



Baldwin County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
February 17, 2026  
1601 N Columbia St, Suite 220  
6:00 PM

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## MINUTES

### PRESENT

Kendrick Butts, Chairman  
Scott Little, Vice Chairman  
Andrew Strickland  
Sammy Hall  
Emily C. Davis

### OTHERS

Carlos Tobar  
Brandon Palmer  
Dana Lleras  
Bo Danuser

### CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Butts called the February 17, 2026 Baldwin County Board of Commissioners meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

### INVOCATION

Chairman Butts asked for a moment of silence for Ethan Knight who worked for the County in the GIS department, he passed away in his sleep; Honorable Reverend Jesse Jackson, the civil rights icon and former Mayor Johnny Grant.

Deputy Sheriff Col. Scott Deason led the prayer.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chairman Scott Little led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Davis made motion to approve the February 3, 2026 regular meeting minutes and executive session minutes and the February 10, 2026 called meeting and executive session minutes.

Commissioner Little asked that the minutes be amended to reflect comments at the end of the meeting made by Commissioner Davis when she stated that in regard to a text message Commissioner Little would not understand because he was not black, never had been, and never will be. No one objected to the amendment.

Commissioner Hall seconded the motion with the amendment. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Hall made a motion to amend the agenda to add a resolution for an extension of the moratorium on solar farms. Commissioner Little seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

## PRESENTATIONS

Latonya Howell gave a presentation on Black History Month. She discussed the reconstruction after the Civil War and defining the legal, social, and political status of 4 million newly freed African Americans; this ushered in the Jim Crow Laws between 1877 to 1965 in an era of separate but equal doctrine that forced segregation in schools, transportation, and public facilities. She told of the impact the Jim Crow laws had in Milledgeville and Baldwin County by creating separation at water fountains, in transportation, education and the integration of Baldwin High School in 1966, having white and colored sections in restaurants and other business, and businesses that refused entrances to African Americans all together.

Ms. Howell told of the boycotts in Milledgeville in 1969 that resulted from two state troopers beating and African American male at the state patrol post. Outraged African American citizens took to the streets; activists and local citizens joined in the boycotts meeting opposition, threats, and beatings. After four months, the boycott led to improved treatment of African Americans, including their treatment by the police department.

Ms. Howell read a poem.

## ADMINISTRATIVE/FISCAL MATTERS

### Appointments

#### Department of Family and Children Services

Commissioner Davis nominated Dr. Salathiel Coleman to the Department of Family and Children Services.

Chairman Butts nominated Donna James.

Commissioner Little nominated Patricia Wolf.

Attorney Palmer explained the procedure for making appointments and that anyone could make a nomination.

There was a discussion about the nomination policy and that the board could waive the policy.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to table the appointment. Chairman Butts seconded the motion to table.

Chairman Butts asked for the commissioners to reach out to him as to whether they wanted to follow precedence or the policy. There was further discussion about the appointment.

Commissioner Strickland stated that he was supportive of making a change but felt they should live within policy. Commissioner Little expressed his concern that the appointment had not been made since December.

Commissioners Hall, Butts, and Davis voted to table the appointment. Commissioners Strickland and Little voted not to table. The motion carried and the appointment to the Department of Family and Children services was tabled.

### Board of Tax Assessors

Commissioner Hall made a motion to table the appointment to the Board of Tax Assessors. The motion died from a lack of a second.

Chairman Butts nominated Ronald Stevenson for reappointment to the Board of Tax Assessors. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion.

Commissioner Strickland stated that after reviewing the Department of Revenue's performance review, there's no way he could support putting any of the current members back on the board. He stated that he felt it was a dire mistake, no one on the Board of Assessors could resolve issues.

Commissioner Hall stated he wanted to table the appointment until the commissioners heard the report from the Tax Assessor and how they would address the performance review.

Commissioner Little disagreed stating that they had gotten a report, and the community got a report twice in the newspaper and found it unacceptable. The community was not interested in kicking the can down the road, they were interested in seeing action. He was not going to support putting any of the current Board of Assessors back on the board.

Commissioner Davis stated she felt the Board of Assessors needed the opportunity to explain what was in the report and the commissioners needed to hear from them.

Chairman Butts stated that he did not have a problem with Mr. Stevenson, If he was not appointed tonight there was no need for him to attend the meeting that was being set up. If the Commission was going to get rid of the whole Board of Assessors, they needed to get rid of all five at the same time.

Chairman Butts read the rules of decorum.

Desiree Liggins addressed the Commissioner stating she didn't recall the request to disassemble the board. She was informed that the program they used was forced on them by the Commissioners. People should be given the opportunity to meet the requirements they didn't meet. She asked the Commissioners to not rush to make a decision because it would not be in the best interest of the community.

Ronald Stevenson addressed the Commissioners stating that he was up for reappointment on the Board of Assessors for District 2 and had served for 15 years with honor, respect and dedication. He asked why the Board of Commissioners did not want him to keep serving after

being asked by Chairman Butts. He stated the Board of Assessors put a plan of action in place and presented in it in 2025 and the Board of Assessors had been working on the plan of action before the Department of Revenue review.

Maurice Liggins addressed the Commissioners stating that he wanted the Commissioners to be cautions of the democratic process, it seemed one person was trying to dictate who and how Chairman Butts could appoint from his district. It was his understanding that the Commissioners appointed one person from their district; no one Commissioners would know who was better to serve their district than the ones who serve that district. He asked why not support the person he wanted to appoint and then set the rules and get all the paperwork needed. He also stated that he felt something was going on behind the scenes; if they wanted the get rid of everyone on the board, get rid of all of them at one time and explain to people why they were doing it.

Chairman Butts thanked Mr. Stevenson for his time serving and that he appreciated everything he did in his 15 years.

Commissioner Strickland stated that the Board of Assessors was a thankless and difficult job; he had a lot of respect for each of them individually but he represented the 4<sup>th</sup> district and the tax payers that lived in it. He stated that he didn't think they were getting what they deserved from the Board of Tax Assessors. Commissioner Strickland referenced a letter from the Department of Revenue calling for the Board of Assessors to provide a monthly report with the progress of the digest completion; the report would include consolidation sheets, the percentage of appeals and the value of disputes.

Chairman Butts responded that they were waiting on the report and the Board of Assessors had not been given a chance to do what they wanted to do.

Commission Strickland responded that the Board of Assessors did not do what they said they were going to do.

Chairman Butts stated that if the Commissioners were going to remove all the Board at one time, they all should go together; anything else would be disrespectful.

Chairman Butts called for the vote.

Commissioners Butts, Hall, and Davis voted in favor of reappointed Ronald Stevenson to the Board of Tax Assessors. Commissioners Strickland and Little voted against. The motion carried and Mr. Ronald Stevenson was reappointed to the Board of Tax Assessors.

### **Solar Farm Moratorium**

Chairman Butts read the caption for Resolution R-2026-17 enacting a moratorium on solar projects.

The resolution was presented as follows:

## RESOLUTION R-2026-17

A RESOLUTION ENACTING A MORATORIUM ON SOLAR PROJECTS, SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS, AND SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT FOR A PERIOD NOT TO EXCEED SIX (6) MONTHS WHILE THE COUNTY CONSIDERS CHANGES TO ITS SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE; TO PROVIDE FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE MORATORIUM, TO PROVIDE FOR FINDINGS OF FACT, IMPOSITION OF MORATORIUM, THE DURATION OF THE MORATORIUM; TO PROVIDE FOR SEVERABILITY; TO PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS RESOLUTION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

### WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, Baldwin County (the "County") is a duly formed political subdivision of the State of Georgia; and

WHEREAS, Baldwin County has been vested with substantial powers, rights and functions under Article IX, Sec. II, Par. I of the Georgia State Constitution to generally regulate the practice, conduct or use of property for the purposes of maintaining health, morals, safety, security, peace, and the general welfare of the County; and

WHEREAS, Georgia law recognizes that local governments may impose moratoria on zoning decisions, building permits, and other developmental approvals where exigent circumstances exist to warrant the same, pursuant to case law found at City of Roswell v. Outdoor Systems, Inc., 274 Ga. 130 (2001); Taylor v. Shetzen, 212 Ga. 101 (1955); Lawson v. Macon, 214 Ga. 278 (1958); and

WHEREAS, County staff is in the process of reviewing and preparing recommended changes to the County's Solar Energy Development Ordinance (Chapter 17 of The Code of Ordinances, Baldwin County, Georgia); and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of Baldwin County, Georgia ("the Board of Commissioners") is, and has been, interested in developing a cohesive and coherent policy regarding development in the County, and has intended to promote community development through stability, predictability and balanced growth which will further the prosperity of the County as a whole; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners has always had a strong interest in growth management so as to promote the traditional police power goals of health, safety, morals, and the general welfare of the community and other public requirements; and

WHEREAS, it is the belief of the Board of Commissioners that the concept of "public welfare" is broad and inclusive and includes, but is not limited to, the valid public objectives of aesthetic conservation, preservation of the value of existing lands and buildings within the County, making the most appropriate use of resources, preserving existing neighborhood characteristics, enhancing and protecting the economic well-being of the community, facilitating adequate provision of public services, and the preservation of the resources of the County; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners' desire to review and revise its Solar Energy Development Ordinance necessitates a cessation of the construction, installation, enlargement of, or alterations to solar projects, solar energy systems, and solar energy development and finds that such cessation is reasonable and in the public interest.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of Baldwin County, Georgia, and it is hereby resolved by authority of the same, as follows:

1. **Incorporation of Recitals.** The above stated recitals are true and correct and are incorporated as though fully set forth herein.
2. **Findings of Fact.** The Board of Commissioners hereby makes the following findings of fact:
  - a. It appears that the County's Solar Energy Development Ordinance is in the process of being reviewed and revised by the County;
  - b. The County's ongoing revision of its Solar Energy Development Ordinance requires a cessation of the application for and issuance of any solar development permits, variances, or licenses or other permits pertaining to solar projects, solar energy systems, or other solar energy developments;
  - c. It is necessary and in the public interest to delay, for a reasonable time, the processing of applications for and the issuance of any solar development permits, variances, or licenses or other permits pertaining to solar projects, solar energy systems, or other solar energy developments, to ensure that the same are consistent with the long-term planning objectives of the County.
3. **Moratorium on Solar Energy Development.** The County does hereby enact a moratorium for an indefinite period, not to exceed six (6) months from the effective date of this Resolution, to allow the County Manager and staff to adequately study, review, evaluate, and devise a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners regarding revisions to the County's Solar Energy Development Ordinance. The duration of this moratorium shall be until the Board of Commissioners adopts a revision of the County's Solar Energy Development Ordinance or until the expiration of six (6) months from the date of adoption of this Resolution, whichever first occurs; or until such time as may be later set by the County.

During the moratorium period, no applications for any solar development permits, variances, licenses or other permits of any kind shall be accepted by the County or any of its Departments, Boards, or Committees pertaining to solar projects, solar energy systems, or other solar energy developments to be located or operated on any property located within the unincorporated area of Baldwin County, Georgia. Any such applications tendered and/or submitted to the County or any Department, Board, or Committee during this moratorium period shall not be accepted, considered, nor acted upon by the County, nor any Department, Board, or Committee thereof. Should an application be accepted, in error, during the moratorium period, such application shall be deemed null and void and have no effect whatsoever and shall constitute no assurance of any right to engage in any act or action related to the development of solar

projects, solar energy systems, or other solar energy developments. Reliance on any such permit shall be unreasonable.

This moratorium shall have no effect upon approvals of solar development permits, licenses, or other permits for solar projects, solar energy systems, or other solar energy developments previously issued or as to development plans previously approved by the County prior to the effective date of this Resolution. Property owners who claim to have a vested right, pursuant to the laws of the State of Georgia, to obtain a solar development permit, license or other permit for solar projects, solar energy systems, or other solar energy developments must submit a written application for exception to the County Manager for submission and consideration by the County. The written application for exception must include verified supporting documentation of the facts and data that support their claim of vested right, and request for exception to the moratorium.

4. **Severability.** In case any one or more of the provisions of this Resolution shall for any reason be held to be illegal or invalid, such illegality or invalidity shall not affect any other provision of this Resolution, but this Resolution shall be construed and enforced as if such illegal or invalid provision had not been contained herein.
5. **Repeal of Conflicting Resolutions.** Any and all resolutions in conflict with this Resolution this day passed be and they are hereby repealed.
6. **Effective Date.** This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

SO RESOLVED, this 17<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2026.

BALDWIN COUNTY, GEORGIA

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Honorable Kendrick Butts, Chairman  
Baldwin County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

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Bo Danuser, County Clerk  
Baldwin County, Georgia

Commissioner Hall made a motion to adopt the resolution. Commissioner Little seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

#### OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Butts asked for an update on repairing the drive at the 125 Maple Drive. County Manger Tobar responded that he would get a report from the engineer.

Commissioner Davis asked for an update on the trash pickup in Lake Lauren Road. Mr. Tobar stated the report of trash on Lake Laurel had been submitted but he was unaware of trash falling out of the truck.

Commission Davis asked for a report on the complaints about boats and trailers parked on Fox Lair Road. Mr. Tobar responded that it had been reported to the Sheriff's Department. Col. Deason responded that he had not seen the complaints but Sheriff's Department routinely got complaints about truckers who dropped trailers; they were cited.

There was a discussion about placing signs in the areas and Col. Deason stated he would follow up in the morning.

### NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Little asked about the width of the rights-of-way and how someone could get a permit to put a house that encroached in the right of way. Mr. Tobar stated that each street was different and the County Engineer had the records and the Planning and Development Department reviewed them before issuing permits. There was a discussion about rights-of-way.

County Manager Tobar announced that he had used a poor choice of words when trying to explain the length of a particular presentation. He stated that he attended a NAACP meeting and apologized for his comments. He thanked them for showing mercy and grace; he appreciated that. He further stated that he appreciated all the help he received from Madam President Cynthia Edwards.

Mr. Tobar stated that they all had to work together and he was committed to making sure all of Baldwin Count thrived, especially the southside.

### COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager Tobar gave his Manager's Report updating the Commission on:

- The Congressionally Directed Spending Bill for 1.3 million dollars for 10 affordable houses was approved by Congress. Commissioner Strickland reported that he and Commissioner Little had an opportunity travel to Washington DC and met with Senator Ossoff and Congressmen Austin Scott and Mike Collins; they advocated on behalf of the Congressionally Directed Spending Bill and were successful and he was proud to do this for Baldwin County. Commissioner Little stated that they were in Washington, DC, attending a leadership conference and took the opportunity to advocate for Baldwin County. He focused on the impact the funds would have in Baldwin County, he was glad to be a small part of getting the funding. The commissioners agreed to donated three parcels on Vinson Highway for this project.
- He received the specifications for the Collins P. Lee Memorial Library and the Twin Lakes Library Board would meet to approve the plans. They would be going out to bid at the end of the month.

### PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Harry Keim, Chairman of the Baldwin County Board of Assessors, addressed the Commissioners providing information about the statistics from the Board of Assessors including property values assessed values, amount of taxes levied, and fair market values from 2021 to 2025. The growth had been dramatic.

Michael Foy addresses the Commission complimenting them on working on a development plan because this was a growing community and they needed controlled growth. He knew the problems created by overgrowth in the wrong areas. There would be 9 convenience stores within a mile and a half of Sinclair Marina Road. He thanked the Commissioners for their hard work and hoped they would continue to make good decisions.

Cynthia Ward Edwards addressed the Commissioners stating that Mr. Tobar addressed the NAACP in reference to the comments he made. They were grateful that he showed ownership of the comments he made, but sometimes that was not enough. She asked if Mr. Tobar would be willing to take some type of sensitivity training because those comments should not continue to happen under any circumstances; there needed to be changed behavior.

Fidelis Filifac addressed the Commissioners regarding the Aquatic Center and the fact the it would be a cashless system. He felt that would be an obstacle to accessibility; there were a lot of people who still depended on cash.

There was a discussion about the Aquatic Park and having a website devoted to the park, including being able to buy tickets online.

Desiree Liggins addressed the Commissioners asking Chairman Butts if it was in the ordinance that they could not clap or was it something he was asking them to do. Chairman Butts responded that he was asking. Ms. Liggins stated that they couldn't force anyone not to clap, she had her rights and she had a lawyer.

Ms. Liggins asked why Sidney Butts Road was still not finished; the driveways were not seamed together and the rocks were eroding exposing what was there before. She asked what the county was doing to implement a TNR program and if there were any grants available to control the homeless population of feral cats. She stated that they would not have to have moratoriums on zoning if they had zoning; she stated that there were too many gas stations, vape shops and liquor stores – she asked what County was doing to protect the citizens. She stated that she drove by the golf course, it was closed; she asked why the entrance sign would have home of the GCSU Bobcats because the golf course belonged to the people of Baldwin County not the college – asking if the college was giving money to promote the college.

Latonya N. Howell addressed the Commissioners regarding her presentation on Black History Month stating that she was asked to give the presentation, she did not volunteer to do it. Constituents requested that she continue to let people know the contributions made by our community members. It took time to do research and she did it out of dedication. The comments that were made were heartbreaking. She thanked the community for rallying to support her and the members here.

Quintin T. Howell addressed the Commission regarding the loss of Civil Rights Icon Jesse Jackson. He stated that his teachings should have been used regarding comments made toward the Mayor about a video she made during her election campaign. He thanked Mr. Tobar for his apology and discussed political comments and people trying to defend the indefensible. His prayer and hope was for more togetherness and less division, especially when it came to race; they had to have conversations of uncomfortable truths.

Maurice Liggins addressed the commission regarding Rev. Jesse Jackson's death and his 5 decades long involvement in the American Civil Rights history. He presented quotes from Rev. Jackson and the power of his language to distill the struggles of citizens, provide affirmations, and to motivate change. Mr. Liggins stated that hope for Jackson was an act of resistance.

Commissioner Little thanked Ms. Howell and thought she did a fantastic job.

Chairman Butts stated the even though it was not in the ordinance to not clap, it was one of the responsibilities of the Chairman to control the decorum of the room so he could set the rules that he wanted to see to ensure respectfulness. He graciously asked everyone to not clap, not speak out and to address only the Chair.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Little made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss personnel and legal matters. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

The commissioners entered into closed session at 7:19 PM.

Commissioner Little made a motion to close the executive session. Commissioner Hall seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Little made a motion to return to open session. Commissioner Hall seconded the motion and the Commissioners returned to open session at 8:26 PM

### ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Little made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Strickland seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

The February 17, 2026 Baldwin County Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 8:26 PM.

Submitted,



Kendrick Butts, Chairman  
Baldwin County Board of Commissioners



ATTEST:



Bo Danuser, County Clerk  
Baldwin County Georgia