



BALDWIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

August 19, 2025

1601 N Columbia St, Suite 220

6:00 PM

MINUTES

Present

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

Others

Carlos Tobar
Dawn Hudson
Brandon Palmer
Bo Danuser

CALL TO ORDER

Baldwin County Board of Commissioners Chairman Andrew Strickland called the August 19, 2025 Commission meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

INVOCATION

Joy-Moten Thomas said the prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Davis led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the August 5, 2025 commission meeting minutes and executive session minutes. Commissioner Butts seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Little made a motion to approve the amended July 15, 2025 minutes. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS

Georgia Military College's Junior College Athletic Director and Head Football Coach, Rob Manchester, addressed the commissioners inviting them to the "Meet the Bulldogs" event. Coach Manchester stated that 158 team members were proud to represent the leaders of this community and GMC.

Coach Manchester continued that of the 158 team members, 130 were from Georgia, and three were from Milledgeville.

Atrium Health Navicent's Joy Moten-Thomas addressed the commissioners regarding the regional hospital. She presented a PowerPoint presentation describing Atrium Health Navicent, highlighting services provided, hospital staff, and their "Leapfrog" score. She discussed the challenges health care faces and the importance of having a rural hospital, and she shared a website with access to their financial reports. Ms. Moten-Thomas discussed the hospital's annual financial losses, their long-term debt, and the cost of providing indigent care.

She shared the financial impact the hospital had in the central Georgia area and the programs the hospital provided to the community.

Ms. Moten-Thomas discussed the upgrades to hospital equipment and thanked the commissioners for the IGA for tax dollar funding.

Michael Patterson provided the commissioners with a report and then discussed the Emergency Medical Service and staffing, stating they provided EMS service across the entire county and at events with 5 24-hour ambulances in this community. EMS averaged 28 calls per day, running over 10,000 calls per year. Mr. Patterson further stated that staff provided over 600 hours of community education, event coverage, and training.

There was a discussion about providing emergency service, including what caused the increase in calls across the region, the number of ambulances available, staffing ambulances, people using the service when not an emergency, patients being able to choose what hospital they were taken to, but decisions were based on the situation.

Ms. Moten-Thomas concluded the presentation stating there was a 15-million-dollar investment in the hospital and building facility. She stated that they still had needs.

She introduced the staff present and they were proud to serve the community.

There was a discussion about the 5-million-dollar cost for indigent care, the lack of community confidence in the hospital and services that had left. Chief Operating Officer Thomas Goss responded that in the two years he was there, they had not eliminated any services and expanded the OB, emergency care, general surgery, oncology, and beyond. There was a discussion about the radiology service, partnering with the recreation department to establish health lifestyle programs, the tax assessment on Baldwin County property owners and providing indigent care to citizens from other counties, receiving funds from the state indigent care fund, and the lack of financial participation from the City of Milledgeville and reading radiology reports on the computer.

ADMINISTRATIVE/FISCAL MATTERS

WIOA Grant

Chairman Strickland read the caption for Resolution R-2025-67 to authorize a WIOA Dislocated Worker Program.

The resolution was presented as follows:

RESOLUTION 2025-67

A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE AN APPLICATION BE SUBMITTED FOR THE GEORGIA
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) GRANT FOR FUNDING
THE DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM FOR THE OF PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2025
THROUGH JUNE 30, 2027; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

WHEREAS, the Baldwin County Board of Commissioners desire to continue to receive funding from the Georgia Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Grant Number 31-25-25-06-01IFAIN 25A55AW0001530; and

WHEREAS, the Grant provides funding of \$122,643 for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2027 for the Dislocated Worker Program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners of Baldwin County, Georgia, and it 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. Authorization of Grant Application. The Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the preparation and submission of a Georgia Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Grant.
3. Authorization of Chairman. The Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the Chairman of the Baldwin County Board of Commissioners to sign any documentation or take any other action necessary or reasonably required to carry out, give effect to, and consummate the application and administration of the Grant and to take all action necessary in conformity therewith.
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 19th day of August, 2025.

BALDWIN COUNTY, GEORGIA

Honorable Andrew Strickland, Chairman
Baldwin County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Bo Danuser, County Clerk
Baldwin County Georgia

Assistant County Manager stated the county received \$122,643 through the Dislocated Worker Program for the grant period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2027.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to accept the grant. Commissioner Butts seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

One Georgia Rural Site Development Grant Award

Chairman Strickland read the caption for Resolution R-2025-68 to authorize an agreement with the Development Authority of Milledgeville and Baldwin county to accept One Georgia Rural Site Development Grant Award.

The resolution was presented as follows:

RESOLUTION R-2025-68

A Resolution to Authorize an Agreement Between the Baldwin County Board of Commissioners and the Development Authority of Milledgeville-Baldwin County in Preparation for the Acceptance of a OneGeorgia Equity Rural Site Development Award for Sibley Place

WHEREAS, The Baldwin County Board of Commissioners in conjunction with the Development Authority of Milledgeville and Baldwin County has been selected as the recipient of a OneGeorgia Rural Site Development Grant Award to make improvements to Sibley Place; and

WHEREAS, the One Georgia Grant award 25sd-MCR-5-5268 provides 2 million dollars toward an entry road, site preparations, streets, flood and drainage, and general improvements at Sibley Place; and

WHEREAS, the mutual receipt of this award requires an agreement between the Board of Commissioners and the Development Authority to outline the disbursement and responsibilities association with receiving funds from OneGeorgia Grant 25-sd-MCR-5-5268; and

WHEREAS, an agreement between Baldwin County Board of Commissioners and the Development Authority of Milledgeville and Baldwin County is hereby attached and by reference, it, along with all of the references, attachments, and addendums included in the agreement are duly incorporated and made a part of this resolution as Exhibit A.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners of Baldwin County, Georgia, and it 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. Authorization of Acceptance. The Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the acceptance of the OneGeorgia Grant award 25sd-MCR-5-5268 in the amount of 2 million dollars to improve Sibley Place.
3. Authorization of Agreement. The Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes an agreement with the Development Authority of Milledgeville and Baldwin County to outline the disbursement and responsibilities association with receiving funds from OneGeorgia Grant 25-sd-MCR-5-5268.
4. Authorization of Chairman. The Board of Commissioners hereby authorize the Chairman of the Baldwin County Board of Commissioners to sign any documentation or take any other action necessary reasonably required to carry out, give effect to, and consummate this agreement with the Development Authority of Milledgeville and Baldwin County and to take all action necessary in conformity therewith.
5. 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.
6. Repeal of Conflicting Resolutions. Any and all resolutions in conflict with this Resolution this day passed be and they are hereby repealed.
7. Effective Date. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

SO RESOLVED, this 19th day of August, 2025.

BALDWIN COUNTY, GEORGIA

Andrew Strickland, Chairman
Baldwin County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Bo Danuser, County Clerk
Baldwin County, Georgia

County Manager Tobar discussed the grant that had been awarded for the road into the Smith-Sibley Industrial park; however, the Development Authority attorney had not had the opportunity to review the agreement and asked that the item be tabled.

Commissioner Hall made a motion to table the resolution. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion.

After discussion about the county's obligation for the grant, soliciting bids, and the conceptual drawing of the road, the motion was approved unanimously and the resolution was tabled.

300 Sparta Highway

Chairman Strickland read the caption for Resolution R-2025-69 that authorized the sale of 300 Sparta Highway with the stipulation to tear down the structure included in the sales agreement.

County Manager Tobar stated the commission had previously authorized the preparation of this contract for this owner.

Commissioner Hall made a motion to approve. Commissioner Little seconded the motion.

There was discussion about including the cleanup as part of the agreement and the consequences if not demolished and cleaned up. There was also discussion about amending the resolution.

Commissioner Little made a motion to amend the resolution to that that the dilapidated structure would be demolished and cleaned up within 90 days from closing.

Commissioners Hall, Strickland, and Little voted aye and Commissioners Butts and Davis voted no. The motion carried.

2026 Community Development Block Grant

County Manager Tobar discussed the selection process for the engineer and grant writers for the 2026 Community Development Block Grant which, would be the second phase of the Oconee Heights Revitalization Strategy from Barnes and moving north for sewer line replacement and housing rehab.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to select Gilbert and Associates as grant writer and administrator for the housing component of the 2026 CDBG grant application and authorize an agreement be prepared for Commission approval. Commissioner Little seconded the motion.

There was a discussion about the time frame for completing project and the housing component.

The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Little made a motion to select Allen-Smith Consulting as grant writer and administrator for the water and sewer component of the 2026 CDBG grant application and authorize an agreement be prepared for Commission approval. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to select Carter and Sloope as the firm to provide the engineering component of the 2026 CDBG grant application and authorize an agreement be prepared for Commission approval. Commissioner Little seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Davis announced that Baldwin County was awarded a \$1.25 million community development block grant for water and sewer line replacement and to replace two substandard houses in the Oconee Heights area.

Mr. Tobar stated that it was phase 1. There was a discussion about who helped bring the grant to award.

Commissioner Little announced the county had received a 6,000-dollar donation for animal control. There was a discussion about donations being used only for earmarked use.

Commissioner Butts commended the animal control staff.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager Tobar gave his report highlighting:

- the 2025 CDBG award for Oconee Heights, with \$6.5 million invested in Oconee Heights,
- future investment in Oconee Heights over the next few years included more sewer and housing rehabs, a dedicated path would be built between McDade's Grocery and the Veterans Home, additions shared-use paths in the neighborhood, street lights,
- road resurfacing continues, they would do a dash cam of the roads being resurfaced,
- Fishing Creek - silt fencing had been done; the area needed to dry out before they started construction,
- submitted draft contract with Paws for Georgia for low-cost spay and neuter clinic
- Bike Walk Baldwin second phase was being completed,
- water park construction continued,
- Harrisburg Park improvements – \$3.8 million had been invested in neighborhood improvements, library design had begun,
- Coopers Park splashpad first part had been completed and was waiting for inspection.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Gene Hurt addressed the commissioners, entering his complaints about the south side not getting the same attention as other parts of town; there were rundown apartment building, boarded trailers, they didn't have urgent care centers, and he had to brandish a weapon when going outside. He asked that the City and County have a town hall meeting to answer his questions. He stated they were rapidly building on the northside and asked for the same amount of respect.

Mr. Tobar informed Mr. Hurt that the Oconee Height Collaborative meetings every month.

There was a discussion about community meetings in southside neighborhoods.

Derrick Douglas addressed the commissioners regarding his home being broken into and that he felt he was targeted by law enforcement. He stated he was a victim of identity, and his reports were not being made, and law enforcement had a pattern of misconduct. He asked the county attorney to make assist him with the identity theft – he felt law enforcement didn't care.

There was discussion about Mr. Douglas being a victim of identity theft and his making an allegation about law enforcement officers, his filing a certified letter, and contacting the sheriff.

Fidelis Folifac addressed the commissioners regarding the southside, he echoed and supported what had been said tonight, and that the concerns were decades old. He stated the first excuse was that development moved north, and claimed northward movement was rooted in systemic racism and economic injustice, ending with black neighborhoods disappearing and having the working class and lower class being pushed into the margins. The second excuse was that the government ran slow, it came down to respecting the dignity of the residents and was an injustice against their human rights. He called on the residents to call upon themselves to organize to see the change they want to see.

Desiree Liggins addressed the commission asking for a follow up for a trap and release program. She discussed the stray cats throughout Baldwin County; the grass needed to be cut on Highway 22/24; asked when Sidney Butts would be finished; the (meeting) videos had disappeared on the website; she had an issue with bottlenecks on the Hwy 49 and 441 connection, and traffic was backed up.

Maurice Liggins addressed the commission discussing his assessment of the county operations, stating there was a single point of failure. There was a disconnect with getting jobs completed and having a repository where citizens could get information. Such a repository would minimize questions and complaints and allow a tracking mechanism.

There was a discussion about the citizen reporter program and the it was being updated.

ADJOURNMENT


Commissioner Little made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

The August 19, 2025 commission meeting was adjourned at 7:33 PM.

Submitted,


Andrew Strickland, Chairman

ATTEST:


Bo Danuser, County Clerk
Baldwin County, Georgia

