



**Columbia County Board of Commissioners Meeting
Minutes of Tuesday, March 3, 2026 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 Jim M. Steed
Commissioner Michael W. Carraway
County Manager Scott Johnson
Deputy County Manager Matt Schlachter
Deputy County Manager Glenn Kennedy
County Attorney Chris Driver
County Clerk Patrice R. Crawley

Division Directors:

Scott Sterling – Planning Services
Paul Scarbary - Development Services
John Luton - Community Services
Michael Blanchard - Technology Services
Stacey Gordon - Water Utility Services
Steven Prather – Facility Services
Kyle Titus – Engineering 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

Commissioner Carraway 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. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

(E1) February 17, 2026

Commissioner Melear made a motion to approve the February 17, 2026 minutes of the Board of Commissioners as presented. Commissioner Steed seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

F. PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chairman Duncan presented the agenda.

G. SPECIAL RECOGNITION, PRESENTATION, AND / OR DECLARATION

Chairman Duncan welcomed members of the 2026 Youth Leadership Columbia County to the meeting.

(G1) Declaration

(G1a) March 2026 Theatre in Our Schools Month Proclamation

Vice Chair Couch presented a proclamation to Eli Bisel and other theatre students declaring March 2026 as Theatre in Our Schools Month.

H. CONSENT AGENDA

In accordance with Columbia County Code of Ordinance Section 2-81(6), the following items were voted on collectively. Commissioner Melear made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Commissioner Steed seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

(H1) Community and Emergency Services Committee

(H1a) Canceling the April 07, 2026 Board of Commissioners Meeting

Approved canceling the April 07, 2026 Board of Commissioners Meeting.

(H1b) March 2026 Theatre in Our Schools Month Proclamation

Approved proclaiming March 2026 as Theatre in Our Schools Month.

(H2) Public Works and Engineering Services Committee

(H2a) Jefferson Energy Cooperative Right of Way Easement for Parcel 021 051 County Line Road

Approved the Jefferson Energy Cooperative Right of Way Easement for parcel 021 051 County Line Road.

(H2b) Award Bid and Contract to Gerald Jones Ford, LLC for County Fleet Vehicle Provider

Approved awarding the bid and contract to Gerald Jones Ford, LLC. for county fleet vehicle provider.

(H2c) Independent Contractor Agreement with Ardurra Group, Inc. for the 2026 Biosolids Report

Approved an Independent Contractor Agreement with Ardurra Group, Inc. for the 2026 Biosolids Report in the amount of \$15,500; 511.5115.533035.

(H2d) Proposal to switch Utility Locate software from Digsmart to Boss811

Approved a Proposal with Boss811 for utility locate software in the amount of \$9,000; 621.6200.533060.

(H2e) Change Order Number 2 with Gearig Civil Works, LLC. for the Euchee Creek Sewer Forcemain

Approved change order number 2 with Gearig Civil Works, LLC. for the Euchee Creek sewer forcemain project in the amount of \$652,283.20; 57037.25.015.686.

(H2f) 2026 Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (LMIG) Reimbursement Application and Acceptance for Damaged Traffic Signal Equipment

Approved the acceptance of the 2026 Local Maintenance Improvement Grant from Georgia Department of Transportation for damaged traffic signal equipment in the amount of \$31,724; 2342710.522092.

(H2g) Traffic Camera Power Service Extension by GA Power at the Riverwood Roundabout

Approved Traffic Camera Power Service Extension with Georgia Power for the Riverwood Roundabout in the amount of \$8,650; 2342710.522080.20502.

(H2h) Renewal for Glance AI Data Module 5-Year Software, Support, and Warranty

Approved renewal for Glance AI Data module for Traffic Engineering in the amount of \$51,825; 2342710.533035.

(H2i) Acceptance of Improvements at Tillery Park South (2nd Iteration)

Approved the acceptance of improvements at Tillery Park South to include the road, storm, water and sewer systems along the rights of way and easement associated with these improvements as depicted on the February 01, 2025 plat prepared by H&C Surveying, Inc.

(H2j) Reclass of Right-of-Way Specialist II Contract Position

Approved the reclassification of the Right-of-Way Specialist II Position Number 3028 to an Engineer I Grade 28 non-exempt with the \$1,440 cell and \$9,750 vehicle allowances.

I. DEBATE AGENDA

(I1) New Business

(I1a) Development and Planning Services Committee

(I1a1) RZ25-12-04, Rezoning from C-C (Community Commercial) to R-2 (Single Family Residential), 309 & 311 South Belair Road, Tax Map 073A Parcels 154 & 155, 0.49 +/- acres each, and currently zoned C-C (Community Commercial) - *Postponed to March 17, 2026*

Commissioner Melear made a motion to postpone RZ25-12-04 to the March 17, 2026 meeting. Commissioner Steed seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Applicant James Blankenship stated why he was in favor of the rezoning. Saj Lakhany stated why he was against the rezoning.

(I1a2) RZ26-02-01, Rezoning from R-2 (Single Family Residential) to C-C (Community Commercial), 4026 Evans to Locks Road and off Mims Road, Tax Map 078 Parcels 078 & 079, 2.63 +/- acres combined, and currently zoned R-2 (Single Family Residential).

Commissioner Melear made a motion to disapprove RZ26-02-01 rezoning from R-2 to C-C for property located at tax map 078 parcel 078 & 079. Commissioner Carraway seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

(I2) Items Added at the Meeting

J. LEGAL MATTERS

K. REQUESTS FOR REVIEW BY COMMITTEE

L. PUBLIC COMMENTS

(L1) Cambrey Wood

Cambrey Wood requested that the Board place a moratorium on data center development.

M. EXECUTIVE SESSION

(M1) Property

(M1a) Temporary Easement from Aldi Inc. parcel 062 086G for the Horizon South Pkwy and Chamblin Rd connector project.

Commissioner Carraway made a motion to accept the donation of .13 acres of Temporary Easement from Aldi Inc. parcel 062 086G for the Horizon South Pkwy and Chamblin Rd connector project. Vice Chair Couch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

(M1b) Settlement Agreement with Farmington Estates Property Owners Association parcels 067C382 and 067C071.

Commissioner Carraway made a motion to approve the Settlement Agreement with Farmington Estates Property Owners Association parcels 067C382 and 067C071. Vice Chair Couch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

(M1c) Kenneth Harpe parcel 060 060 and \$26,500 to Barry Foss parcel 060 019 to obtain right of way and/or easements for the Hereford Farm Road widening project.

Commissioner Carraway made a motion to approve \$41,400 to Kenneth Harpe parcel 060 060 and \$26,500 to Barry Foss parcel 060 019 to obtain right of way and/or easements for the Hereford Farm Road widening project. Vice Chair Couch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

N. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Couch made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:13 p.m. Chair Duncan seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.



Alison G. Couch, Vice Chairman



Patrice R. Crawley, County Clerk