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
OCTOBER 21, 2025

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, October 21, 2025 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 County Clerk, Mr. Clint Hodges – Fire Chief & EMA Director, Ms. Maraya Durham – I.T. Support Specialist, Ms. Danielle Carver – Procurement and Capital Projects Manager, Ms. Lauren Shuman – Purchasing Technician, Ms. Kimberly Barlett – Senior Planner, Ms. Jennifer Rose – Planner I, Ms. Pamela Melser – Development Services Director, Mr. Tre Wilkins – Project Manager Wilkins, Mr. Mark Lastinger – Public Information Coordinator, Mr. Mark Barns – Finance Director, and Mr. Seth Zeigler – Director of Parks and Landscape

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Alec Metzger, Josh Yeager, Dana Sapp, Alex Long, Mike Vaquer, and Charles Way.

I- CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Rahn called the meeting to order at 5:08pm

II- ROLL CALL

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

III – INVOCATION

Volunteer Chaplain Jacqueline Grossbotch offered the invocation.

IV– PLEDGE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

The pledge was led by Chairman Rahn.

V – AGENDA APPROVAL

County Clerk Johnson announced the withdrawal of Unfinished Business items #2 and #3 by the applicant and removal of New Business #9 by Staff.

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

Unfinished Business item #4 was added to the agenda. Commissioner Kieffer made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

VI – MINUTES

Vice Chair Deloach made a motion to approve the October 3-5, 2025 retreat minutes and October 7, 2025 regular meeting minutes. Commissioner Burdette 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 in the Clerk's office and on the Board of Commissioner's website.

IX – CONSENT AGENDA

Vice Chair Deloach made a motion to approve the following Consent Agenda items: **(2025-487)** Consideration to approve reappointing Dr. Jack Heneisen to the Board of Health as the physician actively practicing medicine in the county. **(2025-488)** Consideration to ratify and affirm the submission of a Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program (GOSP) grant application and supporting resolutions for the Treutlen Regional Trail Project. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

X – UNFINISHED BUSINESS

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE SECOND READING OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES, PART II, APPENDIX C - ZONING ORDINANCE, ARTICLE V - USES PERMITTED IN DISTRICTS, SECTIONS 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, AND 5.18 (*APPROVED 1ST READING - 08/05/2025, 2ND READING - POSTPONED 08/19/2025*) (1):

Planning Manager Fernald explained the Steering Committee had completed its charge to review the final article of the zoning ordinance, focusing on clarifying and organizing the residential districts. The committee recommended significant updates, including aligning the R-1 zoning district's design standards closely with the R-5 district and adding a ten percent (10%) open space requirement to R-1, with the sidewalk mandate limited only to areas with water and sewer services. Furthermore, the R-2 and R-3 districts were revitalized to provide greater clarity and consistency regarding housing types and ownership structures, with R-3 now incorporating

approved design standards.

Alex Long and Mike Vaquer expressed concerns regarding R-1 open space requirement and inconsistency with R-2 townhome garages.

Planning Manager Fernald clarified that while front-loaded townhouses are technically allowed in both R-2 and R-3, the County's default preference is for rear-loaded garages. This preference is intended to create a more desirable contiguous green space along the street frontage and consolidate vehicular access behind the buildings, improving aesthetics.

Vice Chair Deloach made a motion to approve the 2nd Reading with changes to reduce the minimum required open space in R-1 to five percent (5%) of the total land area, provided that the minimum lot size within the subject neighborhood equals or exceeds one-half (0.5) acre. Commissioner Kieffer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE AN APPLICATION BY SUZETTE SCHMETZ FOR A CONDITIONAL USE LOCATED ON HWY 17 S TO ALLOW FOR VETERINARY SERVICES IN AR-1 MAP # 296 PARCEL # 46C01 IN THE THIRD DISTRICT (*POSTPONED, 08/19/2025*) (2):

This item was withdrawn by the applicant at agenda approval.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE SECOND READING OF AN APPLICATION BY SUZETTE SCHMETZ FOR A CONDITIONAL USE LOCATED ON HWY 17 S TO ALLOW FOR VETERINARY SERVICES IN AR-1 MAP # 296 PARCEL # 46C01 IN THE THIRD DISTRICT (*POSTPONED, 08/19/2025*) (3):

This item was withdrawn by the applicant at agenda approval.

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

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH BRENNAN CAPITAL INVESTMENTS FOR THE ACQUISITION OF EASEMENT AND PROPERTY TO CONSTRUCT DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS OFF BLUEJAY ROAD RELATED TO STAFFORDSHIRE ESTATES (*POSTPONED, 10/07/2025*) (4):

County Manager Callanan explained that the easement offers several advantages, including access from Bluejay to the wetlands, a right of way for the force main, and a critical outlet for the drainage system on Bluejay.

Commissioner Helmly made a motion to approve Memorandum of Understanding with Brennan Capital Investments for the acquisition of easement and property to construct drainage improvements off Bluejay Road related to Staffordshire Estates. Vice Chair Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XI – NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION# 025-034 THE EXTENSION OF THE MORATORIUM ON REZONING DISTRICTS (1):

County Manager Callanan explained that the Board discussed the status of the Zoning Moratorium. Staff confirmed that upon the adoption of the new zoning ordinance, the moratorium on Residential Districts would be automatically lifted, while the moratorium on Planned Developments (PDs) would remain in effect until November 18th.

Commissioner Burdette requested an extension of the full moratorium (R-Districts and PDs) solely for District 2 until May 20th to mitigate severe traffic and safety issues resulting from ongoing construction and delayed critical infrastructure, such as the Effingham Parkway and associated roundabouts. County Attorney Newberry advised against isolating the moratorium by political district, recommending that infrastructure and safety concerns be addressed through the standard development review and conditional approval process.

Speaking for: Alec Metzger and Mike Vaquer discussed pre-application meetings and avoiding the “moratorium” term.

Commissioner Burdette made a motion to move forward with the release of the moratorium, except for District 2. The full moratorium shall remain in effect within District 2 until May 20th. The motion dies due to lack of a second.

Vice Chair Deloach made a motion to deny with the intent that all future development applications within District 2 be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, with mandatory consideration given to infrastructure capacity and impact. Commissioner Helmly seconded the motion. Commissioner Burdette opposed. The motion carried 4 to 1.

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 (2):

Planner I Rose explained the amended sections 410 and 411 of the tree protection and preservation proposal that were previously discussed during the workshop. The recommended additional amendments include incorporating conservation land into the tree fund and revising the definition of clear-cutting.

Commissioner Helmly made a motion to approve the Tree Protection & Preservation Ordinance for countywide implementation with the noted changes. Commissioner Kieffer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE FIRST READING TO AMEND, PART II, ARTICLE III - GENERAL PROVISIONS, SECTION 3.4 - BUFFERS OF THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES (3):

Planning Manager Fernald explained that the Board began with the second reading of the revised Buffer Ordinance, noting that developments since November 2023 approval highlighted the need for refinement. Key amendments included updating the

intent statement, adding requirements for a 50-foot vegetative buffer for major subdivisions with rear or side-facing homes, and clarifying that the more intense zoning district is responsible for providing the required buffer. Staff also added a comprehensive enforcement section, including stop-work orders and penalties for buffer disturbance, with required replacement planting at three times the original density.

The Board agreed to modify the proposed penalties to ensure they were consistent with the existing Tree Protection Ordinance.

Commissioner Kieffer made a motion to approve an amendment to the Effingham County Code of Ordinances, Part II, Article III – General Provisions, Section 3.4 – Buffers with the noted changes. Vice Chair Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE AN AMENDMENT TO THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES, PART II, APPENDIX C - ZONING ORDINANCES, ARTICLE V - USES PERMITTED IN DISTRICTS, SECTION 5.19 - EBENEZER HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT (4):

Vice Chair Deloach made a motion postpone to the 12/02/2025 meeting. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE TA WARRANTY DEED AS SUBMITTED BY EXETER OLD AUGUSTA LAND, LLC TO ACCEPT INFRASTRUCTURE WITHIN OLD AUGUST ROAD INDUSTRIAL PARK LOCATED OFF OLD AUGUSTA ROAD S IN THE FIFTH DISTRICT (5):

Planning Manager Fernald explained Shaw Industrial Court is situated off Old Augusta Road South, just north of General Way. The County Engineer has recommended approval for the proposed road, water and sewer utilities, drainage improvements, and associated easements.

The Board clarified the County's responsibilities and funding mechanisms related to commercial properties, specifically concerning roads, water, and sewage.

Commissioner Kieffer made a motion to approve the dedication of road, water & sewer utilities, drainage improvements, and easements for Shaw Industrial Court. Vice Chair Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE AN APPLICATION BY ALEXINE DIOUF AS AGENT FOR QUAIL PRESERVE, LLC/ RAY DEMOTT FOR A SITE PLAN FOR "MELDRIM FLEX- PHASE 1" LOCATED ON US HWY 80. MAP # 329 PARCEL # 41E01 IN THE FIRST DISTRICT (6):

Planning Manager Fernald explained the proposed site plan outlines the development of contractor offices, comprising two buildings, 63 parking spaces, a private well, and a private septic system. The site is located within FEMA Flood Zone X.

Commissioner Floyd made a motion to approve the Site Plan for “Meldrim Flex- Phase 1”. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. Commissioner Helmly abstained.

The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE AN APPLICATION BY GEOFFREY WALDHOUR FOR A SITE PLAN FOR "EBENEZER DAYCARE" LOCATED AT 823 EBENEZER ROAD. MAP # 446 PARCEL # 35 IN THE FIFTH DISTRICT (7):

Commissioner Helmly recused herself from this item.

Planning Manager Fernald explained that a daycare facility accommodating up to 60 children aged zero to four years old was proposed for a designated parcel, with a conditional use permit approved in June 2025. The development will feature vegetated buffers, a privacy fence, and an eight-foot septic system. Located within flood zone X, the project requires an encroachment permit from the Georgia Department of Transportation.

JC Helmly with EMC explained the development will utilize a temporary on-site septic system and drain field for sewage management for the foreseeable future, as the City of Springfield has confirmed it is out of capacity until at least 2027. Staff acknowledged that while the City of Springfield sewer manhole and utility easement exists near the property, capacity issues prevent immediate connection.

Commissioner Kieffer made a motion to approve the Site Plan for “Ebenezer Daycare”. Vice Chair Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A FINAL PLAT AS SUBMITTED BY STANLEY MARTIN HOME - CHARLES HAMILTON FOR BRUNSON STATION PHASE 1 LOCATED ON NOEL C CONAWAY ROAD, MAP #418 PARCEL # 2E IN THE SECOND DISTRICT (8):

Commissioner Helmly recused herself from this item.

Planning Manager Fernald explained Effingham County has completed the construction of roads and drainage infrastructure for phase one of Brunson Station, while the developer is responsible for providing water and sewer services. The county engineer has approved the bond recommendation, and the county attorney has reviewed and approved the warranty deed and infrastructure agreement.

Alec Metzger, representing EMC Engineering, provided an update on the current development's compliance and the schedule for local infrastructure improvements.

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 Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A CONTRACT WITH ESO FOR REPORTING AND DATA MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE FOR FIRE-RESCUE (9):

This item was removed at agenda approval.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 025-035 TO AMEND THE FISCAL

YEAR 2026 BUDGET (10):

Commissioner Helmly returned.

Finance Director Barnes explained the amendment allocates $85,000 for teal house repairs, $140,000 for cracked sealer equipment and supplies, carry-forward funding for the Reddick Field Astro Turf project, and $25,000 for the Ebenezer Station revamp.

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

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE SERVICE AGREEMENT BETWEEN EFFINGHAM COUNTY AND THE COASTAL REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR TRANSPORTATION SERVICES SUPPORTING THE SENIOR CENTER (11):

Procurement and Capital Projects Manager explained the Effingham County Senior Center's transportation services will continue to operate through the Coastal Regional Commission. Their insurance coverage has decreased, requiring them to reach a minimum threshold of $50,000 before they can access their insurance benefits.

Vice Chair Deloach made a motion to approve the FY26 Purchase of Service Agreement with Coastal Regional Commission. Commissioner Helmly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A CONTRACT WITH POND FOR DESIGN SERVICES FOR THE CLARENCE E. MORGAN COMPLEX (12):

Project Manager Wilkins presented the first step in continuing the design for Clarence Morgan Park Phase Two. This will be executed as a Construction Manager At-Risk (CMAR) project. The selected CMAR contractor will work jointly with the engineer to finalize the design from its current 50% status to 100%, incorporating value engineering throughout the process. The CMAR method ensures the contractor will ultimately provide a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) for construction.

Vice Chair Deloach made a motion to approve a Contract with POND for design services for the Clarence E. Morgan Complex. Commissioner Kieffer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN EFFINGHAM COUNTY, SAVANNAH INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, LLC (SID), AND THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (ECIDA) FOR THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE GATEWAY PARKWAY EXTENSION FROM EFFINGHAM PARKWAY TO HODGEVILLE ROAD (13):

Engineering Project Coordinator Shuman explained this item is a reimbursement agreement between Effingham County and Savannah industrial development to improve access to the Gateway Industrial Hub.

The Board discussed the mechanism for funding infrastructure improvements within

the area connecting the Effingham Parkway to Hodgeville Road.

Commissioner Burdette made a motion to approve the Reimbursement Agreement with SID and ECIDA. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A DRAINAGE EASEMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN EFFINGHAM COUNTY AND LAMAR W. DAVIS, JR., AS TRUSTEE OF THE RESIDUARY BYPASS TRUST, FOR PROPERTY LOCATED ON SPRINGFIELD TUSCULUM ROAD (14):

Commissioner Helmly recused herself from this item.

Engineering Project Coordinator Shuman explained Effingham County has entered into a drainage easement agreement with Lamar Davis, trustee of the Residuary Bypass Trust, for property located on Springfield Tusculum Road. This agreement enhances the county's ability to access, construct, and maintain critical drainage infrastructure.

Alec Metzger, EMC Engineering stated that EMC Engineering was retained specifically to survey the center line and depth of the existing ditch and to determine the required easement size necessary for that feature.

Vice Chair Deloach made a motion to approve the Drainage Easement Agreement with the Davis Trust. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE CHANGE ORDER #2 TO THE TSPLOST 2025 MAINTENANCE RESURFACING PROJECT (DISTRICT 3), AWARDED TO REEVES CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, TO INCLUDE RESURFACING IMPROVEMENTS ON TUCKASEE KING BOAT LANDING ROAD (15):

Commissioner Helmly returned.

Engineering Project Coordinator Shuman explained this change order includes resurfacing work at Tuckasee King boat landing. It is a cost-effective approach to address the necessary resurfacing while Reeves is already mobilized in the area.

Vice Chair Deloach requested that before the resurfacing crew leaves the area, staff confirm the road's width and ensure the original plan to widen it is executed if the current dimensions prove inadequate, as he needs to uphold his commitments to the community.

Vice Chair Deloach made a motion to approve Change Order #2 with Reeves Construction Company in the amount of $86,120.25. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XII – REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS & ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

County Clerk Johnson

- EOM Report for September 2025

County Manager Callanan

- New employee – Sydney Edwards, Purchasing Coordinator
- New promotion – Pamela Melser, Director of Development Services
- Fall Fun Fest overview. Thank you to Jennifer Baldwin – Programs & Special Events Coordinator
- Sight tour of new projects for the Board

Commissioner Kieffer

- Hickory Knob and Rincon Stillwell intersection tree trimming

Commissioner Helmly

- Expressed gratitude for the Fall Fun Fest and Jennifer Baldwin

Commissioner Deloach

- Land Banks information
- Mock Road signage before curve

Commissioner Burdette

- Planning Board unfinished business possibly moved to the 6:00pm session
- Impact fees study commencement
- Tree ordinance and conservation draft

Commissioner Floyd

- Covered Bridge schedule
- Lee Village "slow down" signs or speed limit reduction
- Hodgeville Road tree trimming

Chairman Rahn

- Simplify the process for ordinance violations

XIII – EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:20pm, Vice Chair Deloach made a motion to go into an executive session for discussion of personnel, property, and pending litigation. Commissioner Kieffer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

At 8:21pm, Vice Chair Deloach made a motion to reconvene. Commissioner Helmly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

XIV – ADJOURNMENT

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

Damon M. Rahn, Chairman

Stephanie D. Johnson, County Clerk

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
NOVEMBER 4, 2025