

**APPLING COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
August 5th, 2025 @ 5:30 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME/INVOCATION/PLEDGE

Appling County Board of Commissioners held the regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, August 5th, 2025 at 5:30 PM in the Commissioners' meeting room of the Courthouse Annex.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Leslie Burch and he welcomed all those in attendance. County Manager Reid Lovett gave the invocation and Commissioner Ricky Barnes led the group in the pledge. Present were Chairman Leslie Burch; Vice Chairman Chad Kent; Commissioners Randy Sellers, Jakharis Jones, Daryl Edwards and Ricky Barnes. Also, present were County Manager Reid Lovett, County Attorney Tracy Brown and County Clerk Robyn Evans.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

County Manager Lovett noted additions to the agenda adding the following under "New Business": Item E – Goodwill Viewpoint Public TV and Item F – Chiller Purchase. Commissioner Edwards made a motion to approve the agenda with additions; Commissioner Sellers seconded; unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting July 8th, 2025

Commissioner Sellers made a motion to approve the Regular July 8th, 2025 Meeting minutes; Commissioner Barnes seconded; unanimously approved.

PRESENTATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Summer Sports State Championship Recognition

Recreation Director Timmy McGuirt thanked the Commissioners, Staff, and Parents for their efforts in making the Summer Recreation Events so successful. He then asked everyone in attendance to join him in singing Happy Birthday to Chairman Leslie Burch.

County Manager Lovett announced the recipients of 2025 Summer Sports State Champions and those in attendance gathered for a photo with the Board.

NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

Legislative Leadership Conference – Voting Delegate

ACCG requested a voting delegate be appointed to the Legislative Leadership Conference in the Fall at Jekyll Island, as part of their Business Session. Commissioner Kent made a motion to appoint County Manager Lovett; Commissioner Barnes seconded; unanimously approved.

Opioid Settlement Participation Agreements

County Manager Lovett shared the newest agreement is a part of Appling County's participation in the National Opioid Settlement, as a subdivision of the State of Georgia against particular classes of manufacturers/pharmaceutical companies. Electronic signatures for the agreements can be utilized but the Board must indicate whom would sign for the County. Commissioner Edwards made a motion to allow County Manager Lovett to sign on behalf of the County; Commissioner Jones seconded; unanimously approved.

Tentative Millage Rate

County Manager Lovett advised the Board that in expectation of rolling back taxes this year, an estimated millage rate will need to be approved for the Tax Assessment Notices to be mailed timely. The amount utilized last year was 0.034. Lovett further explained we were still awaiting final reassessment values from Georgia Mass Appraisal System (GMAS) before a final millage rate can be adopted. Commissioner Sellers made a motion to use last year's rate for assessments (0.034); Commissioner Edwards seconded; unanimously approved.

Heritage Center Roof

County Manager Lovett advised that three (3) quotes were received for roofing of Appling Heritage Center, which was significantly damaged during Hurricane Helene: Dixie Builders \$86,180; Sweet Onion Roofing \$34,450; and LL Home Supply \$54,062(shingles). Commissioner Barnes made a motion to approve the lowest bid by Sweet Onion Roofing \$34,450; Commissioner Kent seconded; unanimously approved.

FY'2026 Insurance Renewal (Employee Benefits)

County Manager Lovett shared with the Board that health benefits, currently contracted with United Healthcare, were proposed to renew at 16% increase in premiums. He shared that the County's insurance broker did negotiate the terms and received a counter rate of 13% increase with no plan changes or at 10% with significant plan changes. Lovett shared the Dental and Vision options would not change as the rates with Humana were locked for a two-year time period. He shared that a new option was introduced this year, called Sidecar, which could be a potential costs savings for the County and employees. However, this plan is very new to the market and vetting should be completed before committing to the major changes for everyone. Lovett recommended the Board approve renewing with United Healthcare at 13% increase for health coverage and approval to further vet Sidecar as an option for possibly January 2026. Commissioner Sellers made a motion to approve as recommended; Commissioner Kent seconded; unanimously approved.

Goodwill Viewpoint Public TV

Lovett shared he'd received information regarding an opportunity for Appling County to be featured on "Viewpoint with Dennis Quaid" – with a segment focus on "Discover America, Great Places to Live, Visit, and Start a Business". The show is broadcast on Public Television and offer participants, as a thank-you, a high-end produced commercial and provides national and regional air time on a myriad of networks such as CNN, Fox News and CNBC. Appling County would own the rights and license to the final materials/video produced and could utilize at their discretion. The commitment requires an investment of \$25,900 for underwriting and \$3400 for the production crew fees. Lovett shared he'd discussed the project with City of Baxley and Tourism Board and would be seeking funding for the expenses but asked the Commissioners to approve the project and fees under promotional items, if funding is not approved by the Tourism Board. Commissioner Sellers made a motion to approve the project and expenses as stated; Commissioner Kent seconded; unanimously approved.

Chiller Purchase

County Manager Lovett shared that during the storms over the past couple of weeks, the Courthouse Chiller, which provides cool air, was struck by lightning and non-repairable. Court was held in the Commissioners' room a couple times until a temporary quick fix could be established. Lovett stated he'd received several quotes for replacement options and for a rental – due to shipment on a new one could take up to sixteen (16) weeks. He recommended the following and stated that an insurance claim was filed with ACCG and those results are pending.

*Rental of Chiller from Air Management – First month w/freight \$11,458.00 and \$6,565 monthly, thereafter.

*Direct purchase of Chiller - \$62,905

*Installation of Chiller by Air Management - \$13,129

Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve the above forementioned; Commissioner Edwards seconded; unanimously approved.

FY'2026 Budget Review

The proposed budget for fiscal year 2026 was reviewed and requested change was to remove \$500,000 LOST monies from the Road Department and budget TIA Discretionary funds instead. Lovett explained areas of the Budget that were "cleaned-up" and clarified some figures; discussions were held amongst the Board, including inquiries regarding the County contract with Ryland and the number of promised waste bins for citizens and their possible assistance with the County Landfill.

Lovett shared that a Public Hearing is required to be held and there's a seven-day wait period before the Budget can be adopted. Commissioner Sellers made a motion to approve the hearing date of Tuesday, September 9, 2025 at 4:00 PM before the Regular Monthly meeting scheduled at 5:30 PM.

County Shop – 2018 SPLOST Update

County Manager Lovett reminded the Board that the 2018 SPLOST items approved construction of a new County Maintenance Shop/Road Department building and that discussions were in process to possibly relocate this department. He also shared that a mandatory Pre-Bid meeting will be held in August as part of the bidding process for this project.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Lovett shared the Recreation games were cancelled due to recent rainfalls of approximately four (4) – six (6) inches in localized areas. He said the Road Department is constantly working but unfortunately, the rain prohibits and delays certain tasks – "can't grade mud". He stated they were continuing to work on specialty projects by zoned areas and mowers and grader will continue their regular schedules. Lovett shared the County Extension Services has grown tremendously and referenced an update in the Board's meeting packets.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Barnes made a motion to close the Regular meeting session and enter into Executive session; Commissioner Kent seconded; unanimously approved.

Commissioner Barnes made a motion to close Executive session and re-enter the Regular meeting session; Commissioner Kent seconded; unanimously approved.

County Manager Lovett shared that discussions were held regarding Real Estate but no actions require a vote from the Board.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

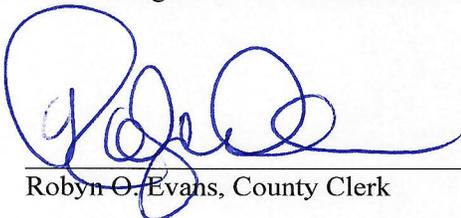
Lovett shared the current revenue and expense balances for the month. He then noted he'd completed a thorough review of records in relation to a County Road name/sign being changed. Calls from concerned citizens were received and requested it be changed back if possible. Lovett advised that he plans to revert the road back to its original name - Roy Boatright Road and wanted this reflected in the minutes. No action is required by the Board.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Chairman Burch thanked all those in attendance.

ADJOURN

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.


Robyn O. Evans, County Clerk




Leslie Burch, Chairman