



BALDWIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

January 6, 2026

1601 N Columbia St, Suite 220

6:00 PM

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The January 6, 2026 Baldwin County Board of Commissioners meeting was called to order by Chairman Andrew Strickland at 6:00 PM.

INVOCATION

Reverend Dexter R. Burney from Saint Paul Baptist Church opened the meeting with a prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Hall led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the December 16, 2025 regular commission meeting minutes; the December 22, 2025 joint City/County called meeting minutes and the December 22, 2025 called commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Hall seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to move the selection of the Chair and Vice Chair to the end of the meeting. Commissioner Hall seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS

Dr. Kristina Brooks, Superintendent of the Baldwin County School System addressed the commissioners. She expressed her appreciation to the elected officials for being so welcoming and supportive. She stated the Baldwin County School System's goal was to educate children to find success and to make a difference in the community; their mantra was to believe in Baldwin, their goal was for students to graduate, seek college and career, find their passion, be part of this community and to be leaders. Dr. Brooks gave a presentation sharing information about the Baldwin County School System including their programs and academies, that the Baldwin County School System was the second largest employer in the county with a \$ 58 million budget; they rolled the millage rate back and had one of the lowest mills in the area; and that 5 mills of taxes had to be sent to the State every year for redistribution across the state. Dr. Brooks stated their mission was to educate students to become contributing members of our community and every student was a vital contributor.

Dr. Brooks listed their cornerstones and milestones in literacy and gave statistics, discussed preparing students for workforce development through the pathways programs, the focus on student well-being – including having cell phone free zones to eliminate distractions. She discussed finding meaningful work for young adults with disabilities aging out of the system.

Dr. Brooks again discussed the pathways programs used to develop expanding careers. She closed her presentation by highlighting the three areas they focused on and used to guide their work, those being that every child read at or above their grade level, every student was employed, enlisted in the military or enrolled in college, technical school or university and the most important was that students were working toward good citizenship.

Dr. Brooks closed by thanking the commissioners for the time they were giving the Baldwin County School system.

There was discussion about the good job the Board of Education and the school system were doing in the community; the 88% poverty rate in Baldwin county school system, teaching students civics and how to make good judgement choices, and the Leader in Me program.

Rebekah Snider, Executive Director of the Milledgeville Baldwin County Convention and Visitors Bureau addressed the commissioners updating them on the CVB's efforts in developing the community brand and spending the hotel motel tax collections to promote tourism. She stated that more than one million people visited Milledgeville generating a \$6.5 million impact and creating over 904 hospitality jobs that all provided tax relief by bringing revenue into the community from external sources.

Ms. Snider discussed increasing the hotel room inventory, improvements at Walter B. Williams Park and the overall improvements to the sports complex and facilities. She discussed the people flow at Walter B. Williams that provided an opportunity for economic relief. She updated on their 10 projects including developing the film industry and bringing Hallmark into Baldwin County; conference collaborations and working with Georgia College for venues; media profile spotlights and showcases including references on MSN, and in Smithsonian Magazine, Southern Living Magazine, Georgia Trend Magazine, the Wallstreet Journal and the New York Times; working with 3 social media influencers and content creators boosting Baldwin County's presence; the leisure advertising campaign with a focus on Georgian and Floridian visitors; paid advertising in publications, co-hosting Milledgeville Burger Week creating a county wide collaboration that generated a \$45,000 economic impact; creating a marketing scheme for the wedding industry that included creating a bridal guide and trade show to get people to marry here; promoting sports events including the Georgia Cycling Association, they hired a consultant to help identify venues that could be used for sports events and building a strong sports infrastructure; and creating a sustainable workforce for the hospitality industry.

Ms. Snider closed by stating they had the best jobs in Baldwin County, they got to brag on our community and got to see the positive pieces of the community. She was grateful for another year of partnership and hoped they were great steward of the money they received.

Chairman Strickland thanked Ms. Snider for the wonderful ideas and honing in on tournaments and Walter B. Williams improvements.

Commissioner Little recognized newly elected councilmember Arlene Simmons being in attendance.

ADMINISTRATIVE/FISCAL MATTERS

Tax Anticipation Note

Commissioner Strickland read the caption for Resolution R-2026-01 authorizing a Tax Anticipation Note.

The resolution was presented as follows:

RESOLUTION R-2026-01

A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE DOCUMENTS TO BORROW FROM CENTURY BANK AND TRUST TO PAY CURRENT YEAR OPERATING EXPENSES FROM TIME TO TIME

WHEREAS, under and by virtue of the Constitution of the State of Georgia, Article IX, Section V, Paragraph V, each city, county, and political subdivision of the State authorized to levy taxes is given the authority to make temporary loans between January 1 and December 31 in each year to pay expenses for such year upon certain conditions, and

WHEREAS, such conditions have been fulfilled by Baldwin County as hereinafter appears; and

WHEREAS, said Baldwin County has now outstanding no such temporary loans or renewals thereof made in any prior year; and

WHEREAS, the total gross income of said Baldwin County from taxes in the last preceding calendar year was \$26,000,000; and

WHEREAS, the total anticipated income (revenue) of Baldwin County for the current year exceeds \$27,000,000; and

WHEREAS, the amount to be borrowed, \$10,000,000, plus all other temporary loans of Baldwin County for the current calendar year are less than the total anticipated revenue from all sources for such calendar year; and

WHEREAS, under the aforesaid authority, Baldwin County Board may make such temporary loans in 2026 in a total amount not to exceed \$20,250,000 which amount is seventy-five percent of \$27,000,000; and

WHEREAS, said temporary loans are needed by Baldwin County to pay the current fiscal year's operating expenses; and

WHEREAS, the Baldwin County Board of Commissioners constitutes the governing body of Baldwin County.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Baldwin County Board of Commissioners:

1. **Incorporation of Recitals.** The above stated recitals are true and correct and are incorporated as though fully set forth herein.
2. **Authorization of Temporary Loan.** That the Chair of the Baldwin County Board of Commissioners is hereby authorized to execute documents to borrow from Century Bank and Trust money to pay current year's operating expenses from time to time during the year, the aggregate amount of which is not to exceed \$10,000,000, said sums to bear interest not to exceed 5.25 percent per annum, and the entire amount, together with interest, to be repaid on or before December 31 of the current year. The money may be drawn upon from time to time as authorized by the Baldwin County Board of Commissioners and interest shall be paid only on that portion of the total sum which is utilized and only for the period of time it is used. The loan(s) shall be evidenced by promissory note(s) executed in the name of the Baldwin County Board of Commissioners.
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 of a temporary loan 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 6th day of January, 2026.

BALDWIN COUNTY, GEORGIA

Andrew Strickland, Chairman
Baldwin County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Bo Danuser, County Clerk
Baldwin County, Georgia

County Manager Carlos Tobar explained that there was a \$10 million line of credit and the low bid was 2.25 %.

Desiree Liggins addressed the commissioners asking if interest would be paid on this loan, how much was the interest, did all counties do this, and was the TAN loan for the entire budget.

Commissioner Strickland responded that this was a revolving line of credit at 5.25% interest.

Ms. Liggins stated that the commissioners needed to stop spending money, including spending on trackman and pickleball. She stated the county owned 3 million to the city, there was no reserve.

There was a brief discussion about the procure for addressing the commissioners.

Commissioner Little made a motion to accept the Tax Anticipated Note. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion.

The commissioners discussed the TAN note, making the loan for the least possible amount, the note had been used for many years, spending money to get good returns on projects, taking drastic actions to repair some of the financial woes the county has, and that the projects currently under way mostly used grant dollars and sales tax dollars, not property tax dollars.

The motion was unanimously approved.

2026 Community Home Improvement Program (CHIP) Application

Commissioner Strickland read the caption for Resolution R-2026-02 authorizing Baldwin County apply for the 2026 CHIP Grant.

The resolution was presented as follows:

RESOLUTION R-2026-02 BALDWIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS (BOC) 2026 CHIP APPLICATION RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established the Community Home Investment Program (CHIP) to assist local governments with improvements to housing improvement activities in Georgia, and

WHEREAS, there exists in Baldwin County a need to provide housing improvements in the Harrisburg and Oconee Heights service area,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Chairman and Board of Commissioners that the Baldwin County BOC supports the application for 2026 CHIP funds and that Baldwin County will apply for these funds for housing improvements in the County's 2026 CHIP Target Area. Baldwin County commits to the required cash match for the project, \$1,000 cash for the required audits and all additional cash and/or in-kind services needed to complete the project over the grant amount.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chairman is authorized and directed to act as the official representative of the Baldwin County BOC, to act in connection with the application, to

be responsible for compliance with the applicable state and federal requirements of the program, and to provide such additional information as may be required;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chairman is authorized to enter into agreements for services relating to the application and subsequent grant (if funded) and to execute the application and other required documents on behalf of the Baldwin County BOC including the grant award package (if funded);

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Baldwin County will comply with all provisions of the HOME Investment Partnership Activity regulations found at 24 CFR Part 92, the state requirements for the implementation of the Community HOME Investment Partnership Activity (CHIP) as defined in the Activity Description, the Administrative Manual, the Homeowner Rehabilitation Manual, as may be amended at the discretion of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Baldwin County BOC will comply with certain laws that may be applicable, though not specifically listed in the HOME Investment Partnership Activity Regulations, by virtue of being applicable under their own terms, such as the Hatch Act (U.S.C. Section 1501, et. seg), which limits the political activities of the employees funded through receipt of Federal assistance;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Baldwin County BOC will comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the HUD Implementing regulations (24 CFR Part 8), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, the Fair Housing Act (42 USC 3601-20), Executive Orders 11246 and 11063, and Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 and will administer and conduct its activity in conformance with them.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Baldwin County BOC agrees to become a subrecipient for purposes of the activity and to assume all responsibilities at 24 CFR Part 92 (as now in effect and as may be amended from time to time) except those responsibilities which DCA determines will not be transferred to the subrecipient for reasons deemed practical, feasible, or legally sound.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Baldwin County BOC acknowledges that if the proposed application is funded, the activity will affirmatively further fair housing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Baldwin County BOC's proposed housing improvements are in conformance with the Baldwin County Comprehensive Plan;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a true and dedicated commitment has been made to the project for the successful completion of the above improvements for the citizens, especially the low-to-moderate income citizens;

BE IT RESOLVED this 6th day of January, 2026.

BALDWIN COUNTY

Andrew Strickland, Chairman
Baldwin County Board of Commissioners

CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Resolution duly adopted by the Baldwin County BOC the date so stated in said Resolution. I further certify that I am the County Clerk and that said Resolution has full force and effect the 6th day of January, 2026.

ATTEST:

(SEAL)

Bo Danuser, County Clerk
Baldwin County, Georgia

County Manager Carlos Tobar discussed the deplorable state of some of the homes in south Baldwin County, stating that this was one of the programs the county had that was life changing for some people. He urged to commissioner to continue this path. There would only be enough money in this round to help 4 or 5 of the nine houses identified in need of help. Mr. Tobar stated that he was grateful that the Federal Government had the funds available to communities like Baldwin County to secure grants and transform people's lives.

There was a discussion about these grants lifting the community up and this would be one of the commissioner's proudest moments and would be their legacy.

Commissioner Little made a motion to approve the 2026 CHIP Application. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Golf Course Irrigation

Chairman Strickland asked the County Manager for a brief on the bid for golf course irrigation.

County Manager Tobar stated that bids had gone out with one responsive bid returned from **Central Pro Supply** for \$577,122.83 that would come out of SPLOST. This motion would be to accept the low bid and authorize the issuance of a purchase order for materials. Mr. Tobar gave an update on the construction of the golf course stating the construction went out to bid, and the commissioners would be voting for the construction on February 3rd and for a construction management contract in two weeks.

Mr. Tobar gave an update on the Trackman stating everything was arriving and being constructed and there should be a ribbon cutting in 5 to 6 weeks.

Desiree Liggins addressed the commissioners asking how much the water was going to cost to irrigate the golf course. She stated that she thought they were going to cease all spending of SPLOST money until the audit was completed, and asked how much more the commissioners

were going to spend on the golf course – people had torn up bathrooms maybe the commissioners should fix bathrooms before they build a golf course.

Maurice Liggins addressed the commissioner suggesting the county reach out to the college, GMC or the school board to help with the golf course.

Commission Little made a motion to accept the bid from Central Pro Supply and authorize a purchase order be issued. Commissioner Hall seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Board of Commissioners Chair and Vice Chair

Commissioner David nominated Kendrick Butts as Chairman of the Board of Commissioners. Chairman Little seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Butts was appointed as Chairman for the 2026 calendar year.

Commissioner Butts nominated Emily Davis as Vice Chair. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Commissioners Butts and Davis voted aye and Commissioners Hall, Strickland, and Little voted no. The motion failed.

Commissioner Strickland nominated Scott Little as Vice Chairman of the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Hall seconded the motion. Commissioners Hall, Strickland, and Little voted aye and Commissioners Butts and Davis voted no. The motion carried and Commissioner Little was appointed as Vice Chairman for the 2026 calendar year.

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Davis asked about the lights at the pickleball courts stating the lights were on late one night. Mr. Tobar responded that the lights were on a timer.

Commissioner Davis raised concerns about solid waste pickup and garbage cans being torn up. Mr. Tobar stated there was a new customer service number. Ms. Davis responded that the customer service had not been responsive and she had gotten calls, she sent Mr. Tobar the information.

Commissioners Butts asked for an update on the stormwater problems on Maplewood. Mr. Tobar responded that the County Engineer was not available right now, but he would get on it next week when he returned.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Davis stated that some departments did not have updated phone numbers for customers. She asked that the county update resident/customers phone numbers.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager Tobar gave his report discussing:

- The Mary Vinson Library reopening ribbon cutting

- he would let the Middle Georgia Library decide when they wanted to do the reveal at the Collins P. Lee Memorial Library; the construction bid would be going out in late February
- the galvanized water line inventory continued and customers were getting letters; the grant in place would replace the galvanized water lines the county owned (to the meter)
- CDBG sewer line on Vinson Highway, Thompson Street, and Marion Street started
- The 2025 sewer replacement and housing rehab was underway and meetings were scheduled
- The target area had been selected for the 2026 CDBG grant, the budget was being prepared and the windshield survey would be finished this month
- There were still punch list items remaining and the asphalt plant had reopened
- The Harrisburg Park sidewalks were being finished, grading was being done for the playground equipment and the foundation had been poured for the community center
- They were waiting for fourth family to move back into their home under the 2024 CHIP grant and a home dedication and street party was being planned on Barnes Avenue
- The congressionally directed spending request for 10 habitat homes east of Vinson Highway was being monitored by Congressman Mike Collins as it went through the house; it passed the senate
- Residents were sent letters by Code Enforcement and properties were being cleaned up before court dates. The commissioner asked about specific cases. Mr. Tobar responded that they had all been given letter and if they had not complied they would be going to court. As long as progress was being made time was given
- There were 20 applicants for the low cost spay and neuter for dogs, but he didn't have data on the cat program
- He expected 1 million visitors to Walter B. Williams Park. There was a brief discussion about making the park the center of the community and bidding out food services. Mr. Tobar stated he would be getting updates weekly and he would share them with the commissioners. There was a discussion about training lifeguard and having a grand opening.

Commissioner Little gave Kudos to the water department crews for after-hours repairs on a water line on Cape Harbor.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Desiree Liggins addressed the commissioners regarding Sidney Butts Road stating that a priority was being placed on the golf course. She asked if the jobs coming to Baldwin County would pay living wages, she asked that new buildings be identified, and that 17 projects were a lot to have ongoing one time.

Mathias Newman addressed the commissioner regarding the performance review of the tax assessor and when it would be available for public review.

Chairman Hall and Strickland responded that it had not been presented to the commissioners and that the report would be made public except for any personnel issues.

Malinda Brewer addressed the commissioner requesting that a copy of the environmental assessment plan for the terminal apron and lower ramp expansion be made available to the public.

Mr. Tobar stated that he had not received a copy of the environmental assessment. Chairman Strickland stated that he would sent the report to her and that the document would be made public.

Maurice Liggins addressed the commission regarding how people were treated differently while making public comments. He requested that the website be updated to help people get information, the document library was a mess. He offered to help improve the data management on the website. He asked that he and his wife's questions not be taken personally.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

The Board of Commissioners went into executive session at 7:34 PM.

Commissioner Little made a motion to adjourn the executive session at 10:04 PM. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

The executive session was adjourned at 10:04 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The January 6, 2026 Baldwin County Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 10:04 PM.

Submitted,


Andrew Strickland, Chair
Baldwin County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:


Bo Danuser, County Clerk
Baldwin County, Georgia

