

AGENDA
MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JANUARY 12, 2026
6:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

PLEASE SILENCE YOUR CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

II. INVOCATION

III. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

Agenda was Amended to Add under New Business #5: Update on Courthouse Progress/Approval of Roof Replacement (Phase I) and Under New Business #6: Reallocation of TSPLOST Widening Funds to E-911 Parking Lot.

1. Appoint Chairman
2. Appoint Vice Chairman
3. Appoint County Administrator
4. Appoint County Clerk
5. Appoint Deputy Clerk
6. Appoint County Attorney

V. PRESENTATIONS

VI. FINANCE REPORT

VII. DEPARTMENT HEADS

VIII. CITIZEN COMMENT

Speakers must contact the County Clerk at a.stephens@meriwethercountyga.gov or 706-672-3460 on or before the dates and times listed below in order to be placed on the Agenda to speak. Speakers must provide their name, address, and topic they wish to discuss.

- For the 2nd Monday of the month 6:00 p.m. meeting – Speakers must e-mail or call before 5:00 p.m. on the day of the scheduled meeting.
- For the 4th Tuesday of the month 6:00 p.m. meeting – Speakers must e-mail or call before 5:00 p.m. on the day of the scheduled meeting.

Speakers must direct their remarks to the Board and not to individual Commissioners or to the audience. Personal disagreements with individual Commissioners or County employees are not a matter of public concern and personal attacks will not be tolerated.

Speakers will be allotted three minutes to speak on their chosen topics as they relate to matters pertinent to the jurisdiction of the Board of Commissioners. No questions will be asked by any of the Commissioners during Citizen Comments. Outbursts from the audience will not be tolerated. Common courtesy and civility are expected at all times during the meeting. No speaker will be permitted to speak more than three minutes or more than once unless the Board votes to suspend this rule.

IX. MINUTES

1. Minutes, December 23, 2025, Regular Meeting 6:00 p.m.

X. PUBLIC HEARING

XI. APPOINTMENTS

1. Appoint ACCG Legislative Coordinator - 1-year term that expires January 1, 2027
2. Appointment to the Lake Meriwether Advisory Board, District 2. This is a 2-year term that will expire on January 28, 2028.
3. Appointment to the Lake Meriwether Advisory Board, District 4. This is a 2-year term that will expire on January 28, 2028.
4. Appointment to the Lake Meriwether Advisory Board, Commissioner. This is a 1-year term that will expire on January 28, 2027.
5. Appointment to the Zoning Board of Appeals. This is a 3-year term that will expire on January 5, 2029.

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Ordinance Amendment 25-05: Amendments to Chapter 4 (Alcoholic Beverages) of the Meriwether County Code of Ordinances — *This was tabled from the December 23, 2025, Regular Meeting.*
2. Approval of Telecommunications Services Agreement with AT&T (Dedicated Internet and Voice Bundle) for E-911 — *This was tabled from the December 23, 2025, Regular Meeting.*

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion on qPublic Subscription Levels — Will Harris
2. Discussion of 2026 LMIG Projects
3. Discussion of Surveillance Signage at Red Oak Covered Bridge and Lake Meriwether
4. Discussion and Possible Action to Amend Prior Approval of 2025 LMIG Project — Wrightsville Road
5. *Agenda Amended to Add: Update on Courthouse Progress/Approval of Roof Replacement (Phase I)*
6. *Agenda Amended to Add: Reallocation of TSPLOST Widening Funds to E-911 Parking Lot*

XIV. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

XV. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

XVI. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY

XVII. FUTURE MEETINGS & NOTICES

1. Closed in Observance for Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Monday, January 19, 2026
2. Tuesday, January 27, 2026, Regular Meeting at 6:00 p.m.
3. Monday, February 9, 2026, Regular Meeting at 6:00 p.m.
4. Closed in Observance of President's Day on Monday, February 16, 2026

XVIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. Litigation
2. Personnel
3. Real Estate
4. Tax Matters

XIX. ADJOURNMENT

Meriwether County BOC is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Board of Commissioners

Time: Jan 12, 2026 06:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84334641307?pwd=Kdv4Zbd21jWgke5qlta11kAlsbaHfL.1>

Meeting ID: 843 3464 1307

Passcode: 400966

To: Board of Commissioners

From: Allyson Stephens, County Clerk

Subject: Appointments

Date: 1/9/2026

Commissioners,

Approval is requested for the appointments listed under the Appointments section of the January 12, 2026 Regular Meeting agenda.

These appointments include the designation of an ACCG Legislative Coordinator and appointments to the Lake Meriwether Advisory Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals, with terms expiring as noted on the agenda.

These appointments are made in accordance with County policy and applicable term requirements to ensure the continued operation and representation of the County on advisory boards and committees. Approval will allow the appointed positions to be filled for the stated terms.

To: Board of Commissioners

From: Allyson Stephens, County Clerk

Subject: Ordinance Amendment 25-05 – Adoption of Corrections and Updates to Chapter 4 – Alcoholic Beverages

Date: 1/9/2026

Commissioners,

Approval is requested for Ordinance Amendment 25-05 amending Chapter 4, Alcoholic Beverages, of the Meriwether County Code of Ordinances, along with authorization to execute the ordinance document. The public hearing has been held and is now closed.

Ordinance Amendment 25-05 was initiated to update Chapter 4 of the County Code following the voter-approved referendum authorizing the sale of distilled spirits by the package. During the drafting process, staff conducted a comprehensive review of the chapter to address inconsistencies, outdated references, formatting issues, and typographical errors, as well as to clarify licensing, enforcement, and administrative procedures.

A duly advertised public hearing was held on December 23, 2025. Public comments and Board feedback received at that hearing were reviewed and taken into consideration. Revisions were made as appropriate, and a clean, revised copy of the ordinance reflecting those changes was provided to the Board on Wednesday, January 7, 2026.

The Ordinance before the Board reflects all changes resulting from the public hearing and subsequent staff and legal review.

The amendment repeals and replaces Chapter 4 in its entirety and adopts a new Chapter 4 – Alcoholic Beverages for codification. Upon approval, the ordinance must be executed by the Chairman and attested by the County Clerk in order to finalize adoption and establish the effective date.

Approval of Ordinance Amendment 25-05 and authorization for the Chairman and County Clerk to execute the ordinance document is recommended.

To: Board of Commissioners

From: John Gorton, County Administrator

Subject: Approval of Telecommunications Service Agreement with AT&T (Dedicated Internet and Voice Bundle) for E-911

Date: 1/9/2026

Commissioners,

Approval is requested for the Telecommunications Services Agreement with AT&T for a Dedicated Internet and Voice Bundle to support E-911 operations. This item was tabled at the December 23, 2025 Regular Meeting at the Board's request for additional cost information.

AT&T is the County's current provider for E-911 telecommunications services via fiber. The proposed agreement provides dedicated internet and voice connectivity necessary for continued E-911 operations at the Public Safety Answering Point. Following the December meeting, staff worked with AT&T to obtain a detailed cost breakdown as requested by the Board.

The updated proposal reflects a monthly recurring cost of \$798.30, with no non-recurring installation charges and a 24-month contract term. This service replaces the County's current configuration, which has an estimated monthly cost of approximately \$11,270. Based on these figures, the proposed agreement would result in estimated savings of approximately \$10,481.70 per month, or more than \$120,000 annually. AT&T has confirmed that the \$10,481.70 savings figure is calculated on a monthly basis.

Approval of the agreement will allow the County to maintain reliable E-911 service while significantly reducing telecommunications costs. Authorization for the Chairman, or Vice-Chairman if necessary, to execute the agreement is recommended.

To: Board of Commissioners

From: William Harris, Chief Tax Appraiser

Subject: Discussion on qPublic Subscription Levels – Will Harris

Date: 1/9/2026

The County has received updated pricing for a digital property information platform, including two subscription package options (Basic and Essentials) with associated annual subscription fees and one-time setup costs. The Board must determine whether to proceed with one of the proposed packages, request modifications, or defer action pending further clarification and negotiation.

Background

The County currently utilizes a digital platform to display property-related information for public access and internal use. The vendor has proposed revised pricing for continued service under a new annual subscription model, citing expanded functionality and optional add-on features that are not included in the base pricing. The vendor has also raised questions regarding the County's need to display owner information more than once per year and has requested further discussion to clarify operational requirements prior to finalizing scope and cost.

Proposed Options and Costs

Option 1: Basic Package

- **Annual Subscription:** \$11,700
 - Represents a **\$5,166 increase** over current pricing
- **One-Time Setup Fee:** \$7,749
- **Includes:** Core platform functionality (excluding optional add-ons)

Option 2: Essentials Package

- **Annual Subscription:** \$22,200
 - Represents a **\$15,666 increase** over current pricing
- **One-Time Setup Fee:** \$18,799
- **Includes:** All Basic Package features plus additional enhanced functionality

Note: Optional add-on features are not included in the above pricing and would be quoted separately if requested by the County.

Financial Impact

Approval of either option will result in both a recurring annual cost increase and a one-time setup expense in the first year. The Essentials Package more than doubles the annual subscription cost compared to the Basic Package and requires a significantly higher upfront investment.

The long-term budget impact will depend on:

- The necessity of enhanced features included in the Essentials Package
- Whether optional add-ons are required in the future
- The operational value of increased frequency in displaying owner information

Operational Considerations

- Clarification is needed on how often owner information must be updated or displayed to meet statutory, operational, and public transparency needs.
- The vendor has requested a meeting to align platform functionality with County requirements before final pricing decisions are made.
- Selection of a higher-tier package without fully defined requirements may result in unnecessary cost.

Recommendation

Staff recommends **deferring final selection** of a package until:

1. A detailed meeting is held with the vendor to clarify functional requirements, particularly regarding owner information display frequency.
2. A cost-benefit analysis is completed comparing the Basic and Essentials Packages relative to County needs.
3. Optional add-on pricing is reviewed, if applicable.

Following these steps, staff will return to the Board with a final recommendation and funding strategy.

Requested Board Action

- Provide direction on whether to:
 - Proceed with further negotiations and clarification, or
 - Select a preferred package for continued discussion, or
 - Defer the project entirely pending additional information

To: Board of Commissioners

From: Allyson Stephens, County Clerk

Subject: Discussion of 2026 LMIG Projects

Date: 1/9/2026

Commissioners,

Discussion and direction are requested regarding the selection of road projects for the County's 2026 Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) application. The application must be submitted to GDOT no later than February 1, 2026, and staff require Board direction on which roadways will be included.

For the 2026 LMIG program year, Meriwether County has been allocated \$942,044.52 in LMIG funding from the State of Georgia. The LMIG program requires a 30 percent local match from the County. Based on this allocation, the required County match is \$282,613.36, resulting in a total project budget of \$1,224,657.88 available for the selected road projects.

In developing the proposed LMIG project lists, the Public Works Department applied a condition-based prioritization methodology consistent with GDOT LMIG guidance. Primary consideration was given to roads with condition ratings generally ranging from 3 to 8. Roads rated at 1 or 2 are typically in advanced stages of deterioration and often require reconstruction beyond the scope and cost-effectiveness of LMIG funding.

Roads rated between 3 and 6 represent a critical threshold where timely maintenance can prevent further degradation and significantly improve roadway condition, maximizing the return on LMIG investment.

In addition to roadway condition, the number of residential structures served by each roadway was considered as a reasonable proxy for traffic demand and public benefit. While traffic counters provide precise volume data, the application timeline did not allow sufficient time to deploy counters on all candidate roadways. This approach provides a practical and transparent method for prioritizing projects that serve the greatest number of residents and align with LMIG objectives.

Attached for the Board's consideration are small project road and large project road lists. These lists were previously provided as well by email on January 7, 2026.

Direction from the Board is needed to determine which roads will be included in the final 2026 LMIG application so staff may proceed with submission by the required deadline of February 1, 2026.

To: Board of Commissioners
From: 
John Gorton, County Administrator
Subject: Discussion of Surveillance Signage at Red Oak Covered Bridge and Lake Meriwether
Date: 01/09/2026

Commissioners,

I have cameras scheduled to arrive on Monday, January 12, 2026, for the entrances on both sides of the Red Oak Covered Bridge and the entrance to Lake Meriwether. We will need to install signage at both locations indicating that the property is under 24/7 video surveillance.

The proposed sign is attached for review. Once the signage is approved and the cameras are received, they will be installed and monitored by the administration staff.

To: Board of Commissioners

From: John Gorton, County Administrator

Subject: Discussion and Possible Action to Amend Prior Approval of 2025 LMIG Project –
Wrightsville Road

Date: 1/9/2026

Commissioners,

Discussion and possible action are requested to amend the prior approval of the 2025 LMIG project for Wrightsville Road.

On September 8, 2025, the Board approved the use of remaining 2025 LMIG funds for resurfacing work on Wrightsville Road in an amount not to exceed \$100,000. That approval was based on preliminary estimates and anticipated unit pricing available at the time.

Following an onsite review with CW Matthews Contracting, EMC Engineering Services has provided a detailed cost estimate for the Wrightsville Road resurfacing project. Based on current contract unit prices, the estimated construction cost totals \$102,685.40. With a recommended 10 percent contingency to account for field conditions and material variability, the total project cost is estimated at \$112,953.94, which has been rounded to **not exceed \$113,000**.

EMC Engineering has advised that this pricing reflects a favorable opportunity and has indicated that savings on other 2025 LMIG road projects may offset the overage. EMC has further advised that a decision is needed immediately, as CW Matthews must be notified in order to incorporate the work without assessing additional mobilization costs. Delaying action could result in increased costs due to demobilization and remobilization of equipment.

Staff recommend approval to amend the prior authorization for Wrightsville Road to **not to exceed \$113,000** under the 2025 LMIG program in order to avoid project delays and higher mobilization costs.

To: Board of Commissioners

From: John Gorton, County Administrator

Subject: Update on the Courthouse Progress/Approval of Roof Replacement.

Date: 1/9/2026

Commissioners,

Discussion and possible action are requested regarding Phase I of the Meriwether County Courthouse renovation project, which was previously approved by the Board on November 25, 2025.

On November 25, 2025, the Board approved Phase I of the Courthouse renovation project, which included roofing and exterior repairs to address ongoing water intrusion and protect the historic structure. That approval authorized the project to proceed as presented at that time, with the roofing portion originally quoted using a TPO roofing system.

Since approval, the Construction Manager, EMC Engineering, architect, and River City Contracting have continued to evaluate the roof conditions and long-term performance of the proposed system. Based on further review, the project team is recommending a change from the originally proposed TPO roofing system to a standing seam metal roof in order to better protect the building, extend the useful life of the roof, and reduce long-term maintenance concerns, while maintaining the historic character of the Courthouse.

The project team has advised that the standing seam metal roof provides improved durability and additional warranty coverage and results in a cost savings compared to the originally proposed roofing system. Representatives from EMC Engineering and River City Contracting are in attendance to answer questions and explain the recommended changes.

Direction from the Board is requested to proceed with Phase I of the Courthouse renovation project as previously approved, incorporating the recommended roofing modification.

To: Board of Commissioners
From: *JWG*
John Gorton, County Administrator
Subject: Reallocation of TSPLOST Widening Funds to E911 Parking Lot
Date: 01/12/2026

Commissioners,

After completion of the Alvaton Road and Judson Bulloch Road widening projects, a remaining balance of \$79,656.10 is available. Staff requests that these funds be reallocated to the E911 parking lot paving project, with any remaining funds returned to the TSPLOST balance for future road paving projects.

