



Columbia County Board of Commissioners
Public Hearing on House Bill 581 Homestead Exemption
Minutes of Tuesday, February 18, 2025 at 6:00 PM
Evans Government Center Auditorium, Evans, Georgia

Present at the meeting included:

Chairman Douglas R. Duncan, Jr.
Vice Chairman Alison G. Couch
Commissioner Connie M. Melear
Commissioner James E. Allen, III
Commissioner Michael W. Carraway
County Manager Scott Johnson
Deputy County Manager Matt Schlachter
Deputy County Manager Glenn Kennedy
County Attorney Chris Driver

Division Directors:

Scott Sterling – Planning Services
Michael Blanchard - Technology Services
Chief Wallen – Fire Services
Paul Scarbary – Development Services

County Staff

Members of the Media and Public

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Duncan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

B. INVOCATION

Chairman Duncan gave the invocation.

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

County Manager Johnson led the pledge to the American Flag.

D. ROLL CALL / QUORUM

Chairman Duncan declared a quorum with five commissioners present.

E. PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chairman Duncan presented the agenda.

F. DISCUSSION OF THE IMPACTS OF HOUSE BILL 581 HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION

Chairman Duncan discussed House Bill 581. He also announced that these public hearings are being live-streamed and are posted on the county website.

County Manager Johnson explained the details of House Bill 581. The law imposes a deadline of March 1, 2025 for the Board to make a decision, which is why the hearings are being conducted. No decision has been made, and the board is seeking citizen input.

G. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PARTICIPATION

(G1) Opening of the Public Hearing

Chairman Duncan opened the public hearing. Adam Plagens, Sandra Delk, Betty Surrency, John Kennedy, Nate Rish, David Lees, John Culp, and Leon Borders provided their opinions and asked questions about House Bill 581.

H. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Duncan adjourned the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Douglas R. Duncan, Jr., Chairman

Patrice R. Crawley, County Clerk