

The Honorable Board of County Commissioners met in their said office at 8:00 p.m., July 6, 1978, according to adjournment.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD PRESENT:

C. Waldo Marlowe, Chairman

Junior W. Dew, Vice-Chairman

Edward W. Williamson

L. A. Hinson

David L. McPherson

James E. Hill, Jr., Attorney

Emogene W. Suggs, Clerk

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman and the invocation was given by Commissioner Hinson.

The following business was transacted:

Due to the large number of citizens being present for the meeting, approximately 125, and inadequate space in the Commissioners meeting room, a motion was made by Commissioner Hinson, seconded by Commissioner Williamson and passed that the meeting adjourn to the Superior Courtroom in the Courthouse.

Notice was posted on each entrance of the Administrative Building of this action and the meeting moved to the Courthouse.

The Chairman announced that the purpose of the meeting was to clarify questions that had arisen concerning the bill which allows the Commissioners to call a special election to determine if the citizens of the County wish to continue dual law enforcement in the County.

The Chairman recognized the Public Safety Commission Members, Sheriff Norton, Representative Wright and Annie Strickland, Elections Secy., who had been invited to attend the meeting. Senator Soles was not present due to a prior commitment.

There was a lengthy discussion on the question of the most appropriate time to call the special election. A statement was made by the Public Safety Commission Chairman Byrd that the Commission had planned a meeting on July 10th to discuss the matter but had no recommendation at this time.

Sheriff Norton stated that he had no preference as to when the election should be held. In response to a question by Commissioner McPherson, Sheriff Norton stated that if the police system was dissolved and the equipment was turned over to the Sheriff's Dept., he would need the personnel also.

Representative Wright answered questions clarifying the wording of the bill and reviewed the history of the bill over a period of about five years. He stated that the word "special" did not mean separate from the General Election but "special" because it would not ordinarily appear on a ballot. He also stated that if the election was not held

on or before November General Election, that the earliest time for the change, should the Public Safety Commission and County Police be dissolved, would be December of 1982.

Each citizen present was given a chance to be heard and there was a strong consensus among those present to have the election in November at the time of the General Election. Approximately three persons spoke in favor of having the special election at a different time than the General Election.

The Board expressed appreciation to the citizens who came to the meeting and expressed their opinion.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hinson to set the time of the special election, to decide if the citizens of the County wish to continue dual law enforcement in Columbus County, at the same time as the General Election which is November 7, 1978.

A substitute motion was made by Commissioner Williamson to delay the decision until the Public Safety Commission could meet and make a recommendation on the matter. This motion was not seconded. Also the citizens in the audience reacted unfavorably to this motion.

The motion by Commissioner Hinson to have the election in November was seconded by Commissioner McPherson and passed unanimously.

Upon motion the meeting adjourned until July 17, 1978, which is regular meeting time.

APPROVED:

*Eugene M. Soggs*  
Clerk

*Waldo Marlowe*  
Chairman