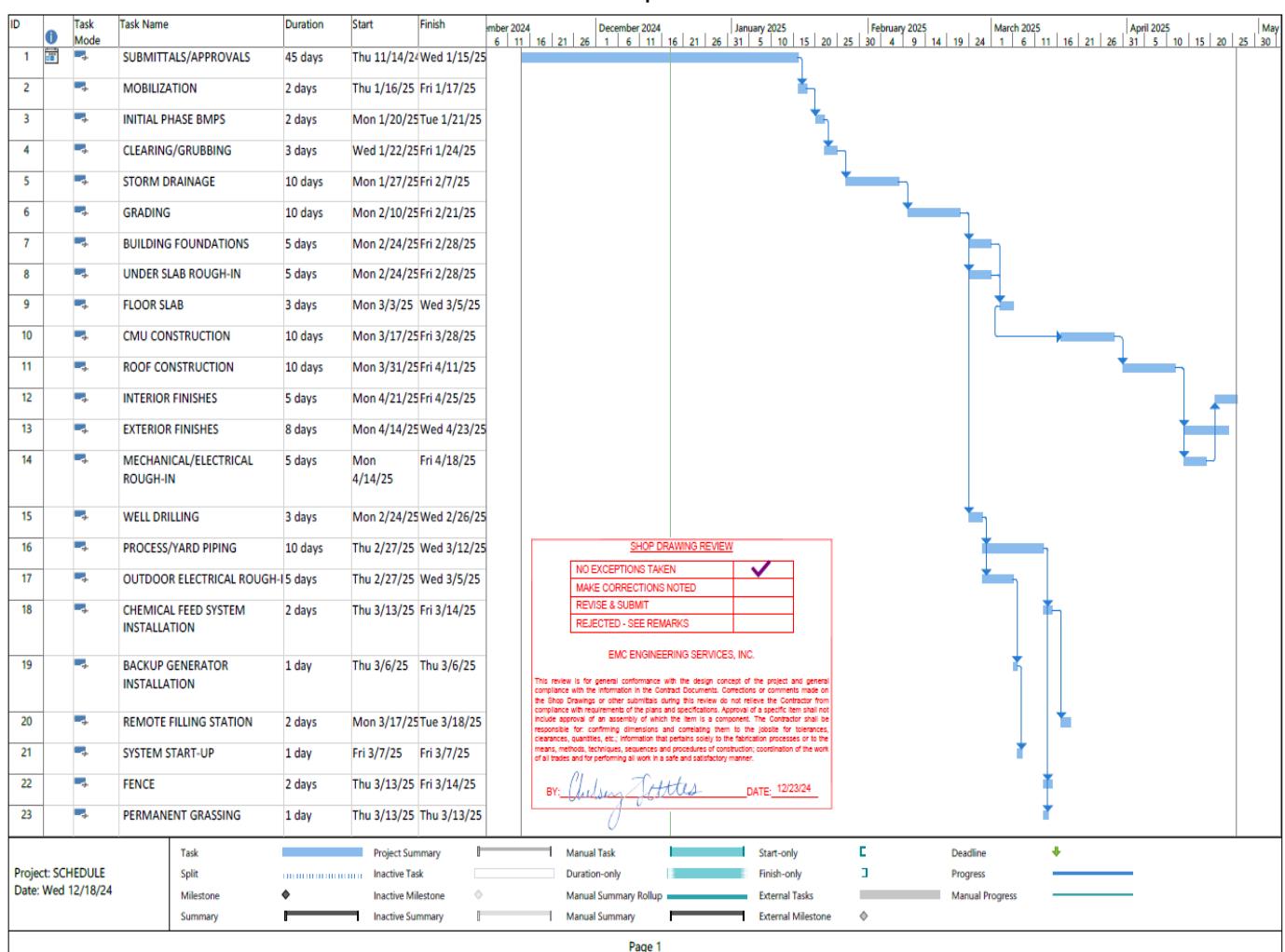
(h) Upon the sworn complaint of any person alleging facts that, if proven to be true, would constitute a violation of this Code section as determined by the county manager and the county attorney, the board of commissioners shall conduct a public hearing at which the accused county official shall be given an opportunity to be heard, either personally or through counsel. At the conclusion of the hearing, the board of commissioners shall, in written findings of fact and conclusions based thereon, make a determination concerning the propriety of the conduct of the county official in question. The primary actions available to the board of commissioners concerning a determined instance of violation by a county official of this Code section are:

- (1) Written and oral reprimand or similar public censure by the board of commissioners; and
- (2) Request for resignation by the board of commissioners.

(Ord. No. 164, 9-25-2003)

State law reference(s)—Conflicts of interest in zoning actions, O.C.G.A. § 36-67A-1 et seq.; code of ethics for government service, O.C.G.A. § 45-10-1; code of ethics for members of boards, commissions, and authorities, O.C.G.A. § 45-10-3.

- e. Discussion on zoning text changes and key facets (lot size, setbacks, etc.)
The board discussed breaking the zoning text changes down into smaller sections.
- f. Discussion on subdivision matrix and permit requirements
Outlining each zoning into a simple matrix.
- g. Review the take home vehicles by department
The Chairman would like to see the use of take-home vehicles to be more policy driven.
- h. Update on the Thurston Well Rehabilitation
The county manager advised that the Thurston Well Rehabilitation project is on schedule. Commissioner Ellington asked that they coordinate the schedule with the Volunteer Fire Department and the church.



- i. Update on the Judicial Center Project Closeout
The County Manager working on the final punch list. Commissioner Jones said several of the items that they discussed during the walk thru have not been addressed. Superior Could hold the first session.

j. Update of the 2024-2025 T-SPLOST Resurfacing Project

Upson County Paving Project

Start date of the paving project was October 7th, 2024, on West Peachtree Street in Thomaston, Georgia.

<u>Road Name</u>	<u>Miles of Road Completed</u>
West Peachtree	0.70
Harvey Street	0.29
Westlake Drive	0.10
Lucille Drive	0.16
Lakefront Drive	0.20
Alexandria Way	0.10
Grandview Drive	0.20
Pamela Ct.	0.08
Sunnyside Road	2.70
Shadow Wood Lane	0.74
Reid Place Road	1.43
Sunnyside Circle	0.71
Pitts Drive	0.57
Batten Drive	0.41
Raines Street	0.25
Walton Street	0.72
Wiley Street	0.18
Gilbert Street	0.26
Butler Street	0.19
Spring Street	0.36
Carter Loop	0.34
Cook Street	0.45
Clark Drive	0.18
Gordon School Road	1.13
Indian Trail Spur	0.06
Baker Britt Road	1.45
Allen Road (Incomplete)	1.80 (2.70 Total)
TOTAL:	15.76

k. Update on the Civic Center Ballfield Renovations



PH1 Construction Updates

Field Work

Field grading – 75%
Drainage lines installed – 65%
Sod preparation in #2 outfield – 50%
Dugout construction – 80%
Fencing and backstops – 0%
Batting cage has been dismantled and stacked for client use

Sports Lighting

Installation – 100%
Power tie in – 25%
To be completed in Jan

Project on schedule for estimated completion in Mid-February

PH2 Design Updates

1/7: Bid Packages released
1/15: Subcontractor site walk through
1/24: Subcontractor bids due
1/31: Selection of partners
2/5: Present final pricing, scope, & design @ Board Work session
2/25: Seek final approval of turnkey PH2 construction contract
Construction Spring/Summer 2025



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l. Discussion on the Board of Commissioners Projects/Priorities Dashboard for 2025

The county manager asked if the board would like to continue using the dashboard for tracking projects progress.

m. Discussion of the 2025 Board of Commissioners Retreat

The county manager asked the board for direction on a 2025 retreat.

III. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Discussion of Personnel and Litigation

A motion was made to recess regular session to go into executive session for personnel and litigation.

A motion was made to exit executive session and go back into regular session.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Jones with a second from Commissioner Watson to adjourn the meeting.

Chairman Dan R. Brue II

Commissioner James Ellington

Commissioner Benjamin Watson

Commissioner Chris Biggs

Commissioner Paul Jones