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 06, 2026

The Board of Commissioners of Effingham County, Georgia, Mr. Damon Rahn, Mr. Forrest Floyd, Mr. Roger Burdette, Mr. Jamie Deloach, Mrs. Elizabeth Helmly, and Mr. Phil Kieffer met in regular session at 5:00 pm on Tuesday, January 6, 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, Mr. Clint Hodges – Fire Chief & EMA Director, Ms. Marie Todd – Executive Assistant, Ms. Maraya Durham – I.T. Support Specialist, Ms. Lauren Shuman – Project Coordinator, Ms. Pamela Melser – Director of Development Services, Ms. Jennifer Rose – Planner I, Ms. Kimberly Barlett – Senior Planner, Mr. Tre Wilkins – Project Manager, Mr. Johnathan Hulme – County Engineer, and Mr. Josh Moody – Building Official.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Lauren Davenport, Josh Yeager, Heather Wilburn, Kristine Sega, Letitia Shuman, Sharon & Dennis Hales, John & Cindy Knight, Cathy Sheffield, Kathy & Joey Smith, Terri Miller, Catherine Kirkland, Eric Henry, and Kim Morgan

I- CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Rahn called the meeting to order at 5:02pm

II- ROLL CALL

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

III – INVOCATION

Sheriff Chaplain & Clyo Methodist Church Pastor Nick Pumfrey offered the invocation.

IV– PLEDGE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

The pledge was led by Commissioner Helmly.

V – ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRPERSON

Commissioner Floyd made a motion to approve Commissioner Kieffer as Vice Chair. Commissioner Helmly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

VI – AGENDA APPROVAL

County Clerk Johnson announced the postponement of New Business Item #3 to January 20, 2026 meeting, as requested by Staff.

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

VII – MINUTES

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE DECEMBER 16, 2025 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES (1):

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Vice Chair Kieffer seconded the motion. Commissioner Floyd abstained due to absence. Commissioners Burdette, Deloach, Helmly and Kieffer voted to approve. The motion carried.

VIII– 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.

IX – CORRESPONDENCE

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

X – UNFINISHED BUSINESS

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE AN APPLICATION BY ANTHONY PARKER AS AGENT FOR MS2 FARMS LLC FOR A SITE PLAN FOR "PARKWAY LOGISTICS PHASE 1" LOCATED OF EFFINGHAM PARKWAY MAP # 415 PARCEL # 30 IN THE SECOND DISTRICT *(Postponed, 12/16/2025)* **(1):**

Senior Planner Barlett explained the project will include 300-foot natural buffers on the north, east, south, and west sides. A nationwide permit application has been submitted for proposed wetland impacts. Additionally, a full access driveway and multi-use trail are planned, with access from Effingham Parkway upon its completion.

The Board engaged in a discussion regarding the primary tension lies between the expansion of industrial warehousing and the environmental protection of wetlands, combined with the permanent closure of existing roads in favor of a cul-de-sac.

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

1. Development Services shall review and sign the plat. Then, the plat shall be recorded.

Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. Commissioner Helmly opposed. Commissioners Floyd, Burdette, Deloach and Kieffer approved the motion. The motion carried 4 to 1.

XI – NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A PROPOSAL FROM THOMAS & HUTTON FOR CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING INSPECTION SUPPORT (1):

Engineer Project Coordinator Shuman explained the request is for the approval of additional Construction Engineering Inspection (CEI) services to be provided by Thomas and Hutton under the county's existing Master Services Agreement. These services are necessary to support several roadway projects that are currently underway or scheduled to commence soon.

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

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A FINAL PLAT, WARRANTY DEED, AND INFRASTRUCTURE AGREEMENT FOR "BRUNSON STATION PHASE 1A" LOCATED ON NOEL C CONAWAY ROAD AS SUBMITTED BY STANLEY MARTIN HOMES - ROGER HUNT MAP # 418 PARCEL # 2E IN THE SECOND DISTRICT (2):

Commissioner Helmly recused herself from voting on this item.

Director of Development Services Melser explained the request includes the dedication of infrastructure to Effingham County, following the completion of roads and drainage systems by Stanley Martin Homes and EMC Engineering Contractors. Effingham County will be responsible for providing water and sewer services for the project.

Commissioner Burdette made a motion to approve the final plat and infrastructure agreement for Brunson Station Phase 1, and accept the roads, pump station, water, sewer, reuse utilities, and easements identified in the warranty deed. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A WARRANTY DEED FOR THE DEDICATION OF ROADS, WATER, SEWER, AND DRAINAGE IN NEW HAVEN PHASE 2 LOCATED ON HODGEVILLE ROAD TO EFFINGHAM COUNTY MAP# 416 PARCEL# 20F IN THE SECOND DISTRICT (3):

This item was postponed to 01/20/2026 by staff at agenda approval.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE AN APPLICATION BY NEIL MCKENZIE AS AGENT FOR CLAYTON PROPERTIES GROUP, INC. FOR A PRELIMINARY PLAT FOR "LONADINE PHASE 5"LOCATED ON GA HWY 119 S MAP # 344 PARCEL# 26A IN THE THIRD DISTRICT (4):

Commissioner Helmly returned.

Senior Planner Barlett explained at the March 16, 2021 Board of Commissioners meeting the Board of Commissioners approved the rezoning from AR-1 to R-6 and the master plan for 283 lots was approved at the June 15, 2021 meeting, subject to the condition that site development plans must comply with Effingham County Code of Ordinances Section 3.4 buffers.

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

1. Site development plans must adhere to the Effingham County Code of Ordinances, Section 3.4 – Buffers.

Vice Chair Kieffer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE AN APPLICATION BY NEIL MCKENZIE AS AGENT FOR CLAYTON PROPERTIES GROUP, INC. FOR A PRELIMINARY PLAT FOR "LONADINE PHASE 6 & 7"LOCATED ON GA HWY 119 S MAP# 344 PARCEL# 26A IN THE THIRD DISTRICT (5):

Senior Planner Barlett explained specifications for these phases include a minimum lot size of 6,600 square feet, with setbacks established at 15 feet for the front, 25 feet for the rear, and 7.5 feet for the sides. Water and sewer services will be provided by the City of Springfield. The plan incorporates a 20-foot drainage easement and ensures dedicated access for official and emergency vehicles. The homeowner's association is tasked with the private maintenance of all common areas, detention ponds, and sidewalks. Staff recommend approval, contingent upon the conditions listed below.

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

1. Site development plans must adhere to the Effingham County Code of Ordinances, Section 3.4 – Buffers.

Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE AN APPLICATION BY MAUPIN ENGINEERING AS AGENT FOR SAV PARKWAY PROPERTIES, LLC FOR A SITE PLAN FOR "KICKLIGHTER COMMERCIAL" LOCATED ON OLD AUGUSTA ROAD S MAP # 466C PARCEL # 1C04 IN THE FIFTH DISTRICT (6):

Senior Planner Barlett explained that the Board of Commissioners previously approved the rezoning of this property from B-3 to I-1 on December 12, 2017. The current proposal features a five-unit building with a maximum height of approximately 30 feet. The plan includes a 15-foot platted area fronting Old Augusta Road South and a parking configuration of 32 standard spaces and two ADA-compliant spaces, intended to accommodate 10 employees. The site will be served by County water and sewer utilities. Regarding environmental and traffic considerations, the applicant provided traffic analysis, a wetlands delineation, and a letter of confirmation from the Army Corps of Engineers, noting that the property is located within a Zone A flood hazard area.

Vice Chair Kieffer made a motion to approve the application, and the application is complete with the following conditions:

1. An encroachment permit must be reviewed & approved by the County Engineer.

Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A PROPOSAL WITH ACCUSOURCEHR FOR COMPREHENSIVE PRE-EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND CHECKS AND TO IMPLEMENT ITS REMOTE, PROCTORED 10-PANEL ORAL-FLUID DRUG TESTING FOR PRE-EMPLOYMENT, POST-INCIDENT AND RANDOM DRUG SCREENING (7):

Human Resources and Risk Management Director Mausolf addressed the board to propose a strategic transition in the county's third-party vendors for pre-employment background checks and drug screenings. This recommendation stems from ongoing challenges with the binding vendor, which is currently outside the network of the primary provider. This disconnect has created significant friction in the onboarding process, causing undue logistical burdens for prospective employees and delaying start dates.

The board engaged in a discussion regarding the integrity of the screening process, detection windows and policy and oversight.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to postpone to 01/20/2026 to obtain additional details. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION# 026-001 TO AMEND THE 2026 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET (8):

Finance Director Barnes explained this amendment allocates $5,000 to each first responder agency and includes a minor adjustment to the tax assessor's uniform budget.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the resolution to amend the budget for FY 2026. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XII – REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS & ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

County Clerk Johnson

- Reminder of the Catalyst briefing at the Herald Building next Thursday

County Manager Callanan

- Baker Park Grand Opening - Saturday at 1pm
- Effingham Day at the Capitol discussions

Commissioner Floyd

- Ryan Thompson's planning board term has expired

Commissioner Deloach

- Transportation Engineering position advertisement

Commissioner Burdette

- Gateway Parkway update

Chairman Rahn

- Resurfacing project update for Ninth Street and Stillwell Clyo
- EPD meeting while in Atlanta for Effingham Day

Commissioner Kieffer

- EMS Station update
- Empire Gym event – January 10th at 8am

Commissioner Helmly

- Commencement of Administrative Assistant candidate screening
- Transportation topic for Effingham Day at the Capitol

XIII – EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:51pm, Vice Chair Kieffer made a motion to go into an executive session for discussion of personnel, property, and pending litigation. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

At 8:20pm, Commissioner Deloach made a motion to reconvene. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XIV – EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the December 16, 2025 executive session minutes. Commissioner Helmly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XV – PLANNING BOARD – 6:00 pm

CATHERINE KIRKLAND – PUBLIC HEARING (01): Consideration to approve an application by Catherine Kirkland for a conditional use to allow for an Agritourism Business in AR-1. Located at 5560 Old Dixie Highway South. Map # 263 Parcel # 32A in the Third District.

Senior Planner Barlett explained that the applicant has requested conditional use for agritourism to operate a farm stand and host pick-your-own events for flowers grown on the property.

Speaking for: Catherine Kirkland stated that she anticipates having a farm stand at the end of the driveway from March to April.

Commissioner Deloach 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.

CATHERINE KIRKLAND – SECOND READING (02): Consideration to approve the Second Reading an application by Catherine Kirkland for a conditional use to allow for an Agritourism Business in AR-1. Located at 5560 Old Dixie Highway South. Map # 263 Parcel # 32A in the Third District**.**

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the 2nd Reading. Commissioner

Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

NEIL MCKENZIE as agent for **BACA PROPERTIES, LLC – PUBLIC HEARING (03):** Planning Board recommends approving an application by Neil McKenzie as agent for BACA Properties, LLC, to rezone +/- 21.73 acres from AR-1 to B-3 and HI (Heavy Industrial) to allow for permitted uses in B-3 and HI. Located at 2388 US Highway 80. Map # 354 Parcel # 28 & 29 in the First District.

Planner I Rose explained the applicant requests the rezoning of 21.73 acres to B-3 (Major Commercial District) and HI (Heavy Industrial) to facilitate the development of a ready-mixed concrete batch plant, heavy industrial zoning, and retail/office space along Highway 80. The development will be served by Effingham County water and sewer. The parcel is situated within a "Transitional Area" on the Future Land Use Map, which supports mixed-use and adaptive opportunities.

Speaking for: Neil McKenzie highlighted that the proposed conditions were developed in direct response to neighbor feedback received during a November meeting. A primary mitigation feature is a 20-foot internal buffer separating the commercial and industrial zones. This buffer is proposed as a structural hybrid consisting of a concrete wall with an earth-backfilled berm to maximize noise reduction and visual screening.

Speaking in objection: Kathy Sheffield, Dennis Hales, and Joey Smith expressed concerns with traffic and road safety, environmental waste, buffering and visual impact, crystalline silica, operational hours and air quality.

The Board engaged in discussion regarding dust control, buffer & berm, hours of operation, and commercial integration.

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

1. A Site Plan must be approved by the Board of Commissioners
2. Development Services must review and sign the plat. Then, the plat must be recorded so the zoning can take effect.
3. The applicant must obtain and keep in good standing an Effingham County Occupational Tax Certificate (Business License).
4. Concrete Plant Batching hours: 5:00 am – 5:00 pm (Monday – Friday); 6:00 am – 12:00 pm (Saturday, as needed).
5. Commercial Development to meet Architectural Design Standards presented in Appendix F – Corridor Overlay District, Section XIII.
6. Site Plan will include an internal berm separating the B-3 zoning from the H-I (Heavy Industrial) zoning shall be 20’ in height (minimum) and vegetated in accordance with Appendix C, Article III, Section 3.4.
7. Plant vibrator will be fitted with noise suppression device, in place and tested prior to plant operations.
8. An approved dust control plan must be in place prior to concrete plant operation. The dust control plan will include an approved dust control system installed at the plant and inspected by EPD prior to plant operations. a. https://www.vincehagan.com/concrete-batching-equipment/cement-dust-control-collectors/free-standing/ b. See attached info/spec for the dust

collection system
9. The concrete plant traffic areas and travel lanes will be paved.
10. Development entrances will be subject to traffic study and GDOT permitting.
11. No crushing of concrete on the site.
12. Trees shall be planted on the west side of the property.
13. The commercial building will be constructed at the same time as the concrete plant.
14. Concrete plant batching hours shall be limited to 5:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 6:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Saturdays. No after-hours operations.

Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. Commissioner Helmly opposed. Commissioners Floyd, Burdette, Deloach, Kieffer approved of the motion. The motion carried 4 to 1.

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 from AR-1 to B-3 and HI (Heavy Industrial) to allow for permitted uses in B-3 and HI. Located at 2388 US Highway 80. Map # 354 Parcel # 28 & 29 in the First District.

This item was postponed to January 20, 2026 commission meeting due to added stipulations.

CLARENCE WILSON – PUBLIC HEARING (05): Planning Board recommends approving an application by Clarence Wilson to rezone +/- 5.81 acres from AR-1 to AR-3 to allow for permitted uses in AR-3. Located at 459 Zettler Loop. Map # 417B Parcel #27 & 28 in the Second District.

Planner I Rose explained that the applicant seeks to rezone 5.81 acres to AR-3 to increase livable area and road frontage for each lot.

Speaking for: Terri Miller is requesting a simple recombination of lot lines for the property. This is a non-industrial, administrative matter involving family residential land.

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

1. Development Services must review and sign the plat. Then the plat must be recorded for the zoning to take effect.
2. Any new encroachments onto Zettler Loop must obtain an encroachment permit from Effingham County and meet the requirements of the Access Management Policy.

Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CLARENCE WILSON – SECOND READING (06): Consideration to approve the Second Reading of an application by Clarence Wilson to rezone +/- 5.81 acres from AR-1 to AR-3 to allow for permitted uses in AR-3. Located at 459 Zettler Loop. Map # 417B Parcel #27 & 28 in the Second District.

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

ERIC HENRY – PUBLIC HEARING (07): Consideration to approve an application by Eric Henry for a variance from Section 3.21.1, to allow for the occupation of an RV/Camper during the construction of a home in AR-2, located at 2819 Sand Hill Road Map # 301C Parcel # 2 in the First District.

Senior Planner Barlett explained the applicant has requested permission to reside in a camper or RV during the construction of their home. The permit has been approved with the following conditions listed below.

Speaking for: Eric Henry is requesting to live in their RV on their property while their single-family home is being built.

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

1. The RV/camper may be occupied for up to twelve (12) months during the home construction. Should an extension be needed, the applicant shall come before the Board of Commissioners for approval.
2. Upon issuance of the certificate of occupancy for the house construction, the camper shall be vacated and disconnected from the well and septic.

Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

ERIC HENRY – SECOND READING (08): Consideration to approve the Second Reading for an application by Eric Henry for a variance from Section 3.21.1, to allow for the occupation of an RV/Camper during the construction of a home in AR-2, located at 2819 Sand Hill Road Map # 301C Parcel # 2 in the First District.

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

EFFINGHAM COUNTY as agent for **RONNIE MORGAN – PUBLIC HEARING (09):** Consideration to approve an application by Effingham County as agent for Ronnie Morgan for a variance from Section 5.1.1, to allow for modification of the building setbacks on non-conforming lots in AR-1, located at 205 Melrose Place. Map # 465H Parcel # 47B in the Second District.

Senior Planner Barlett explained the county has initiated a variance request regarding building setbacks for undeveloped lots in the Westwood Heights subdivision. The request would allow for front setbacks of 25 feet and side setbacks of five feet.

County Manager Callanan explained why the current zoning laws are at odds with the reality of an established neighborhood and outlined a multi-step plan to fix it.

Speaking for: Kim Morgan was present to answer any questions.

Commissioner Burdette made a motion to approve the application, and the application is completed. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY as agent for **RONNIE MORGAN – SECOND READING (10):** Consideration to approve the second reading of an application by Effingham County as agent for Ronnie Morgan for a variance from Section 5.1.1, to allow for modification of the building setbacks on non-conforming lots in AR-1, located at 205 Melrose Place Map # 465H Parcel # 47B in the Second District.

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

XIV – ADJOURNMENT

At 8:21pm, there being no further business, Commissioner Deloach made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Damon Rahn, Chairman

Stephanie D. Johnson, County Clerk

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JANUARY 20, 2026