Effingham County Georgia
Board of Commissioners

Damon M. Rahn, Chairman at Large
Forrest F. Floyd, District 1
Roger Burdette, District 2
Jamie Deloach, District 3
Elizabeth Helmly, District 4
Phil Kieffer, District 5

REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 20, 2026

The Board of Commissioners of Effingham County, Georgia, Mr. Damon Rahn, Mr. Forrest Floyd, Mr. Roger Burdette, Mr. Jamie Deloach, Ms. Elizabeth Helmly, and Mr. Phil Kieffer met in regular session at 5:00 pm on Tuesday, January 20, 2026 in the Commissioners Meeting Chambers at the Effingham County Administrative Complex located at 804 South Laurel Street Springfield, Georgia 31329.

STAFF PARTICIPATION

Mr. Tim Callanan – County Manager, Mr. Edward Newberry – County Attorney, Ms. Stephanie Johnson – County Clerk, Ms. Tasheena Shiggs – Deputy Clerk Mr. Clint Hodges – Fire Chief & EMA Director, Ms. Marie Todd – Executive Assistant, Ms. Maraya Durham – I.T. Support Specialist, Ms. Pamela Melser – Director of Development Services, Ms. Jennifer Rose – Planner I, Ms. Kimberly Barlett – Senior Planner, Mr. Tre Wilkins – Capital Projects Manager, Mr. Johnathan Hulme – County Engineer, and Mr. Daniel Rodewalt – Tax Commissioner.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Brett Bennett, Judy Jones, and Christopher Kabinsky

I- CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Rahn called the meeting to order at 5:22pm

II- ROLL CALL

Damon Rahn, Chairman
Forrest Floyd
Roger Burdette
Jamie Deloach, Vice Chairman
Beth Helmly
Phil Kieffer

III – INVOCATION

Abigail Williamson, 11th grade student at the Effingham College and Career Academy offered the invocation.

IV– PLEDGE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

The pledge was led by Abigail Williamson.

V – AGENDA APPROVAL

County Clerk Johnson announced Unfinished Business items # 1 and #2 will be

moved to Planning Board following items #1 and #2. With the addition of New Business item #16.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the agenda with the noted changes. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

VI – MINUTES

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE JANUARY 6, 2026 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES (1):

Commissioner Helmly made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

VII – PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Rahn stated comments shall pertain to the agenda items only. Should you wish to make remarks, clearly state your full name into the microphone before commencing to speak.

VIII – CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Rahn stated documents from this meeting are located in the Clerk's office and on the Board of Commissioner's website.

IX – 5:05 pm - SPECIAL RECOGNITION - (*by Daniel Rodewolt, Tax Commissioner*)

Daniel Rodewolt, Effingham County's Tax Commissioner, announced the promotion of Bessie Johnson to Office Manager and Cynthia Bazemore to Deputy Tax Commissioner. Ms. Bessie Johnson has provided 30 years of dedicated service to Effingham County, demonstrating expertise in all aspects of the office, including the collection of delinquent taxes and management of complex filings. Ms. Cynthia Bazemore will continue to serve the community with dedication, professionalism, and a strong commitment to public service. She is recognized for her reliability, leadership, and problem-solving abilities.

VIII – CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Deloach made a motion approve the following Consent Agenda items: **(2026-019)** Consideration to approve Resolution# 026-003 to reappoint Traci Wells to the Board of Tax Assessor. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XI – UNFINISHED BUSINESS

~~**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE AN APPLICATION BY JUDY JONES FOR A CONDITIONAL USE LOCATED AT 1317 NOEL C CONAWAY ROAD TO ALLOW FOR A CEMETERY IN AR-1. MAP # 375E PARCEL # 11 IN THE SECOND DISTRICT (*POSTPONED, 12/16/2025*) (1):~~

This item was moved to Planning Board item #3 at agenda approval.

~~**JUDY JONES – SECOND READING (02)**: Consideration to approve the Second Reading of an application by Judy Jones for a Conditional Use located at 1317 Noel C Conaway Road to allow for a cemetery in AR-1 Map # 375E Parcel # 11 in the Second District (*Postponed, 12/16/2025*)~~

This item was moved to Planning Board item #4 at agenda approval.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A WARRANTY DEED FOR THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND DRAINAGE IN NEW HAVEN PHASE 2 LOCATED ON HODGEVILLE ROAD TO EFFINGHAM COUNTY MAP# 416 PARCEL# 20F IN THE SECOND DISTRICT (*Postponed, 01/06/2026*) (3):

Development Services Director Melser presented the acceptance of a warranty deed for New Haven Phase 2. The deed covers the dedication of essential infrastructure, including streets, water, sewer, and drainage systems. It was noted that the infrastructure for Phase 1 was previously accepted in February 2022, and the plat for Phase 2 was approved during the May 2024 meeting.

Christopher Kabinsky, Board of Directors for Belmont Glen HOA highlighted significant drainage issues in Phase 1, where homeowners have experienced severe flooding in backyards. The HOA expressed hesitancy to approve further warranty deeds until they have assurances that Phase 2 will not suffer similar liabilities. The Board was presented with photographic evidence of standing water and landscaping equipment stuck in saturated soil.

Commissioner Burdette made a motion to withdraw the item. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

NEIL MCKENZIE as agent for **BACA PROPERTIES, LLC – SECOND READING (04):** Consideration to approve the Second Reading of an application by Neil McKenzie as agent for BACA Properties, LLC, to rezone +/- 21.73 acres located at 2388 US Highway 80 from AR-1 to B-3 and HI (Heavy Industrial) to allow for permitted uses in B-3 and HI Map # 354 Parcel # 28 & 29 in the First District (*1st reading approved, 01/06/2026*)

Commissioner Floyd made a motion to approve the 2nd Reading. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. Commissioner Helmly opposed. The motion carried 4 to 1.

XII – NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A PROCLAMATION DECLARING FEBRUARY 8-14, 2026 AS FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA (FBLA) WEEK (1):

County Clerk Johnson explained the Board of Commissioners of Effingham County, Georgia, hereby proclaims February 8th through the 14th, 2026 as National Future Business Leaders of America Week.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the Proclamation as presented. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION# 026-002 TO SET AND PUBLISH

THE QUALIFYING FEES FOR 2026 (2):

County Clerk Johnson explained the governing body must officially set the qualifying fees for the current election year. The resolution presented establishes these fees and authorizes their publication as required by law.

Commissioner Burdette raised a discrepancy between his personal pay stubs and the gross salary figures presented in the resolution.

It was clarified that the calculations were updated from "base salary" to "current gross salary" to comply with legal requirements.

Commissioner Helmly made a motion to approve the resolution to set qualifying fees as presented. Vice Chair Kieffer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A WARRANTY DEED FOR THE DEDICATION OF RIGHT-OF-WAY BETWEEN HODGEVILLE ROAD AND EFFINGHAM PARKWAY LOCATED IN EFFINGHAM COUNTY MAP# 433 PARCEL# 1RW1 THE SECOND DISTRICT (3):

County Engineer Hulme explained the Board has approved a construction contract for the Gateway Parkway Extension from Hodgeville to Effingham Parkway. If the deed is approved, construction will commence immediately and is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

Commissioner Burdette made a motion to approve the deed. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE FIRST READING TO AMEND PART II, CHAPTER 30 - ENVIRONMENT, ARTICLE X - TREE PROTECTION & PRESERVATION OF THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES (4):

This item was discussed during the work session.

Commissioner Helmly made a motion to postpone to 02/17/2026 to allow for further clarification. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE FIRST READING TO AMEND PART II, CHAPTER 36, ARTICLE IV - OPEN BURNING OF THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES (5):

This item was discussed during the work session.

Commissioner Helmly made a motion to postpone to 02/17/2026 to allow for further clarification. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE AND PUBLISH A NEW JOB DESCRIPTION FOR SENIOR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT FOR THE COUNTY MANAGER'S OFFICE (6):

HR and Risk Management Director Mausolf requested a new job title and designation for Marie Todd to distinguish her role from a newly proposed second executive assistant position.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the job title, job description, and authorize publication and distribution. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A NEW STAFF MEMBER POSITION FOR STATE COURT (7):

Judge Melissa Calhoun explained a request for a new staff position to manage the rising civil cases volume. It was noted that Judge Calhoun has currently been utilizing personal private practice supplies to offset office costs.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the request for an additional position in State Court. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE EXECUTION AND RATIFICATION OF LOAN DOCUMENTS RELATED TO GEORGIA ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE AUTHORITY (GEFA) LOAN GFAPP001 (8):

County Manager Callanan explained The Georgia Environmental Finance Authority has approved a $159 million loan to construct a water intake, water treatment plant, and 20 miles of pipe and water tank infrastructure. The loan features a deferred interest period of five (5) years following project completion, with a zero interest rate. Effingham County is positioned to become a regional water supplier, benefiting from highly favorable loan terms.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the GEFA Loan GFAPP001 agreement and authorize the County Manager to execute all related documents. Vice Chair Kieffer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION# 026-004 REQUESTING THE INTRODUCTION OF LOCAL LEGISLATION AND THE CREATION OF A PUBLIC FACILITIES AUTHORITY (9):

County Manager Callanan explained this initiative establishes an entity that enables borrowing funds independently without relying on the industrial development authority.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the Resolution Requesting the Introduction of Local Legislation and the Creation of a Public Facilities Authority. Commissioner Helmly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A CONSULTING SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH PATRICIA P. HERNDON TO SERVE AS LIBRARY TRANSITION SPECIALIST FOR THE TRANSITION OF EFFINGHAM COUNTY LIBRARIES FROM LIVE OAK PUBLIC LIBRARIES TO STATESBORO REGIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES (10):

County Manager Callanan explained the specialist will manage the transition of Effingham County Libraries from the Live Oak Public Libraries system to the Statesboro Regional Public Libraries system, providing approximately 10 hours of service per week at an hourly rate of $100.

Vice Chair Kieffer made a motion to approve the Consulting Services Agreement with Patricia P. Herndon. Commissioner Helmly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE AWARD RECOMMENDATION AND CONTRACT FOR THE CREEKSIDE ELEMENTARY ENTRANCE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UNDER 25-ITB-097 (11):

Procurement and Contracts Manager Carver explained the school is slated to open this coming August, the project is a critical infrastructure priority designed to establish a dedicated entrance. This new access point is intended to optimize traffic flow and significantly enhance student safety during peak morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up hours. A joint review by the Engineering and Procurement departments identified JW Oliver Construction as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.

Commissioner Helmly made a motion to approve award of contract for the Creekside Elementary Entrance Construction Project under 25-ITB-097. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE AWARD RECOMMENDATION AND CONTRACT WITH INLINER SOLUTIONS, LLC FOR THE ROADWAY PIPELINING PROJECT, UNDER 25-ITB-101 (12):

Procurement and Contracts Manager Carver explained Inliner Solutions LLC was identified as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder for the roadway pipelining project under 25-ITB-101. The project aims to rehabilitate deteriorated stormwater infrastructure beneath county roadways using cured-in-place pipelining.

County Engineer Hulme explained that that pipelining is a more convenient way to repair storm infrastructure than taking out the road and replacing it.

Commissioner Floyd made a motion to approve award of the contract to Inliner Solutions, LLC and authorize the Chairman to sign. Vice Chair Kieffer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN EFFINGHAM COUNTY AND GREENLAND DEVELOPERS, LLC FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND PROVISION OF WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE TO SERVE THE HINELY TRACT SUBDIVISION LOCATED ON SANDHILL ROAD (13):

Capital Projects Manager Wilkins explained this agreement is a necessary step to provide utility infrastructure for the previously approved preliminary plat on Sand Hill Road.

Brett Bennett with Greenland Developers stated that he anticipates achieving permitting readiness ahead of the projected timeline, facilitating a more efficient

transition to the construction phase.

Commissioner Floyd made a motion to approve the Development Agreement and all attached exhibits. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. Commissioner Helmly opposed. The motion carried 4 to 1.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE CHANGE ORDER 3 FOR THE I-07B ROUNDABOUT PROJECT TO ADD SIDEWALKS AND PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE AROUND THE ROUNDABOUT (14):

County Engineer Hulme explained that Change Order No. 3 encompasses necessary utility adjustments identified during the water extension phase of the project, and that the contractor currently mobilized for the roundabout construction will now prepare sidewalks and medians.

Commissioner Helmly made a motion to approve Change Order 3 as presented. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE SUBMISSION OF THE 2026 LOCAL MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT GRANT (LMIG) APPLICATION TO THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (GDOT) (15):

Procurement and Contracts Manager Carver presented a formal proposal for the submission of a 2026 Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) application to the Georgia Department of Transportation. The application includes resurfacing 8.3 miles of public roads, with a required 30% local funding contribution.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the LMIG 2026 application forms for signature and County seal. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

****ADDITION TO THE AGENDA****

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A SITE PLAN AS PRESENTED BY ALEX FANT AS AGENT FOR JOHN BUCHHALTER FOR "GEORGIA TRANSFORMER EXPANSION" LOCATED ON HIGHWAY 21, ZONED I-1 MAP# 429A PARCEL#100A IN THE FOURTH DISTRICT (16):

Senior Planner Barlett explained the proposed industrial expansion includes a new employee parking lot, additions to existing warehouse and manufacturing facilities, a new service yard, and seven additional warehouse buildings reaching a maximum height of 60 feet. The application is complete and meets all necessary requirements for approval.

County Manager Callanan reported that the application for a full traffic signal warrant was not successful; however, approval was secured for a school-related flashing beacon. The site’s location at the junction of two state routes remains a primary consideration for future traffic mitigation strategies.

Vice Chair Kieffer made a motion to approve a Site Plan as presented by Alex Fant as agent for John Buchhalter for "Georgia Transformer Expansion". Commissioner

Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XIII – REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS & ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

County Clerk Johnson

- EOM monthly report

County Manager Callanan

- Effingham Day at the Capitol reminder
- EPD follow-up regarding DRT
- GDOT approved temporary traffic signal on Sand Hill Road

Commissioner Deloach

- Business license renewal process
- Community Park rendering sign

Commissioner Burdette

- The local Library Board have reached out seeking PR support

Commissioner Helmly

- Reminder: Blue Jay property owners multi-use trail and waterline meeting, Thursday night at 6pm
- Transportation topic for Effingham Day at the Capitol

Commissioner Kieffer

- GDOT regions meeting in Statesboro

Chairman Rahn

- Concerns with Terra Street on High Bluff Road
- Potential dinner dates with municipalities
- Expressed gratitude to all who participated in the MLK Day event

XIV – EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:11pm, Commissioner Deloach made a motion to go into an executive session for discussion of personnel, property, and pending litigation. Commissioner Helmly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

At 8:46pm, Commissioner Deloach made a motion to reconvene. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XV – EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the January 6, 2026 executive session minutes. Commissioner Helmly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XVI – PLANNING BOARD – 6:00 pm

WILLIAM UTTER – PUBLIC HEARING (01): Consideration to approve an application by William Utter for a conditional use to allow for an Agritourism Business in AR-1 located at 3332 Blue Jay Road Map # 373 Parcel # 29 in the First District.

Senior Planner Barlett explained the applicant seeks approval for a conditional use permit to operate an existing farm winery, Butterducks Winery, which provides tours, wine tastings, gift baskets, and hosts special events.

Commissioner Floyd made a motion to approve the application, and the application is complete with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall obtain, and keep in good standing, an Effingham County Occupational Tax Certificate (business license)

Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

WILLIAM UTTER – SECOND READING (02): Consideration to approve the Second Reading an application by William Utter for a conditional use to allow for an Agritourism Business in AR-1 located at 3332 Blue Jay Road. Map # 373 Parcel # 29 in the First District**.**

Commissioner Floyd made a motion to approve the 2nd Reading. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

JUDY JONES – PUBLIC HEARING (03): Consideration to approve an application by Judy Jones for a Conditional Use located at 1317 Noel C Conaway road to allow for a cemetery in AR-1. Map #375e Parcel #11 in the second district (*postponed, 12/16/2025*).

Senior Planner Barlett explained the applicant has submitted a request for a conditional use permit to establish a cemetery on 87 acres at Noel C Conaway Road. Per the ordinance, burials or placements of the deceased must maintain a minimum distance of 10 feet from any highway right -of-way and 10 feet from any property line.

The Board engaged in a discussion regarding concerns with acreage.

Commissioner Burdette made a motion to deny. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

JUDY JONES – SECOND READING (04): Consideration to approve the Second Reading of an application by Judy Jones for a Conditional Use located at 1317 Noel C Conaway Road to allow for a cemetery in AR-1 Map # 375E Parcel # 11 in the Second District (*Postponed, 12/16/2025*)

This item was denied due to previous action.

XVII – ADJOURNMENT

At 8:48pm, there being no further business, Commissioner Deloach made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Damon M Rahn

Damon Rahn, Chairman

Stephanie Johnson

Stephanie D. Johnson, County Clerk

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FEBRUARY 17, 2026