

MINUTES
MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JANUARY 27, 2026
6:00 PM

Commissioners Present: Chairman Emmett Collins, Vice Chairman Jennifer Snelson, Commissioner Gene King, Commissioner Bryan Threadgill, and Commissioner Adam Worsley
Commissioners Absent: None.

Staff Present: County Administrator John Gorton, County Clerk Allyson Stephens, Finance Director Tammy Lackey, Deputy Clerk Hailee Palmer, and County Attorney Michael Hill
Staff Absent: None.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Meeting was Called to Order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Emmett Collins.

II. INVOCATION

The Invocation was given by Mr. Tae Carter.

III. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

All.

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

The Agenda was Amended to Add under New Business #7 - c. Fund 215 (E911).

A motion was made to adopt the amended Agenda by Commissioner King and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson. All were in favor.

V. PRESENTATIONS

There were no Presentations.

VI. FINANCE REPORT

Finance Director Tammy Lackey presented the Finance Report to the Board. Director Lackey reported that the financial statements reflected the County's bank balances as of that afternoon. She stated that the County had received the 2025 LMIG distribution in the amount of \$942,044.52. Director Lackey further reported that the County expected to receive the SPLOST and TSPLOST distributions by the end of the week and that the County had also been notified of the fourth-quarter tipping fees and host fees, which are anticipated to be received by the end of the month. She noted that the expected amounts for those revenues were reflected in the financial summary provided to the Board. Director Lackey advised that the 2020 SPLOST balance currently reflected a negative balance of \$462,000, explaining that no advances had yet been made from the General Fund. She further reported that the TSPLOST balance remained at approximately \$849,000. Following the Finance Director's report, County Administrator Gorton addressed the Board to provide clarification regarding questions raised at the prior meeting concerning in-house paving funding. County Administrator Gorton stated that there is a budgeted amount of \$1.5 million under Site Improvements in Fund 541 (2025 TSPLOST), which includes paving and gravel work. He further noted that there is an additional \$187,000 budgeted for equipment that will not be due until the following year. County Administrator Gorton explained that once the Public Works Director presented the proposed in-house paving projects and the Board grants approval, the Finance Department would bring forward a budget amendment to properly allocate the in-house paving expenditures for accounting purposes. County Administrator Gorton stated that he wanted to provide this clarification to the Board in

response to questions raised during the previous meeting. The Board thanked him for the update. Chairman Collins then asked if there were any questions regarding the Finance Report. No further questions were raised.

VII. DEPARTMENT HEADS

Director of Human Resources, Valerie Chambers, addressed the Board and provided a year-end overview of Human Resources activities. Director Chambers reported that during calendar year 2025, the County hired 84 employees, of whom 56 remain active, and processed 68 terminations. By comparison, she noted that in 2024, the County hired 85 employees, with 34 remaining active, and processed 79 terminations. Based on these figures, Director Chambers stated that the County experienced a 27 percent increase in new-hire retention from 2024 to 2025, which she described as a positive improvement. Director Chambers highlighted several training initiatives completed during the year, including leadership training sponsored by West Georgia Technical College in February and the annual discrimination and harassment training, which was conducted in October in compliance with Human Resources requirements. She also reviewed enhancements to employee benefits, including the implementation of loan options within the County's 457(b) and 401(a) retirement plans, the addition of a vacation sell-back option, and the inclusion of Veterans Day as a County holiday. Director Chambers thanked County Administrator Gorton for his support and expressed appreciation to the Board of Commissioners for approving these benefit enhancements. Director Chambers further reported on the implementation of the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) benefit for public safety employees, which is required to be in place by January 1, 2026. She stated that the Human Resources Department has been working with the Sheriff's Office, E911, and the Fire and Rescue Department to ensure the benefit is fully implemented, properly communicated, and available to eligible employees in public safety roles. Director Chambers also provided an update on the County's wellness program, noting that the County is entering its second year of participation with Engagement Health Group (EHG). She reported that a dashboard meeting is scheduled for March 18, which will include a detailed comparison of 2024 and 2025 wellness data and success stories from employee health coaching sessions. Preliminary results were described as favorable, including stable participation levels, a slight decrease in overall high blood pressure rates, a 9 percent reduction in employees classified as at-risk for high blood pressure, continued low diabetes rates, improved blood sugar control among participating employees, and 8 employees losing 10 pounds or more between 2024 and 2025. Director Chambers also noted that Mark III had been approved by the Board as the County's benefits broker and stated that the kickoff meeting for implementation was scheduled for the following day. She reviewed compliance-related efforts undertaken by the Human Resources Department, including the implementation of annual Medical Director Reviews (MDRs), completion of a safety audit with corrective actions taken, and steps to ensure continued compliance with the Affordable Care Act (ACA). In closing, Director Chambers provided an update on the County policy manual, stating that a draft was completed and reviewed by the Board in 2025, subsequently submitted for legal review, and recently returned with recommended revisions. She stated that she has been reviewing the changes with legal counsel and plans to meet with the County Administrator before presenting the final version to the Board, which she anticipates bringing forward at a February meeting. Director Chambers thanked the Board for its continued support.

Next, **Director of Animal Control, George Richmond**, presented his departmental report. Director Richmond provided a summary of Animal Control operations for 2025, reporting that

the shelter handled 499 animal intakes, representing an approximate 61 percent increase compared to 2024. Of those intakes, 420 were stray pickups, 46 were owner surrenders, and the remainder were animals seized. Director Richmond stated that during the year, the shelter recorded 264 adoptions, and 198 animals were transported out of state by staff to partner facilities for adoption. Director Richmond reported that, despite intake volumes, the shelter recorded only six were euthanized, noting that the facility has maintained no-kill shelter status for the fourth consecutive year. He stated that many adoptions were completed at off-site events, including weekend adoption events, fairs, and community outreach activities conducted by himself and shelter staff. Director Richmond further advised the Board that the shelter currently houses 55 dogs and five cats, and that he has been personally caring for six puppies at his home over the past three months. He noted that a transport was scheduled for the following morning, during which 22 puppies would be transported to Ohio for adoption. Director Richmond concluded his report and thanked the Board.

VIII. CITIZEN COMMENT

Mr. Aloysius Campbell, 249 Bartee Road, Woodbury, GA, addressed the Board regarding concerns about the organization and fairness of the Meriwether County Recreation Department. Mr. Campbell stated that this was the second year he had observed procedures that, in his view, resulted in children being treated unequally. Mr. Campbell explained that in the ten-year-old basketball league, “some children are required to participate in a formal draft that was documented on paper, while another team was organized by Randy Carter and allowed to enter the basketball league without going through a draft process.” He stated that the team “was not listed on draft paperwork, yet had been scheduled to play against teams that were drafted.” Mr. Campbell emphasized that the situation was not the fault of the children involved but raised concerns about fairness, stating that it “raised an important question — how is it fair to other players and families who followed the established process?” Mr. Campbell stated that “some parents appear to be aware of the situation, while others are not,” and explained that as “a parent, coach, and community member,” he wanted to know “who is responsible for allowing one individual to organize a non-drafted, hand-picked team and still participate in the basketball league.” He added, “You are supposed to be providing equal opportunity for all children — no favoritism or exceptions.” Mr. Campbell stated that when he attempted to discuss the matter directly with Randy Carter, Assistant Director of Recreation, he was told that Mr. Carter “did not have to explain anything to me.” Mr. Campbell then stated that he spoke with Allan Fordham, Director of Recreation, who was willing to talk but “was unsure of his job title and his level of authority.” Mr. Campbell stated that this raised additional concern, noting that “when someone is being paid by the County to oversee the Recreation program, they should be empowered and willing to step up and address issues when something is clearly not right.” Mr. Campbell further stated that parents had been told and agreed that teams would have opportunities to travel and play outside the County; however, he stated that “all teams will not be afforded that opportunity,” which he said reinforced “the perception of unfair treatment.” He also expressed concerns regarding scheduling, stating, “We currently have three different schedules — the first schedule was given to the teams, the second schedule was posted on social media, and the third schedule was posted at the gym.” He added that “all three schedules have different information, and we have to ask before each game, ‘Who are we playing?’” Mr. Campbell stated that Director Fordham had removed his team from one of the schedules when they were scheduled to play another team, and that Assistant Director Carter told him that Director Fordham “didn’t want to play games against me.” Mr. Campbell concluded his remarks

by stating, "The program should be about the kids. Every kid should have the same chance to learn, grow, compete, and enjoy the game. When the rules are applied unevenly, it undermines the trust in the program and the integrity of the league." He added that "Meriwether County owes the parents and players transparency, accountability, and fairness," and stated that "these concerns deserve answers, and the children deserve better." Mr. Campbell concluded his remarks, and the Board thanked him for speaking.

Ms. Debbie Nelson, 2125 Tenny Nelson Road, Grantville, GA, addressed the Board regarding concerns related to zoning, development, and citizen engagement. Ms. Nelson stated that she was requesting "some changes in the ordinance and the zoning" and explained that she was "here to talk about moving two-acre lots to the Planning Board." Ms. Nelson described the growth in her community, stating, "I feel like that living in a community where there were 40 of us, and now there's another 100 homes in our area, there have been no additional employees to support the services and the infrastructure of their needs." She further expressed concerns regarding water service, stating, "We are constantly hearing the water in Luthersville, which provides to these homes, being brown, disruptive services due to the fact that there is no water. So they're buying water from Lone Oak." Ms. Nelson noted that many of the homes in her area are small and stated, "Most of these homes that are in our area are very small. We find that the families are outfitted with garages, containers, and improperly placed storage units on the front and side of the home." She thanked the Board for its efforts, stating, "I want to thank you for your help in trying to resolve some of these issues." Ms. Nelson also raised concerns related to housing finance and stability, stating, "Most of all, these people come in with 100 percent USDA loans. Several are in first payment default after only eight months of occupancy. Several are at this point in time, and they have moved out with no payment whatsoever." Ms. Nelson then addressed the topic of appointed boards, stating that she would ask the Commission to consider term limits. She stated, "I would ask that this Commission look at term limits on appointed boards, encourage the public to be involved, and use a notification system online versus each commissioner just appointing someone." She further requested that "resumes be sent to the Board of Commissioners for review" and that "public posts may be available online for those that are interested in hopes that we get more people involved in our community." Ms. Nelson commented on the length of service of current board members, stating, "The boards that we have, who have people on them, have been there 15 to 20 years. I'm speaking of appointed boards. They are ineffective in the changing climate of our county. Term limits [are] highly recommended." Ms. Nelson concluded her comments by emphasizing the importance of communication and public engagement. She stated, "Citizen concerns — how do we pick up county demands? How do we keep citizens informed? We must communicate better between each other and between citizens." She referenced challenges faced by the local newspaper and asked, "How could decisions in this county be made without town hall meetings? Are you guys hanging out, working with the citizens?" Ms. Nelson suggested that "town halls may be made either live or via Zoom" and noted that "there's many ways of communicating." Ms. Nelson concluded her remarks by thanking the Board. Before moving on to the next person, Ms. Nelson reapproached the Board by thanking them for the renovations to the courthouse, and that it was greatly appreciated. The Board thanked her for speaking.

Mr. Kyle Mapp, 8492 Rocky Mount Road, Luthersville, GA, addressed the Board in opposition to the proposed two-acre lot changes. Mr. Mapp stated, "My reason for speaking tonight is in opposition of two-acre lots." He explained that he did not believe Meriwether County currently has the infrastructure necessary to support such development, stating that "first

of all, I don't think we have the infrastructural support to make a change, and all it's going to do is bring builders onto the land for their profitable gain, and it's not going to benefit anyone." Mr. Mapp stated that, in his experience, residents of Meriwether County are not seeking increased development, saying, "I don't know anybody in Meriwether County that comes out here and says, 'Oh, I want more subdivisions,' or 'I want another Walmart,' or 'I need another Target.'" He stated that most residents value the County's existing character, adding, "Most of the people that live here want the agricultural aspect of the county. You want the rural aspect of the county, and that's what we enjoy." Mr. Mapp reiterated that infrastructure limitations remain a concern, stating that "the road system doesn't have it yet," and that "fire and rescue can't support it yet." He further stated that "the police department, water, and sewage can't support it," and emphasized that population growth should not occur without adequate public services in place. Mr. Mapp stated, "There's a lot of other things that we can do as a community in another area and build on that before we start worrying about over-building." Mr. Mapp concluded by stating that population growth should not outpace essential services, saying, "You can't support population growth with all these other services if you don't have EMS, fire, water, sewage, and police departments." Mr. Mapp thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak and concluded his remarks. The Board thanked him for speaking.

Mr. Dustin Owens, 21158 Roosevelt Hwy, Greenville, GA, addressed the Board regarding the proposed two-acre lot zoning changes. Mr. Owens stated that he appreciated the willingness of Commissioner King and Chairman Collins to speak with him, noting that he had spoken with them earlier that day and during their time in office. He stated, "I appreciate Commissioner King and Commissioner Collins. I spoke with both of you all today, and throughout y'all's time serving, y'all have been more than open and willing to speak with me at any time." He further stated that he appreciated the clarification provided regarding the zoning issue. Mr. Owens stated that, based on his conversations with residents, many were unaware that two-acre zoning already exists on paved roads, while dirt roads still require a five-acre minimum. He stated, "myself along with multiple people I've spoken with today don't realize we already currently have two-acre zoning on paved roads. The issue is that on dirt roads it's still a five-acre requirement." Mr. Owens stated that when he moved to the County, he believed there was a five-acre minimum throughout the entire County, noting that any changes may have occurred previously without broad public awareness. Mr. Owens expressed concern about past actions taken by prior administrations, stating that "there are things that have happened here in the past under former administrations that weren't really done very visibly and transparent," and that he would like to see those decisions reviewed. He stated that he supports maintaining a five-acre minimum lot size, adding that "so far we've seen some of the effects of the two-acre minimum," including developers seeking to "exploit our county for growth and development for their own benefit." Mr. Owens quoted former President Theodore Roosevelt, stating, "Here is your country. Cherish these natural wonders, cherish the natural resources, the history and romance of the sacred heritage for your children and your children's children. Do not let selfish men ruin your country, its beauty, its riches, or its romance." He stated that he would like to see a return to more stringent zoning ordinances, clarifying that his position was not intended to prevent individuals from building homes, but rather to limit large-scale development by corporate builders. Mr. Owens concluded by stating that while development may increase the tax base, it also increases the scale of existing challenges, saying that "yes, it's increased the tax base, but along with the tax base, it's just increased the problems." He thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak and concluded his remarks. The Board thanked him for speaking.

There were no further Citizen Comments.

IX. MINUTES

1. Minutes, January 12, 2026, Regular Meeting 6:00 p.m.

County Clerk Stephens reported that there were a few grammatical errors, but she had corrected everything prior to the meeting. A motion was made to accept the minutes by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson. All were in favor.

X. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Case #PC25-14 - Request from James Flournoy located at 140 Sheri Lynn Lane, Parcel #074-02, for the special use of three lots in his manufactured home park to allow for recreational vehicles.

A motion was made to enter the Public Hearing at 6:25 p.m. by Commissioner King and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson. All were in favor. Director of Planning, Zoning, and Community Development Cassandra Jones presented the staff summary. Director Jones stated, "This is case number PC25-14 from James Flournoy for a special use permit to allow RV parking spots in his mobile home park." She advised that the case was heard by the Planning Commission on November 17, and the Planning Commission recommended denial. Director Jones explained that Mr. Flournoy was requesting for lots 43, 47, and 51 to be occupied by RVs for no longer than 180 days, with a requirement that the RVs be vacated for 30 days, and that he maintain a quarterly log report. She further stated that the request included no permanent structures and that it otherwise aligned with applicable code requirements. Director Jones noted that Mr. Flournoy was present and explained that the request was being brought before the Board due to circumstances following tornado damage. She stated that when the tornadoes came through, Mr. Flournoy lost a mobile home and could not afford to replace it. Director Jones further stated that staff attempted to locate historical documentation showing prior approval for RV use in the park many years ago, but that throughout the years it had been used primarily for mobile homes. Prior to hearing public comments, County Attorney Michael Hill advised the Board that the County's ordinances allow the Board to set a time limit for public hearing speakers between 10 and 20 minutes. Attorney Hill advised that the Board may wish to set a time limit and allocate time for proponents and opponents, including the possibility of asking for a spokesperson. Chairman Collins asked whether the Board would allow "15 minutes for and 15 minutes against." Attorney Hill advised the Board that it was their discretion, within the ordinance limits, and added that there is also a rebuttal period. A motion was made by Commissioner King to allow 15 minutes for speakers in favor and 15 minutes for speakers in opposition. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Threadgill. All were in favor. Attorney Hill further clarified that each side would be allowed an additional five minutes for rebuttal. **Mr. James Flournoy, 140 Sheri Lynn Lane**, addressed the Board and stated, "I've been in business for 37 years." He stated that when he first began operating the park, he had RVs, and over time it became primarily mobile homes. Mr. Flournoy stated that three years earlier, when a tornado came through, it destroyed three homes. He stated that he went before the Board and received permission to rebuild poles and electrical service, and that he believed this included electrical hookups for campers. Mr. Flournoy stated that RVs had been on the property for approximately two and a half years and that no one raised concerns until a recent complaint. He stated, "Nobody ever said nothing, until somebody made a complaint recently. That's why we're having to go through this today." Mr. Flournoy stated that he believed the situation was unfair because, in his view, he was "grandfathered" and had followed procedures. He stated that he performs background checks and stated that the residents are "good family people."

Mr. Flournoy described the tornado event and its impact on the property and stated that he had been rebuilding since that time. He asked the Board to allow the RVs to remain, stating that people were already living there and had been prior to the complaint. Chairman Collins asked Mr. Flournoy whether the campers had been there since the tornado, and Mr. Flournoy responded, "Yes, sir." Chairman Collins asked whether there is an ordinance that a person cannot live permanently in a camper. Ms. Jones confirmed that County ordinance prohibits living in a camper for more than 180 days, stating the ordinance has been in effect since at least 2019. Commissioner King commented that the ordinance was adopted after Mr. Flournoy's claimed zoning approval decades earlier. Commissioner Worsley stated that he was confused, noting that Mr. Flournoy stated he received zoning approval 37 years ago, but staff and the Clerk were unable to locate documentation. County Clerk Allyson Stephens stated that she was not able to locate documentation in the Board of Commissioners records but noted it could potentially be recorded in another manner or maintained elsewhere. Commissioner Worsley further asked Mr. Flournoy about his statement that he received approval two to three years earlier. Mr. Flournoy stated that the poles were rebuilt and that he asked about the RVs and was told the electrical service would be adjusted so the campers could be plugged in. Commissioner Worsley asked who Mr. Flournoy meant by "them," and Mr. Flournoy responded, "Building and Zoning." Director Jones stated that Mr. Flournoy received electrical permits but that the permits did not specifically reference RV use. Mr. Flournoy stated that the electrical permit showed 50-amp service, and that mobile homes would have required 100-amp service, and stated that the inspector came out and approved it. Commissioner Worsley asked whether Mr. Flournoy had paperwork documenting this, and Mr. Flournoy responded, "Yes, sir." Commissioner Worsley requested that Deputy Clerk Palmer make copies of the paperwork for the record. During discussion of historical documentation, County Clerk Stephens stated that it would be easier to locate records if a year was identified. Mr. Flournoy stated he believed the original approval was around 1987. County Clerk Stephens stated she had not initially searched as far back as 1987, and Commissioner Worsley asked Director Jones whether her department searched that far back. Ms. Jones stated, "Yes." County Clerk Stephens stated she could further review older records. Chairman Collins then asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of the request.

One gentleman, who stated he lived in Manchester, Georgia, spoke in favor. The speaker stated that he did not personally know Mr. Flournoy but wished to speak in support of the request. He stated that recreational vehicle tenants can be advantageous to a community and may contribute to local spending and economic activity. He further stated that the Board has the advantage of looking back at the record and observing whether there had been negative impacts from RVs on the property, including whether law enforcement had been called or whether there were noise issues. The speaker stated that, based on what he had heard, Mr. Flournoy had operated for many years without serious complaints, aside from a recent complaint, and he asked the Board to allow Mr. Flournoy to continue operating with RVs. Chairman Collins asked if there were any additional speakers in favor. No one else came forward. Chairman Collins then asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition.

Mr. Lee Wright, 1439 Rocky Mount Road, spoke in opposition. Mr. Wright stated he owned property across the road from the park and stated that he believed RVs were incompatible with the neighborhood. He further stated that, in his opinion, the area was "a junky mess" and an eyesore and asked the Board to vote against the request. Commissioner King asked how long Mr. Wright had been in the area, and Mr. Wright stated since 2007. Commissioner King asked whether Mr. Wright had previously filed complaints during the period RVs had been present. Commissioner King further asked whether the issue

would remain if the property was cleaned up and limited to RVs without additional debris. Mr. Wright stated he did not believe the property should be rezoned and stated he had no problem with mobile homes, but he did not support RVs due to concerns about transient occupants. During questioning, Vice Chairman Snelson clarified that the park is located on Allie Road, and Mr. Wright stated that he owned property across from the park but did not live directly across from it. Mr. Wright stated the property was vacant.

Mr. Daniel Dahlke, 970 Allie Road, spoke in opposition. Mr. Dahlke stated that his property borders the mobile home park and stated concerns about safety due to having young children. He stated he did not prefer transient occupants coming in and out. He stated that under the proposed special use permit, RVs would be limited to 180 days; however, he stated that the RVs were currently being used as permanent residences. Mr. Dahlke stated that he would prefer the property remain a mobile home park rather than an RV park. He further stated that, based on conditions at the site, it would be difficult for occupants to move the RVs out for a period of time due to accumulated items and debris, stating it would take significant time to clear and move RVs. Mr. Dahlke concluded his remarks.

Mr. Dustin Owens, 21158 Roosevelt Highway, spoke in opposition. Mr. Owens stated that his property was also affected by the tornado and stated that he sympathized with Mr. Flournoy regarding the damage and recovery. Mr. Owens stated that he had not previously had an issue with the RVs because he assumed they were a temporary measure. He stated his concerns were related to safety and precedent. Mr. Owens stated that if the County were to take what was a temporary situation and make it more permanent, he was concerned about the safety of residents living long-term in RVs, especially in the event of future storms. Mr. Owens stated he was also concerned about the precedent it could set for future requests and stated concerns regarding the County's ability to track compliance with time limits. Mr. Owens stated he was concerned about liability should someone be injured or killed during a storm, stating RVs are not designed to be permanent residential structures. Mr. Owens concluded his remarks and thanked the Board. Attorney Hill reminded the Board that both sides were entitled to five minutes of rebuttal. Mr. Flournoy spoke during rebuttal and again stated, "I'm grandfathered from back in '87 — campers, mobile homes." Mr. Flournoy stated he did not want to involve legal action but referenced the possibility. Mr. Flournoy also referenced one speaker who owned property behind the park and stated the individual had never approached him. Mr. Flournoy stated he had not had trouble with neighbors and stated he performs background checks. Mr. Flournoy stated that RVs are movable and described the length of time they had been present. Chairman Collins asked whether the RVs were movable and asked how long they had been present. Mr. Flournoy responded that the RVs were movable and stated they had been there for approximately a year and a half to two years. Mr. Flournoy also stated that some residents had requested small storage sheds for personal belongings, and he stated that he did not charge them additional fees. Commissioner King asked Director Jones whether she had been on the property and whether there were code violations. Director Jones stated she had been on the property and stated that staff required Mr. Flournoy to clean up tires that had been on the property. Director Jones stated that the storage structures referenced were makeshift and not permanent structures, with no electrical power connected. Director Jones stated that staff had checked the septic systems and that each lot had two tanks. Director Jones reiterated that the electrical permits were for power restoration after tornado damage and did not reference RV use. Vice Chairman Snelson stated she visited the site and took photographs, and she offered to provide the photos to the Board for review. Attorney Hill advised that if the Board considered the photographs, they must be made part of the record and provided to the Clerk. Commissioner King asked County Clerk Stephens how long it would take to locate records back to 1987. County Clerk Stephens stated that staff had searched

available records and could not find any reference to Sheri Lynn Lane or James Flournoy, noting that missing documentation was not unusual in older records. Director Jones stated the use was currently considered a non-conforming lot under present ordinances. Commissioner Worsley asked for clarification, and Director Jones stated the use does not comply with current ordinances. Attorney Hill explained the legal concept of a non-conforming use, stating that generally, a non-conforming use may continue if it existed prior to adoption of an ordinance; however, a non-conforming use can be lost after a period of non-use. Attorney Hill stated he believed the common law period is approximately six months but advised he could verify. Commissioner Worsley stated that if RV use ceased and the property was used only for mobile homes for a period of time, then the non-conforming RV use may have been lost. Attorney Hill stated that if RV use had stopped for the required period, then the property would no longer be vested in that use and would require special use approval. Commissioner Threadgill asked whether the Board needed to close the public hearing to continue discussion. Attorney Hill advised that the Board could continue discussion during the public hearing and that all considerations should be elicited on the record. Attorney Hill further advised that the Board could continue the public hearing without closing it in order to gather additional information before taking action. Commissioner Worsley made a motion to continue the Public Hearing on Case #PC25-14 to the next regularly scheduled meeting on February 9, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner King. All were in favor. Following the motion, Commissioner Threadgill advised Mr. Flournoy that staff would reach out regarding the continued Public Hearing date and that the matter would be discussed further at the next meeting. Mr. Flournoy thanked the Board, and the Board thanked him.

2. Case #PC25-15 - Request from John Parker to rezone parcel 164-046 (445.29 acres, Hwy 85 and Alvaton Road) from LDR to NHC.

A motion was made to enter the Public Hearing at 6:59 p.m. by Commissioner Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Worsley. All were in favor.

Director of Planning, Zoning, and Community Development Cassandra Jones presented the staff summary. Director Jones stated that the request was brought before the Planning Commission in November and involved a request "to commercial" for proposed uses on the property. Director Jones advised that the Planning Commission heard the request and heard comments from citizens, and that the Planning Commission's recommendation was denial. Director Jones referenced the proposed use information in the packet and stated, "You look in your packet you'll see a page in your packet. This is proposed use." County Attorney Michael Hill advised the Board, consistent with the prior public hearing, that the ordinances allow the Board to set speaker time limits between 10 and 20 minutes and that there is an automatic five-minute rebuttal. County Clerk Stephens advised that she had only had one person signed up to speak. Attorney Hill stated that with one speaker per side, time limits were at the Board's discretion. A motion was made by Chairman Collins to allow 10 minutes for speakers in favor and 10 minutes for speakers in opposition. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Threadgill. All were in favor. Chairman Collins asked if anyone was present to speak in favor of the request.

Mr. John Parker, 1394 Luthersville Rd, appeared with his partner, Paul. Mr. Parker stated they were confused about the acreage referenced and indicated they were not intending to rezone the full acreage as understood by the Board. Mr. Parker's partner spoke and stated, "The original one we were looking to develop some of the 315-acre tract, but that was going to be potential ball fields if we get funding and donations for that... but um... just want to move to the 125..." Commissioner Threadgill asked what the application was for, and Commissioner King asked

whether the request was for the entire tract. Director Jones responded that the application was for 445 acres, stating, "445 acres from LDR to NHC." Commissioner Worsley clarified, "And they're requesting us for approval to rezone 445 acres... to neighborhood commercial. Not 125." Mr. Parker then addressed the Board and stated he had spoken with some commissioners in person and by phone and stated, "I'm trying to bring something to our community." Mr. Parker stated he had attended town halls and wanted to develop uses that would meet community needs, stating he would like to propose bringing "a small softball complex to the area, vet clinic, pediatrics... a general store with a hardware store, a small grocery store," and stated his goal was to "fill some of the needs" of citizens in and around the area. Mr. Parker stated, "We're not looking to just throw anything in there and... just get what you get." He encouraged any opposition to come speak with them, stating, "We encourage any opposition to come and talk to us and let's see what needs to be filled and try to make it happen... work together." Commissioner King asked whether the uses Mr. Parker listed were items they planned to develop or items they hoped might come if the rezoning were approved. Mr. Parker responded, "We plan on participating in the development part." Commissioner Worsley asked staff for clarification about the proposed use table in the packet, asking what the "S" and "X" designations meant. Director Jones explained, "X means it's allowed in the district... If it's an S, it had to be done under a special use." Chairman Collins asked Mr. Parker, "Y'all plan to build all this out?" and Mr. Parker responded, "Probably." Chairman Collins asked when Mr. Parker believed full build-out would occur if approved, and Mr. Parker stated, "Probably close to the seven-year mark... ideally," and stated he did not want to rush into development. Commissioner King expressed concern about rezoning the full 445 acres at one time, stating he would be more comfortable with a smaller initial rezoning, such as 15-20 acres, to establish a clear plan and demonstrate progress before additional acreage is rezoned. Commissioner King stated he was "very concerned with changing the whole... 445 acres to neighborhood commercial all at one time," and expressed concern about future resale and unintended uses. Mr. Parker stated he may have misunderstood and said, "I thought we could leave it in conservation." Commissioner Threadgill stated that the undeveloped portion could potentially remain in conservation, and Commissioner King acknowledged confusion and stated, "I just apolog[ize]." Commissioner King reiterated that he would prefer a smaller rezoning request paired with early development to show a clear precedent and intent. Chairman Collins asked if anyone else wished to speak in favor; no additional speakers came forward. Chairman Collins then asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition.

Mr. Robbie Moore, 271 Crawford Creek Road, spoke in opposition. Mr. Moore stated he was not opposed to development and identified himself as a developer. Mr. Moore stated his concern was that the request was to rezone a large area for what "may come," rather than a defined plan. Mr. Moore stated he did not understand the "X's" on the proposed use sheet and stated that if the rezoning were approved, a wide range of uses could be permitted. Mr. Moore asked where water, sewer, and other utilities would come from and stated that typically developers present detailed plans and spend money on plans before requesting rezoning. Mr. Moore also referenced hearing "campers" and expressed concern about RV/camping issues. Mr. Moore stated he would like to see a plan and "quality" development rather than opening what he described as "Pandora's box." Commissioner King referenced the proposed use sheet and stated that it included camping language and conditions such as an RV occupancy limit, explaining that this was why he asked questions about camping. Commissioner Worsley stated that the list reflected approved uses if rezoned and that the applicant had not provided a clear statement limiting intent, adding that without conditions, the zoning could allow uses beyond those currently

described. Mr. Moore continued and read or referenced examples from the proposed use list, indicating concern that numerous commercial uses could be allowed if the rezoning were approved, including uses Mr. Moore believed were not appropriate without a defined plan. Mr. Moore stated that approving the rezoning could allow broad commercial uses without further Board action, and he stated, "I just don't know if that's the best thing for us at this time." County Clerk Stephens advised that one additional speaker wished to speak.

Mr. Dustin Owens, 21158 Roosevelt Highway, spoke in opposition. Mr. Owens stated that he was not against development and was not against the individuals proposing the business, noting that he believed they had "great ideas." He explained that, in his opinion, there is a significant difference between local individuals invested in the county establishing a business and outside developers who come primarily for "financial gain." He urged the Board to be bold in its decisions moving forward and to choose to do something different from surrounding counties. He shared that he had seen other communities become "carbon copies" of one another, with development becoming "denser and denser," transitioning from larger lots to subdivisions, high-density apartments, and mixed industrial and commercial uses. Mr. Owens stated that while growth can be controlled, he rejected the notion that growth and development are inevitable, emphasizing that the County has the power to decide what it wants to become. He expressed a preference for maintaining the County's current character, stating that he did not believe two-acre lots were necessary and that smaller lots were already available within city limits. He noted that he moved to Meriwether County because of the way it looks and feels now and expressed his desire to preserve it as closely as possible. He concluded with a quote from Theodore Roosevelt: "There can be no greater issue than that of conservation in this country," and encouraged the Board to serve boldly in protecting the County before it reaches a "path of no return."

Chairman Collins asked whether there were rebuttal comments. Attorney Hill confirmed there was an opportunity for rebuttal if desired. Chairman Collins asked whether anyone wished to speak again in favor.

Mr. Parker addressed the Board in rebuttal and stated that some people had not seen the work he had done and stated he had met privately with residents to ensure he was aligning with the county's vision. Mr. Parker stated he enjoyed the county's conservation character and wanted to be part of improving the community. Mr. Parker stated that softball was personally important to him and that he wanted to help provide facilities for children. Mr. Parker stated he wanted to be part of that and concluded his rebuttal remarks. Vice Chairman Snelson asked whether any EPA study or land impact study had been done and expressed concern regarding visible water on the property, stating that the Board needs to know "where all this water is going to go." Mr. Parker responded that such items would be addressed through an approved site plan and that the current request was zoning. Mr. Parker stated that once zoning is approved, he would be able to bring forward interested parties and prepare site plans and engineering review. Vice Chairman Snelson asked again whether there had been any projected impact study done, and Mr. Parker stated that engineering and additional studies would be part of later site plan review. Commissioner King reiterated that while the vision sounded positive, he remained concerned that the request was for a large acreage without a complete layout and detailed plan, and stated he would feel differently if the applicant presented a smaller tract or presented more complete planning documents. Mr. Parker responded that they did not want to invest in extensive planning work if the rezoning would be denied. Chairman Collins asked whether any additional opposition comments were offered. Mr. Moore stated that environmental and engineering reviews would occur during site plan submission but reiterated that the issue remained the breadth of allowed uses under the requested zoning and stated that the community did not want "everything on that list." Before closing the public hearing, Attorney Hill reminded the Board that if any commissioner had received writings from constituents regarding the matter, that would be the time to present it for the record. Commissioner Worsley asked whether anything had been submitted in writing.

County Clerk Stephens stated, "Not to my knowledge." With no further comments, a motion was made to close the public hearing at 7:29 p.m. by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Threadgill. All were in favor. A short discussion followed the closing of the Public Hearing. A motion was made to deny the request to rezone parcel 164-046 from LDE to NHC by Commissioner King and seconded by Commissioner Worsley. All were in favor.

XI. APPOINTMENTS

1. Appointment to the Lake Meriwether Advisory Board to fill an unexpired term that will end on 1-28-2028

County Clerk Stephens reported that Ms. Dora Terry was recently appointed to the Lake Meriwether Advisory Board for District 2. Although, she did reach out to Vice Chairman Snelson to let her know that she was no longer willing to serve. A motion was made to table the request until the February 9, 2026, Regular Meeting at 6:00 p.m. by Vice Chairman Snelson and seconded by Commissioner Threadgill. All were in favor.

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Set Public Hearing for 2-acre lots — This item was tabled from the November 25, 2025, Regular Meeting.

Chairman Collins called for discussion of the item regarding setting a public hearing for the proposed ordinance change related to two-acre lots, which had been tabled from the November 25, 2025, Regular Meeting. County Administrator John Gorton advised the Board that a public hearing date needed to be established, and staff was still working on the required revisions to the ordinance. He explained that the ordinance would need to be finalized for legal review and that, following legal review, the County would be required to provide public notice of the hearing for a minimum of 15 days and a maximum of 45 days. County Administrator Gorton stated that staff recommended setting the public hearing for March 24, 2026, at 6:00 p.m., as this date would allow sufficient time to complete the revisions, obtain legal review, and provide proper notice. Commissioner Threadgill stated that several citizens had spoken during the meeting in opposition to two-acre lots and expressed that he agreed with those concerns. Commissioner Threadgill stated that he did not see a need to proceed with a public hearing if the Board was not in favor of moving forward with the ordinance change and stated that he was not in favor of allowing two-acre lots on dirt roads and believed the County should remain at five-acre minimums. Commissioner King stated that the agenda wording had created confusion for the public and explained that the County already permits two-acre lots on paved roads.

Commissioner King stated that many citizens believed the County was proposing to change all zoning countywide to allow two-acre lots, when the primary concern that initiated the discussion was the difference between paved roads and dirt roads. Commissioner King stated that he would prefer five-acre minimum lots but felt it was unfair that residents could have two-acre lots on paved roads while residents on dirt roads were required to have five-acre lots, even in situations where a landowner wished to divide land for a family member to build a home nearby. Commissioner King stated that the intent was not to open the door for developers but rather to address fairness for citizens and asked whether the ordinance could be revised or handled through a case-by-case process. Commissioner Worsley stated that if the Board wished to pursue a different approach, such as a case-by-case process, it would require a different ordinance and a separate item brought before the Board. Commissioner Threadgill stated that the Board had previously adopted an ordinance allowing guest houses up to 1,000 square feet and noted that this provided an existing option for families. Commissioner Threadgill stated that reducing the minimum lot size on dirt roads would likely increase traffic and increase maintenance demands on roads that were already difficult to maintain. Commissioner King stated that a guest house still results in an additional household and associated traffic. Vice Chairman Snelson asked whether a case-by-case approach would allow residents to request approval to section off two acres from family land. Commissioner

Worsley stated that the Board could establish parameters for hardship situations and expressed understanding of Commissioner King's intent. Commissioner Worsley stated that a special use permit process would allow for limited approvals tied to a specific property and circumstance, and that the approval could be structured so that it would not continue if the property were later sold. Commissioner Worsley stated concerns that a broader ordinance change could open the door for development in ways that could not later be restricted. Commissioner Worsley also addressed comments regarding the condition of dirt roads and stated that Public Works was fully staffed for the first time in years and that the County was preparing to make significant progress with paving, gravel work, and road improvements. Chairman Collins concurred and stated that Public Works had made progress in recent months and would continue to increase activity as weather conditions improved. After discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Worsley to not have a public hearing for the discussion of regular lots on dirt roads. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Threadgill. All were in favor.

2. Update on Revisions of Lease Agreement between Public Service Towers Inc. (PSC) and Meriwether County

Chairman Collins called for the update regarding revisions to the lease agreement between Public Service Towers, Inc. (PSC) and Meriwether County. County Administrator John Gorton advised the Board that PSC had responded with two proposed revisions that they were not willing to modify. He stated that the first revision concerned the venue for any disputes, with PSC requesting that venue remain in Taylor County or a neighboring county. County Administrator Gorton stated that legal had advised litigation could occur in any county, but that Meriwether County was preferred. He stated the second revision related to Item 29J, which addresses consequential damages. County Administrator Gorton further explained that the proposed work would not occur within the existing fenced area. Instead, a secondary fence would be constructed outside the current perimeter to house the power equipment required for the tower. County Administrator Gorton stated that staff recommended approval of the contract with the venue set in Taylor County, acceptance of Item 29J as written, and authorization for the Chairman or Vice Chairman to execute the agreement. County Administrator stated that legal had reviewed the agreement and that staff wanted to make the Board aware of the two conditions PSC would not change. Vice Chairman Snelson asked for staff's thoughts regarding the revisions. County Administrator Gorton stated that he had no objection to the agreement as written. County Attorney Michael Hill addressed the two provisions and stated that venue provisions are commonly negotiated and that it was ultimately up to the Board. Attorney Hill explained that the consequential damages provision was a mutual limitation of consequential damages, which are damages that are not a direct result of an incident but occur as an indirect consequence. Attorney Hill stated that while it was difficult to predict what consequential damages might apply in a situation involving a tower, an example could involve a chain of events such as equipment becoming dislodged and resulting in a loss of emergency services. Vice Chairman Snelson confirmed that staff continued to recommend approval with legal review. County Administrator Gorton stated that legal had advised consequential damages were rare and unlikely in this case because the County's equipment would be housed in a separate fenced area outside PSC's fenced perimeter, and the work would not occur inside the PSC-owned portion of the tower site. Vice Chairman Snelson made a motion to approve the contract with venue set in Taylor County, acceptance of Item 29J as written, and authorization for the Chairman or Vice Chairman to execute the agreement. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Threadgill. Voting in favor were Chairman Collins, Vice Chairman Snelson, Commissioner King, and Commissioner Threadgill. Commissioner Worsley abstained from the vote. The motion passed.

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of Banking and Financial Services and Signatures for 2026

County Administrator John Gorton presented the item regarding approval of banking and financial services and authorized signatures for 2026. County Administrator Gorton stated that the Meriwether County Board of Commissioners currently uses four banks in Meriwether County, including F&M Bank and Colony Bank in Manchester, First Peoples Bank in Greenville, and United Bank in Woodbury. He also stated that the County maintains four accounts with the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP). County Administrator Gorton advised the Board that the designated check signers for 2026 would include County Administrator John Gorton, Finance Director Tammy Lackey, Chairman Emmett Collins, Vice Chairman Jennifer Snelson, and County Clerk Allyson Stephens. County Administrator stated this item is presented annually to recognize and approve the authorized signers for the year. A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley to approve the banking and financial services and authorized signatures for 2026. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Threadgill. All were in favor.

2. Consideration of Engineering Services for Administration of 2026 LMIG Bid Process

County Administrator John Gorton presented the item for consideration to allow EMC Engineering, Inc. to perform the 2026 LMIG bid process. County Administrator Gorton stated EMC Engineering previously performed this service for the 2025 LMIG program, which included preparing the RFP, drafting contracts, managing documentation related to the bid award, and overseeing the LMIG project. County Administrator Gorton stated the cost for those services in 2025 was approximately \$40,000. Commissioner Worsley asked whether EMC Engineering representatives were present or available by phone, and County Administrator Gorton responded that he did not believe they were. Commissioner Worsley asked whether the cost was deducted from the project cost at the end, and County Administrator Gorton stated that in 2025 the fee was calculated as a percentage of the estimated bid, approximately 4%. Chairman Collins asked whether the cost of the road assessment was included in the prior amount, and County Administrator Gorton confirmed it was. Chairman Collins commented that, based on that, the County did not save the \$40,000 by having Public Works conduct the road assessment. County Administrator Gorton clarified that the service being discussed related to the road assessment and bid process for the specific LMIG project(s) approved by the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Worsley stated that he was generally in favor of allowing EMC Engineering to perform the service again, noting that EMC had obtained a lower rate than in prior years. However, Commissioner Worsley expressed concern about the length of time it took to begin work under the prior LMIG project and stated he would like to see contract language allowing the County to terminate early in 2026 if the project did not commence in a timely manner. Chairman Collins commented that the delay in the prior year may have been partially due to the County's process and discussion. County Administrator Gorton recommended tabling the item until staff could obtain the actual contract and updated figures from EMC Engineering so the Board could review the exact dollar amounts. Commissioner Threadgill stated it would also be helpful to have EMC Engineering present for questions. Vice Chairman Snelson stated she would feel more comfortable having the agreement and proposed pricing in front of the Board before approving the item, noting that the Board did not yet have confirmation of the cost. County Administrator Gorton stated the 4% figure reflected the prior year and could change, and he noted that staff had brought the item forward because the Board had previously expressed interest in EMC Engineering, and staff capacity to handle the process in-house was limited.

A motion was made to table the item until the Monday, February 9, 2026, Regular Meeting by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson. All were in favor.

3. Consideration of Approval of IGA for all Cities and Meriwether County — Animal Control

County Administrator John Gorton presented the proposed updated Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for animal control services to be provided within Meriwether County for adoption by all municipalities located within the County. County Administrator Gorton stated the proposed IGA had been reviewed and approved by legal counsel. County Administrator Gorton explained that a fee must be established in Section 1.7 for animals housed at the County animal shelter. He stated that, in addition to applicable veterinary expenses, staff recommended setting the fee at \$45. County Administrator Gorton noted the \$45 recommendation was provided by Animal Control Director George Richmond. County Administrator Gorton stated Board approval was required before the IGA could be distributed to the municipalities for adoption. A motion was made by Commissioner Threadgill to approve the request. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Worsley. All were in favor.

4. Approval of ACCG GCIP Grant Agreement — Intern — Probate Court

County Administrator John Gorton presented the ACCG GCIP Grant Agreement for an intern to be placed with the Meriwether County Probate Court for 2026. County Administrator Gorton stated that each year the ACCG GCIP offers grant opportunities for interns that are available to any department within the County. He explained that in recent years the Probate Court has received an intern through this grant and had also been awarded an intern for 2026. County Administrator Gorton stated the grant operates on a reimbursement basis and provides the opportunity for interns to gain hands-on experience in the designated department. He recommended approval and authorization for the Chairman or Vice Chairman to sign the agreement. County Administrator Gorton noted this was the same contract that had been used for several years and stated he believed legal had reviewed it, but it was consistent with prior years. County Attorney Michael Hill stated the agreement had been revised the first time it came before the Board approximately four years ago, and ACCG had been submitting the same agreement since that time. Attorney Hill stated he was not certain whether this year's agreement was identical, but he had no objections to it. County Administrator Gorton stated staff could compare the documents to confirm it was the same agreement. A motion was made by Commissioner Threadgill to approve the ACCG GCIP Grant Agreement for the Probate Court intern and authorize the Chairman or Vice Chairman to sign with legal's review. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson. All were in favor.

5. Request approval to replace the grease trap — Meriwether County Jail

County Administrator Gorton informed the Board that Max Plumbing is currently performing repairs on the Meriwether County Jail sanitary sewer lines and, during the course of that work, discovered additional damage to the sanitary line connected to the grease trap. He explained that the line consists of older metal piping and is in need of repair. County Administrator Gorton stated that Max Plumbing is already working in the area and has provided a repair quote in the amount of \$19,929. He further advised that the company has agreed to the previously established terms requested by legal counsel. Staff recommended allowing Max Plumbing to complete the additional work in conjunction with the existing project, and County Administrator Gorton stated that the contractor was prepared to begin the work the following day if approved. He advised that funding would be through SPLOST. Staff recommended approval and requested authorization for the Chairman or Vice Chairman to execute the agreement. A motion was made

to approve the request as outlined by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Threadgill. All were in favor.

After the motion was made, Commissioner Worsley asked if approving additional work was going to place the County at risk of violating any bidding or quoting requirements, stating that this was not the first time additional repairs had come up and expressing concern that repeated additions to the contract could potentially reach a threshold requiring the work to be bid out. County Administrator Gorton responded that because the work involves sewer lines, it could fall under emergency repair and also under professional services due to the sanitary sewer nature of the repairs. Commissioner Worsley emphasized the need to ensure the County was protected in whatever action was taken. Attorney Hill stated that, generally, the County is allowed to make reasonable change orders that are natural to the repairs being performed. Commissioner King stated that the grease trap issue had previously been discussed when the kitchen and backups were first brought before the Board, and he expressed concern that it should have been addressed from the beginning, stating that the issue should have been known. County Administrator Gorton responded that the line had backed up after the first repair and they believed it had been fixed; however, once the area was dug up, it was discovered that an additional section still contained old, rusty piping. He stated that Lee had been monitoring the work as it progressed and that the repair should address all of the rusty pipes at the jail. Commissioner King stated that he hoped the repair would solve the problem.

6. Request for Approval to Replace Grinder Station for the main sewer line — Meriwether County Jail

County Administrator Gorton advised the Board that the existing grinder station currently in service is no longer effectively addressing foreign matter issues at the County's pump station, which flows to the Greenville Wastewater Treatment Plant. He explained that, in order to resolve the issue, a new manual bar screen will be installed as a seal unit to isolate the water flow. County Administrator Gorton stated that this system will prevent debris from bypassing the screening process and will significantly reduce the amount of debris entering the waste channel without being properly screened. He stated that the cost of the system is \$19,400, with funding to be through SPLOST. Staff recommended approval and requested authorization for Environmental Instrumental and Calibration to install the required equipment. County Administrator Gorton added that he had spoken with Lee Whatley regarding the project and stated the system is an outside screening system that has been in place for numerous years and, from his understanding, has exhausted its lifespan. He further stated that photographs were included in the meeting packet showing the debris coming through and explained that the new system would allow staff to screen and remove debris to keep it from entering the line. A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley to approve as outlined, and the motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson. All were in favor.

7. Audit Budget Amendments

a. 2025 TPLOST

Finance Director Tammy Lackey advised the Board that, during the audit preparation process, the Finance Department identified that Fund 541 (2025 TSPLOST) did not have any budgeted amounts. She explained that, in order to comply with DCA requirements, a budget must be established for all expenditures along with corresponding offsetting revenues. Finance Director Lackey stated that the budget amendment would require the Chairman and Finance Director's signatures. She reported that all expenditures with no budget listed totaled approximately \$375,000 and would be adjusted within the fund. Finance Director Lackey noted that, although revenues exceed expenditures in this fund, the County must still have a balanced budgeted

amount, with the debits and credits listed at the bottom of the amendment. County Administrator Gorton added that this issue was due to the absence of an established budget and stated the County would be cited in the audit if the budget was not properly established. A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley to approve the amendment, and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Threadgill. All were in favor.

b. General Fund

Finance Director Lackey advised the Board that, during the audit preparation process, the Finance Department identified expenditures that must be recorded as part of year-end closeout to properly balance departmental appropriations. She stated that the corresponding offsetting revenue line items were also listed. Finance Director Lackey explained that this is a DCA audit requirement mandating that all departments close the fiscal year with either a surplus or a zero balance in their appropriations. She stated that the amendment would require the Chairman and Finance Director's signatures. Finance Director Lackey reviewed the debits as follows: General Government \$650,000; Building and Grounds \$5,000; District Attorney \$5; Public Defender \$27,000; EMS \$30,000; and an additional \$2,000, for a total of \$714,005. She then reviewed the credits as Miscellaneous Revenue \$357,000 and Sale of Assets \$357,005, for a total of \$714,005. A motion was made by Commissioner Threadgill to approve the amendment and allow the required signatures, and the motion was seconded by Commissioner King. All were in favor.

c. Fund 215 (E911)

Finance Director Lackey advised the Board that, during the audit preparation process, the Finance Department identified that Fund 215 (E-911) did not have any budgeted amounts. She explained that, in order to comply with DCA requirements, a budget must be established for all expenditures along with corresponding offsetting revenues. Finance Director Lackey stated that the amendment would require the Chairman and Finance Director's signatures. She reported that all expenditures with no budget listed totaled \$1,312,892.95, and that the debits and credits were listed in the amendment. A motion was made by Commissioner Threadgill to approve the amendment and allow the required signatures, and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Worsley. All were in favor.

XIV. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

County Administrator John Gorton reported that staff is coordinating with the Finance Department in preparation for the County audit scheduled to begin February 2. He also provided an update on the courthouse roof project, noting that materials have been selected and ordered and that work on the scaffolding has resumed following weather delays. County Administrator Gorton reported that county departments were on standby during recent severe weather, with minimal road impacts, and that the warming shelter in Manchester will remain open through next Wednesday using EMA funds. He also noted that his office will continue providing weekly updates to the Board.

XV. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Vice Chairman Jennifer Snelson: Vice Chairman Snelson thanked public safety, public works, and county employees for their preparedness and response during recent severe weather, noting that crews worked overnight to ensure safety. She also commented on the visible progress at the courthouse and expressed appreciation for citizen engagement and public input.

Commissioner Gene King: Commissioner King echoed appreciation for county staff and noted that Meriwether County was fortunate to avoid major impacts from the recent storm. He thanked employees for their readiness and extended thoughts to other areas that were more severely affected.

Commissioner Bryan Threadgill: Commissioner Threadgill commented on the continued progress at the courthouse, expressed gratitude to county staff, and noted relief that the recent weather caused minimal disruption.

Commissioner Adam Worsley: Commissioner Worsley expressed appreciation that the county was spared from severe weather impacts and noted progress on courthouse improvements and road projects. He also thanked residents for attending the meeting and suggested scheduling a work session to plan upcoming projects for the year.

Chairman Emmett Collins: Chairman Collins thanked county staff and employees for their ongoing work and thanked those in attendance for participating in the meeting.

XVI. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY

County Attorney Michael Hill had nothing to report, but asked if there was a need for Executive Session.

XVII. FUTURE MEETINGS & NOTICES

Chairman Collins read off the Future Meetings & Notices before entering into Executive Session.

XVIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made to enter Executive Session at 8:02 p.m. for the purposes of Litigation, Personnel, Real Estate, and Tax Matters by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Threadgill. All were in favor.

A motion was made to exit Executive Session at 8:44 p.m. by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner King. All were in favor.

A motion was made to go back into Regular Session at 8:45 p.m. by Commissioner King and seconded by Commissioner Threadgill. All were in favor.

XIX. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, a motion was made to Adjourn the Meeting at 8:45 p.m. by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Threadgill. All were in favor.

Approved by:

Attest:

Date:

Majority vote of the Board of Commissioners
Alyson S. Stephens, County Clerk
February 9, 2026