

**APPLING COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CALLED MEETING MINUTES
March 3rd, 2026 @ 4:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME/INVOCATION/PLEDGE

Appling County Board of Commissioners held a called meeting on Tuesday, March 3rd, 2026 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. Commissioner Sellers gave the invocation and Commissioner Jones led the group in the pledge. Present were Chairman Leslie Burch; Vice Chairman Chad Kent; Commissioners Randy Sellers, Daryl Edwards, Jakharis Jones and Ricky Barnes. Also, present were County Manager Reid Lovett, County Attorney Tracy Brown and County Clerk Robyn Evans.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Kent made a motion to approve the agenda as presented; Commissioner Edwards seconded; unanimously approved.

ANIMAL CONTROL

County Manager Lovett shared with the Board, a draft ordinance, similar to Pike County's ordinance. Attorney Brown shared that estimates obtained for an animal shelter were not currently in the County budget, nor may be in the future. Brown shared that this proposed ordinance follows State law but is a starting point to review and share with the Public before holding a public meeting.

Commissioner Jones asked for clarification on the estimated costs for a full animal shelter. County Manager Lovett shared that the informal estimate was about \$500,000-\$600,000, to include facility, supplies, labor force and equipment.

Commissioner Sellers stated that would probably cause a \$1,000,000 tax increase to provide these services.

Commissioner Barnes stated that most constituents in his district are opposed to spending this much funding for an animal shelter; adding that State law gives an individual the right to protect their land (from strays killing their livestock, damaging property, etc.). Barnes stated he didn't feel the County should house stray animals; however, he favors imposing fines for incidents of abandonment, roaming pets, and dangerous and vicious dogs, etc. County Attorney Brown stated the fines and appeals process would be handled through the Magistrate Court.

Commissioner Kent asked how an Animal Control Officer would factor into this; asking if the County will create this position for hire. County Manager Lovett stated that currently, the Sheriff is the animal control officer.

Commissioner Edwards stated in the past, the County worked with the City of Baxley regarding an Animal Control Officer. Lovett shared that with the ordinance, an agreement with the City would be established before enforcing the ordinance, and in conjunction with the Sheriff's Department for enforcement.

Commissioner Sellers shared his recent discussion with Chairman of Toombs County Board of Commissioners. He stated the County spends about \$40,000 annually, and works in conjunction with their City and Sheriff's Department; also collaborating with SOAPS (Sweet Onion Animal Protection Society) for placement or adoption of strays.

County Manager Lovett shared he has spoken with City Manager Keri Orvin regarding a joint agreement and she is on-board with this solution/partnership, and adding to their animal shelter if it becomes necessary.

After continued discussions, County Attorney Brown recommended holding public hearings before April and May Board of Commissioners meetings and vote on a final ordinance in the regular meeting in May.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

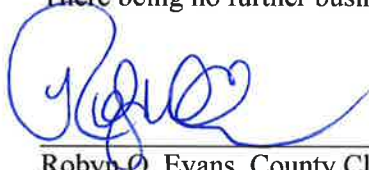
Lovett shared that he sat thru four (4) "mock" commissioner meetings with groups of ninth (9th) graders earlier in the day, stating they were a "tough crowd but very entertaining". They took the topics seriously, electing their own chairman, and voting on spending for certain items.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

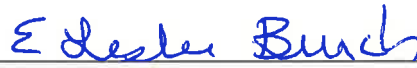
Chairman Burch had no comments.

ADJOURN

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.



Robyn O. Evans, County Clerk



Leslie Burch, Chairman

COUNTY SEAL

