

**MINUTES OF THE CRISP COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 14, 2023**

OPENING CEREMONIES

Chairman, James Dowdy, III, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in Room 305 of the Crisp County Government Center, with Commissioners Larry Felton (present by speaker phone), A. James Nance, Jr, Sam Farrow, and Mark Crenshaw in attendance. Others present were County Administrator Clark Harrell, County Attorney Rick Lawson, Finance Director Sherrie Leverett and County Clerk Monica Irwin. Rick Smarr gave the invocation and Administrator Harrell led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America. Chairman Dowdy welcomed all in attendance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Commissioner Farrow to adopt the agenda for the February 14, 2023 Commission Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Crenshaw, motion carried unanimously.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion was made by Commissioner Nance to approve the regular meeting minutes of January 10, 2023, seconded by Commissioner Farrow, motion carried unanimously.

SHERIFF'S REPORT

Sheriff Hancock reported stats are steady as previous month: 239 warrants issued with 173 being served and 280 citations issued. The Sheriff Office received \$64,000 from the Marshall Service for federal inmate housing. This court term, a total of 30 inmates were brought back from the prison system for trials. Currently, numbers are high in the jail with 224 being housed. Sheriff Hancock also stated the agency has been working to combat the fentanyl epidemic. In May of 2022, the Sheriff's Office began collaboration with GBI, Cordele PD, and the DA's office to put into motion ways to combat the epidemic. May 2022 started out with an Education Program Campaign with multiple public information programs, media exposure, and placed an officer in every school in this community to talk about the epidemic of opioids and fentanyl. The second part was enforcement. Crisp County had 91 cases of drug violations since last year and recovered 10,900 pills and 1 kilo of fentanyl. This led us to 8 kilos in Tift County where 97 pounds of marijuana, 6 kilos of meth, 10 kilos cocaine, 472 Xanax pills, and 19 firearms were taken off the streets. Through the Criminal Apprehension Program, 3,499 citations were issued. Numerous press releases were issued, public safety announcements and updates on fentanyl, press release on traffic stops leading to drug arrests, and also worked in conjunction with Wilcox County on an arrest for trafficking methamphetamine. The GBI arrested an armed drug trafficker in Crisp County as well as 3 arrests in a drug conspiracy case in Crisp County. The Sheriff Office investigated 8 deaths in 2022 to date related to narcotic overdoses. The Sheriff also reported deputies currently carry Narcan in their patrol cars which has cost the agency over \$5000 in the last 12 months to provide in each patrol car. The Sheriff did advise with the use of Narcan deputies have saved 22 lives to date.

MILLER EDWARDS, MAULDIN & JENKINS AUDIT REPORT

Mr. Edwards addressed the Board reporting good news from the audit conducted for FY2022. Mr. Edwards commended the management team and the great job each one has done managing the affairs and accounts, which showed during the audit process. The audit includes many different departments and operations. The FY22 audit reported Crisp County has \$90 million dollars in assets, an equity position of about \$69-70 million dollars, and \$34 million dollars in revenue received this past year. Mr. Edwards reported Crisp County, financially looks great and strong, and currently has a strong balance sheet.

UGA EXTENSION AGENT

County Administrator, Clark Harrell addressed the Board advising, Mr. Randy West from the Crisp County 4-H Office was present along with Ms. Elizabeth Clark. Mr. Harrell advised the Board Ms. Clark is a new Extension Agent in Crisp County. Ms. Clark introduced herself to the Board expressing her gratitude for being in Crisp County and ready to serve the citizens.

PUBLIC HEARINGS – UPDATES TO CURRENT CODES

County Administrator, Clark Harrell, informed the Board of the Public Hearing requested by Peniel Recovery Ministries to present their request to establish and operate a half-way house known as a "Sober Living Home" in the Omar Heights neighborhood on property that is owned by Thrive Church of Cordele. The property is a vacant lot that is approximately 0.47 acres and is located beside Thrive Church at 191 Ingram Blvd, Cordele, GA. Mr. Harrell reminded the Board the Public Hearing is a requirement under Georgia Law being held six months prior to any action by the Board of Commissioners. Planning and Zoning Director, Mickey Dunnivant, advised the Board this meeting will be the first of two meetings the state requires based off of House Bill 1405 and the second meeting will be set-up on August 8, 2023. Mr. Dunnivant also advised that Mr. Clay Johnson is present, representing Peniel Recover Ministries, and will be presenting his request today.

Mr. Clay Johnson addressed the Board giving his background as a resident of Crisp County, his struggle with addiction, and establishing Celebrate Recovery in Cordele. His request is to establish a men's home, Peniel Ministry (sober living home), which will house 6 to 8 men. The facility will be free and will operate from contributions and donations. The facility will be supervised day and night. The men will be required to attend chapel, educational classes, and complete on-site job duties.

Support of facility: Bobby Ryals, former resident of Crisp County, currently lives in Houston County, Shannon Youngblood – resident of Crisp County, Eric Eidenier – Pastor of Thrive Church, Hal Slade – resident of Crisp County, Barbara Smith – Resident of Omar Heights, Teresa McGinnis – resident of Omar Heights, Natalie Johnson – resident of Dooly County, Fanny Pollock – resident of Omar Heights.

Opposed to facility in neighborhood: Fanny Pollock – resident of Omar Heights, Ricky Willard – resident of Omar Heights, Michael Waters – resident of Omar Heights, Barbara Smith – resident of Omar Heights

Public Hearing Closed 10:12 am

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mrs. Leverett gave a preliminary report of revenues and expenditures for the General & three major Special Revenue Funds. YTD Revenues exceeded expenses at January 31st by about 4% leaving a positive revenue over expenditure balance of \$959,000. As of this report the County has received about 90% of the projected revenue from the 2022 ad valorem tax billings. The proprietary funds, monthly activity for the Water Fund pushed the Fiscal YTD net income for this fund up to \$60,949. Water consumption billed for the month was 9.9 million gallons to a total of 1,492 customers and The USDA Bonds are current at \$1.1 million. The Landfill Fund, monthly revenues less expenses pushed the YTD net gain here up to \$824,716. Total tonnage for January was 8,068.00 tons. Approximately 26% of that was received under the local commercial contracts, 6% under the City's residential contract and 4% under the County's residential curbside service contract. The GEFA loans are current at \$1.1 million. The General Fund and special revenue funds combined are reporting cash on hand of \$19.1 million; The proprietary funds \$10.1 million and the SPLOST and TSPLOST funds \$13.0 million... leaving a County Wide total of \$42.1 million. Just over \$29.0 million of that is reserved or restricted for special projects or uses. SPLOST reports, January's distributions pushed the total expenditures up to \$23.1 million on the 2011 Issue. The 2017 SPLOST Issue, Distribution #60 is the first distribution under this issue with no measurable increase over the prior year. It was up only \$140/basically breaking even with last December. It does bring issue to date collections to \$23.1 million while expenditures and current obligations have reached \$15.6 million. SPLOST Expenditures for the month of January, \$275,333 spent in Special Local Option Sales Tax pennies during the month. Projects benefiting were Water Distribution, CCSO, Fire, Public Works, Sanitation/Solid Waste and the cities of Arabi and Cordele. 2012 TSPLOST final distribution under this issue pushed collections up to \$8.3 million. To date, including LMIG and GDOT funding on several projects, we have appropriated \$13.0 million for local road improvements. Local Option Sales Tax Distributions representing December retail sales shows a slight increase of only \$1,200 over last year. The CDBG Revolving Loan Fund total outstanding balance of \$1.7 million at 1/31/23. Expenditures should be at 58% or below, overall, the General and Special Revenue Funds combined are over budget at 64%; the Water Fund is also over at 61% and the Landfill is within budget at 55%.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Harrell reported to the Board he is still waiting for any status on the water system grant totaling \$9 million dollars. Rock Road Railway Project work continues staking the right-of-way, clearing and grubbing will begin this month. Meadow Park Subdivision/CDBG Project bid was awarded to Concrete Enterprises, coming in as the lowest bid, and work will begin February 27, 2023. The 2022 LMIG resurfacing project began February 13, 2023. This project includes 30th, 31st, Exa Avenue, Cross Road Store Road, and a portion of Arabi-Warwick Road. Mr. Harrell also stated the 2023 LMIG will be letting within the next 30 days. The airport fence project will begin this month. Bids will be accepted for an additional airport project consisting of a new rejuvenator for the runways. This project will be led by the Airport Consultant, Holt and Company. Funding for this project will be from the state and FFA. Mr. Harrell stated he continues to work with the hospital administrator on updating the 1998 contract for EMS. Crisp County is still awaiting official word from FEMA for reimbursement on expenses from storm damages on January 12, 2023. Mr. Harrell attended several meeting last month.

GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR PERSONNEL

Motion was made by Commissioner Nance to go into Executive Session for personnel, seconded by Commissioner Farrow, motion carried with all Commissioners agreeing to go into Executive Session at 10:26 am.

COME OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Commissioner Nance to come out of Executive Session at 10:53 am, seconded by Commissioner Farrow, motion carried with all Commissioners agreeing to come out of Executive Session.

CHANGE TO PERSONNEL POLICY

Holiday hours will be counted as regular work hours for nonexempt employees "called-back" to work during a holiday pay period. Any hours above 40 hours during the pay period will be paid at the overtime rate. **Motion was made by Commissioner Nance to update the language change to the personnel policy payroll practices to allow overtime pay for "call-back" nonexempt employees during a holiday week.**

ADJOURN MEETING

By common consent, Commissioners adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.


James R Dowdy, III, Chairman


Clark Harrell, County Administrator