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
NOVEMBER 03, 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, November 3, 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, Mr. Michael King – Assistant County Manager, Ms. Maraya Durham – IT Specialist, Mr. Mark Barnes – Finance Director, Ms. Pamela Melser – Director of Development Services, Ms. Akela Wright – Planning Manager, Ms. Kimberly Barlett – Senior Planner, Ms. Lauren Shuman – Engineer Project Coordinator, Mr. Tre Wilkins – Project Manager, Ms. Brook Sutherland – Engineering Project Coordinator, Mr. Ted Goudeau – Facilities Maintenance Director, and Mr. Mark Lastinger – Public Information Coordinator.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Karen McDonald, Kenny Lak, Randy Sapp, Pam Anderegg, Jerri Howell, Elizabeth Fisher, Patsy Zeigler, Michelle Johns, Matt Saxon, Andrew Nestor, John Smith, Sharee McKenzie, James Hall, Trivinia Barber, Chris Barber, Jalea Davis, Alexis Lane, Manjusha Sheobaran, David Dillie, Raymond Carver, Evan Karp.

I- CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Rahn called the meeting to order at 5:01pm

II- ROLL CALL

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

III – INVOCATION

Commissioner Helmly offered the invocation.

IV– PLEDGE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

The pledge was led by Commissioner Helmly.

V – AGENDA APPROVAL

There were no changes to announce.

Commissioner Floyd made a motion to approve the agenda as read. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

VI – MINUTES

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 20, 2026 WORK SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING MINUTES (1):

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Vice Chair Kieffer 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 – CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Floyd made a motion to approve the following Consent Agenda items: **(2026-489)** Consideration to approve the appointment of Melinda Hawkins to the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) Board as representative for the fourth district. Commissioner Helmly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

X – SPECIAL RECOGNITION – Acknowledgement of Effingham Retired Educators

County Clerk Johnson noted that the Board had previously approved a proclamation honoring retired educators, highlighting that the Governor also designated November 1 as Retired Educators Day in Georgia. Members of the Effingham Retired Educators Association who missed the earlier meeting were brought forward for recognition. Pam Anderegg, past president of the organization, expressed gratitude to the Board and outlined the group's focus on fellowship, community service, and advocacy for retired educators' benefits.

XI – NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL CONTRACT RENEWAL AGREEMENT WITH GENESYS HEALTH ALLIANCE, LLC FOR INMATE HEALTH CARE SERVICES AT THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY PRISON AND JAIL (1):

Procurement and Contracts Manager Carver explained a one-year renewal of the agreement with Genesys Health Alliance for medical services at the Effingham County Prison and Jail through June 30, 2027. The renewal includes a 4 percent increase, which falls within the original contract's renewal provisions.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the proposed one-year renewal and 4% price increase. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION# 026-035 TO AMEND THE FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET (2):

Finance Director Barnes explained the amendment covers three items: budgeting the previously accepted Sheriff's Office HEAT grant award; utilizing library system funds to update the Springfield library building, following earlier Rincon building upgrades from the same source; and using animal protection donation funds to purchase emergency kennels.

Vice Chair Kieffer made a motion to approve the resolution to amend the budget for FY27. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO THE AGREEMENT WITH GOODWYN MILLS CAWOOD, LLC FOR THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE HIGHWAY 119 RECREATIONAL COMPLEX MASTER PLAN TO INCLUDE A SITEWIDE GPRS SURVEY AND WATER LEAK DETECTION (3):

Capital Projects Project Manager Wilkins explained Amendment No. 1 with Goodwyn Mills Cawood, LLC. adds a site-wide GPRS survey and water leak detection to the Highway 119 Recreational Complex Master Plan scope.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve of Amendment No. 1 with Goodwyn Mills Cawood, LLC. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE SUBMISSION OF THE GOSP (GEORGIA OUTDOOR STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM) GRANT APPLICATION FOR IMPROVEMENTS AT ABERCORN LANDING (4):

Capital Projects Project Manager Wilkins explained the renewed Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program (GOSP) grant application for Phase 1 improvements at Abercorn Landing, budgeted under $2,000,000 with permitting nearly complete. Staff confirmed the grant offers up to $1,000,000 in funding (75%) requiring a 25% local match.

Commissioner Burdette made a motion to approve the submission of the GOSP (Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program) grant application for Abercorn Landing.

Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE AMENDMENT NO. 3 TO THE RIGHT-OF-WAY SERVICES CONTRACT WITH JMT FOR ADDITIONAL RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION SERVICES ASSOCIATED WITH THE LOW GROUND ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (5):

Engineering Project Coordinator Sutherland explained Amendment No. 3 to the right-of-way services contract with JMT for the Low Ground Road Improvement Project, in the amount of $101,375. The additional services are 25 appraisals, 20 updated acquisition offers, 3 septic cost-to-cure evaluations, 5 cost estimate updates and 1 additional parcel negotiation.

Commissioner Helmly made a motion to approve Amendment No. 3 to the Right-of-Way Services Contract with JMT. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A PROPOSAL WITH GOODWYN MILLS CAWOOD, LLC. FOR CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS TESTING SERVICES FOR THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY PROJECT (6):

Capital Projects Project Manager Wilkins presented a proposal from Goodwyn Mills Cawood, LLC for construction materials testing services for the Effingham County Regional Water Supply Project. Approval had been held back until final design was known. Plans are now 100 percent complete and the contractor has mobilized, with pipe visible along Blue Jay Road.

Commissioner Floyd made a motion to approve the proposal for Construction Materials Testing Services. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XII – REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS & ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

County Manager Callanan

Parks & Recreation

- Clyo Park: Grand opening held successfully.
- Pineora Park: Opening expected by Q2 2027.
- Atlas Park (Phase 1): Bidding planned for January 2027.
- Clarence Morgan Park (Phase 2): Pending GMP to select CMAR or competitive bid.

Roads & Transportation

- Goshen / Hodgeville Roundabout: Delayed for utility cable relocation; resolution expected next week.
- Hodgeville / Blue Jay Roundabout: On track for late 2026/early 2027 completion.
- Blue Jay / Sand Hill Roundabout: Bidding anticipated by late 2026.
- Abercorn Landing Project: Permitting for the ADA-accessible paddle boat dock, fishing pier, restrooms, and expanded parking is nearing completion, after which it will proceed to bid with an estimated eight-month construction timeline.

Effingham Parkway

- Goshen to Blue Jay: Takeover inspection set for Nov 16, 2026; GDOT opening expected same afternoon.
- Southern Segment: GDOT change order pending; completion targeted for Summer 2027.

Vice Chair Kieffer

- Thanked staff for the Clyo event

Commissioner Helmly

- Noted that a data center moratorium and related conditional-use discussions are expected on November 17.

Commissioner Deloach

- Thanked staff for the Clyo park.

Commissioner Burdette

- Reminded attendees of the Back the Badge rally on Sunday at 7:00 p.m. at Freedom Park.

XIII – EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 5:24 p.m., Commissioner Deloach made a motion to go into an executive session for discussion of personnel, property, and pending litigation. Vice Chair Kieffer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

At 6:00p.m., Commissioner Deloach made a motion to reconvene. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XIV – EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the October 20, 2026 executive session meeting minutes. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XV – PLANNING BOARD UNFINISHED BUSINESS – 6:00 pm

BOLTIN TEETER as agent for **MARK COOPER – SECOND READING (1):** Consideration to approve the Second Reading of an application submitted by Boltin Teeter as agent for Mark Cooper to rezone +/- 99 acres located at 1180 Old River Road from AR-1 to LI to allow for permitted uses in LI. Map # 304 Parcel # 10 in the First District

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

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE SECOND READING OF THE ADOPTION OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF EFFINGHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA, AND THE ADOPTION OF THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF EFFINGHAM COUNTY (*Postponed, 10/20/2026 by the BOC at agenda approval*) (2):

County Manager Callanan explained that the item is a readoption of the entire Zoning Ordinance and Official Zoning Map. Earlier text amendments had been taken up at two separate meetings, so the board asked that the full readoption be placed on this agenda.

Speaking in objection: John Smith, Manjusha Sheobaran, Jeff Beauvais, Raymond Carver, Michelle Johns, Jacob Carroll, Christina Williams expressed concerns with process transparency, improper public notice, and the potential placement of data centers.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to adopt the Zoning Ordinance in its entirety and the Official Zoning Map as supplied. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XVI – PLANNING BOARD – 6:00 pm

WILLIAM BELL – PUBLIC HEARING (1): Planning Board recommends approving an application submitted by William Bell to rezone +/- 0.881 acres located on US Hwy 80 from AR-1 to B-3 to allow for permitted uses in B-3 Map # 355A Parcel # 8A in the First District

Senior Planner Barlett explained the purpose is outdoor display and sale of portable storage buildings and sheds. The request is associated with a code enforcement case, and adjoining properties were rezoned B-3 in 2018. The request is inconsistent with the agricultural residential future land use designation but lies within the commercial corridor overlay.

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

WILLIAM BELL – SECOND READING (2): Consideration to approve the Second Reading of an application submitted by William Bell to rezone +/- 0.881 acres located on US Hwy 80 from AR-1 to B-3 to allow for permitted uses in B-3. Map # 355A Parcel # 8A in the First District

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

CHRISTOPHER LEWIS – PUBLIC HEARING (3): Consideration to approve an application by Christopher Lewis for a variance from Section 5.8.15, located at 130 Burke Drive, to allow for a decrease in the minimum acreage required for an RV parkin R-4 Map # 366 Parcel # 51 in the Third District

Planner I Xu explained the variance would reduce the minimum acreage for an RV park in R-4 from 10 acres to 8.86 acres. The site is currently a mobile home park, which the applicant proposes to convert to an RV park. Staff noted possible effects on traffic, internal circulation, emergency access and utilities, and that approval would not waive other development requirements.

Speaking for: Christopher Lewis stated that the conversion has been planned for about

four years and noted that some existing homes on-site are in poor condition.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the application. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CHRISTOPHER LEWIS – SECOND READING (4): Consideration to approve an application by Christopher Lewis for a variance from Section 5.8.15, located at 130 Burke Drive, to allow for a decrease in the minimum acreage required for an RV parkin R-4 Map # 366 Parcel # 51 in the Third District

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

KERN & CO. LLC- CHAD ZITTROUER as agent for **JOSEPH MANN – PUBLIC HEARING (5):** Planning Board recommends approving an application submitted by Kern & Co. LLC- Chad Zittrouer as agent for Joseph Mann to rezone +/- 98.92 acres located on Springfield Tusculum Road from AR-1 to AR-3 to allow for permitted uses in AR-3 Map # 318 Parcel # 18, 20, & 20A in the Third District

Senior Planner Barlett stated that the plan envisions 21 stick-built single-family lots, each of at least 2.5 acres, with paved internal roads and individual wells and septic systems. The property contains wetlands but no flood hazard areas. The Planning Board recommended approval with two stipulations: only stick-built homes, and a 50-foot buffer along the rear of the northwestern lots.

Speaking for: Chad Zittrouer agreed to the stipulations.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. Only stick-built homes may be placed on the property.
2. A 50 ft buffer must be implemented along the backside of the northwest lots.

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

KERN & CO. LLC- CHAD ZITTROUER as agent for **JOSEPH MANN– SECOND READING (6):** Consideration to approve the Second Reading of an application submitted by Kern & Co.- Chad Zittrouer as agent for Joseph Mann to rezone +/- 98.92 acres located on Springfield Tusculum Road from AR-1 to AR-3 to allow for permitted uses in AR-3. Map # 318 Parcel # 18, 20, & 20A in the Third District

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

JOSHUA MAYNARD – PUBLIC HEARING (7): Planning Board recommends approving an application submitted by Joshua Maynard to rezone +/- 2.43 acres located on Clark Road from AR-1 to AR-2 to allow for permitted uses in AR-2 Map # 235A Parcel # 6C in the Third District

Senior Planner Barlett explained the purpose is to create two lots of about 1.217 acres each, served by well and septic, with a soil study provided and no wetlands or flood

hazard areas.

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

JOSHUA MAYNARD – SECOND READING (8): Consideration to approve the Second Reading of an application submitted by Joshua Maynard to rezone +/- 2.43 acres located on Clark Road from AR-1 to AR-2 to allow for permitted uses in AR-2. Map # 235A Parcel # 6C in the Third District

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

DEATIA MCFARLIN – PUBLIC HEARING (9): Planning Board recommends approving an application submitted by Deatia McFarlin to rezone +/- 5.684 acres located at 352 Lower Ferry Road from AR-1 to AR-2 to allow for permitted uses in AR-2 Map # 424 Parcel # 15 in the Third District

Senior Planner Barlett explained the property would be divided into four parcels, creating two additional home sites, with about 5.10 acres remaining AR-1. Wetlands exist on portions of the property, and a soil study was provided.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the application. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

DEATIA MCFARLIN – SECOND READING (10): Consideration to approve the Second Reading of an application submitted by Deatia McFarlin to rezone +/- 5.684 acres located at 352 Lower Ferry Road from AR-1 to AR 2 to allow for permitted uses in AR-2. Map # 424 Parcel # 15 in the Third District

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

JOYCE SOWERS – PUBLIC HEARING (11): Planning Board recommends approving an application submitted by Joyce Sowers to rezone +/- 0.60 acres out of 1.60 acres located at 2393 Rincon-Stillwell Road from AR 2 to AR-1 to allow for permitted uses in AR-1 Map # 461 Parcel # 66 in the Fifth District

Vice Chair Kieffer made a motion to approve the application. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

JOYCE SOWERS – SECOND READING (12): Consideration to approve the Second Reading of an application submitted by Joyce Sowers to rezone +/- 0.60 acres out of 1.60 acres located at 2393 Rincon-Stillwell Road from AR-2 to AR-1 to allow for permitted uses in AR-1. Map # 461 Parcel # 66 in the Fifth District

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

BOLTIN TEETER as agent for **MARK COOPER – PUBLIC HEARING (13):** Consideration to approve an application by Boltin Teeter as agent for Mark Cooper for a variance from Section 3.4, located at 1180 Old River Road, to allow for a decrease in the required minimum buffers in LI Map # 304 Parcel # 10 in the First District

Senior Planner Barlett explained the variance would reduce the required 150-foot internal buffer between the proposed LI area and the remaining AR-1 acreage to zero feet. The remaining acreage, which includes substantial wetlands, is proposed for donation to Effingham County.

Speaking for: Robert McCorkle addressed concerns with buffer variance request along the river and impacts on adjacent properties.

Speaking in objection: Paul Clark expressed neighborhood traffic impacts, operational nuisance, and inadequate public notice

The Board discussed securing public river access while maintaining an adequate buffer between land uses.

Commissioner Floyd made a motion to approve the application. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

BOLTIN TEETER as agent for **MARK COOPER – SECOND READING (14):** Consideration to approve the Second Reading for an application by Boltin Teeter as agent for Mark Cooper for a variance from Section 3.4, located at 1180 Old River Road to allow for a decrease in the required minimum buffers in LI Map # 304 Parcel # 10 in the First District

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

BOLTIN TEETER as agent for **MARK COOPER – SITE PLAN (15):** Consideration to approve an application by Boltin Teeter as agent for Mark Cooper for a Site Plan for "Old River Road Logistics" located at 1180 Old River Road Map # 304 Parcel # 10 in the First District

Senior Planner Barlett stated that the proposed development includes a 1,000,000-square-foot warehouse with a maximum height of 48 feet, 280 trailer spaces, 248 employee parking spaces, and two driveways on Old River Road. The plan features vegetated buffers and berms. The Coastal Regional Commission’s regional impact review recommended a focus on stormwater management, drainage, flood risk, and water conservation. Staff concluded that the plan generally complies with LI zoning and site development requirements.

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

OCTANS GA LLC – SITE PLAN (16): Consideration to approve an application by Octans GA LLC for a Site Plan for "Project Camellia," a proposed data center

development located along Effingham Parkway and Gateway Parkway, zoned I-1, Map # 433 Parcel # 1E and Map # 433 Parcel # 1, in the 2nd District.

Chairman Rahn turned the meeting over to Vice Chair Kieffer and removed himself from the dais for this item.

Planning Manager Wright presented Octans GA LLC's site plan for "Project Camellia," a data center campus spanning about 1,347 acres across two I-1 parcels along Effingham Parkway and Gateway Parkway. Wright noted that data centers are permitted by right under I-1 zoning and that the Board's action addresses only the site plan, not the property's zoning or land use. The plan includes six data center buildings about 42 feet tall (well under the 55-foot maximum), a 100,000-square-foot warehouse, 75,000-square-foot operations building, electrical substations, equipment yards, and chiller facilities. The project provides 1,608 parking spaces, exceeding ordinance requirements based on the largest shift, and has access from both parkways, plus a secondary emergency access point pending engineering and fire department review. Required site buffers are 300 feet adjacent to AR-1, 150 feet adjacent to B-3, and 25 feet adjacent to I-1.

Speaking for: Rich Moduleski, development consultant with Dermody representing the applicant, stated key details regarding the project's reduced scope and overall impact. He noted that while the site was originally zoned I-1 under a 2016 Industrial Development Authority (IDA) partnership, with a prior master plan contemplating approximately 15,000,000 square feet across roughly 30 buildings, the current proposal significantly scales back development to about 3 to 4 million square feet across six buildings. This modification reduces estimated domestic water demand to 30,000 gallons per day, down from the 100,000 gallons per day anticipated under the previous industrial concept, while also decreasing traffic by approximately 1,500 trips during each peak period. Additionally, Mr. Moduleski highlighted that a natural wooded buffer of about 3,000 feet will remain preserved on the north side and clarified that on-site generators will serve strictly life safety and security systems, with battery systems providing back-up power for the servers.

The Board engaged in conversation with Stuart Sligh and Kevin Ford regarding technical evaluation, environmental impact, and conditional requirements for the "Project Camellia" site plan.

Commissioner Burdette made a motion to postpone to 11/17/2026 due to lack of a firm sight and sound berm. Commissioner Helmly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XVII – ADJOURNMENT

At 7:55pm, 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
NOVEMBER 17, 2026