

**MINUTES**  
**MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**FEBRUARY 9, 2026**  
**6:00 PM**

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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, Deputy Clerk Hailee Palmer, Finance Director Tammy Lackey, and County Attorney Nathan Lee

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 Commissioner Adam Worsley.

**III. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

All.

**IV. ADOPT AGENDA**

*The following amendments were made to the Agenda: Correct the word "tabled" to state "continued" under Public Hearing. Add #7 Under New Business: MOU for EM Grants Manager and Change Roman Numeral XIV to Report from ACCG Legislative Coordinator, numbering down the rest.*

A motion was made by Commissioner King and seconded by Commissioner Threadgill to Adopt the Agenda. All were in favor.

**V. PRESENTATIONS**

There were no Presentations.

**VI. FINANCE REPORT**

Finance Director Lackey presented the Finance Report and gave the bank balances as of that afternoon. She advised that the investment earnings had been updated. Finance Director Lackey noted that the LOST, SPLOST, and TSPLOST distributions received in January were listed on the report. On the second page, she reported that the SPLOST balance reflected a negative \$280,000, as no advances had yet been made from the General Fund. She further reported that the TSPLOST balance was \$960,000. Chairman Collins asked if there were any questions regarding the Finance Report. Commissioner Worsley asked for clarification regarding the negative TSPLOST balance and confirmed that the matter would be addressed later in the meeting. County Administrator Gorton confirmed that it would.

**VII. DEPARTMENT HEADS**

**Fire and EMS Chief Danny Stephens** presented an annual update for Fire Rescue and reviewed response-time statistics and operational activity for 2025. Chief Stephens explained that turnout time (from dispatch to being in route) averaged 2 minutes and 32 seconds for the County, compared to a national average of 5 minutes and 58 seconds for 90% of responses. He reported the County's median travel time from dispatch to arrival on scene averaged 7 minutes, compared to a national median of 14 minutes. Chief Stephens stated the total fire response time

(alarm to arrival) averaged 10 minutes and 9 seconds, compared to a national average of 17 minutes and 9 seconds. He provided a breakdown of the highest response areas for the year, stating Warm Springs had 860 responses, Greenville had 780, Woodbury had 567, Luthersville had 423, and Lone Oak had 295. Chief Stephens reported departmental call types as follows: fire calls made up 3.37% of responses, EMS/rescue calls made up 82.3%, canceled or good-intent calls were 6.46%, false alarms were 2.12%, severe weather calls were 0.92%, service calls were 5.6%, and other calls were less than 1%. Chief Stephens reported January call volume averaged 12.8 calls per day, totaling 397 calls for the month, and stated 88% were EMS calls, with 350 EMS calls and 215 transports. He reported the busiest days were Tuesday and Thursday, with peak hours between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Chief Stephens further reviewed EMS timing averages, stating EMS turnout time averaged 2.4 minutes, response time averaged 11.8 minutes, and time on scene averaged 17.8 minutes. He reported the average time from scene to hospital was 29.5 minutes and noted that transport and hospital offload times significantly impact unit availability; he stated patient offload time averaged 39 minutes for 90% of cases. Chief Stephens reported that 62% of EMS responses resulted in transport. He stated that fully staffed operations would include 5,475 shifts annually and reported 1,084 open shifts in 2025 (less than 20%). Chief Stephens reported departmental revenue increased to approximately \$1.4 million in 2025, up from approximately \$800,000, which he attributed in part to changes in information capture and the billing company, and stated the department expected to exceed that amount in 2026 based on current trends. He advised the Board that recruit training was ongoing, and that the department had seven students in the current recruit class (having hired nine initially but ultimately retaining seven). He reported the State EMS inspection was completed in January with no issues and noted EMS certification renewals were due by March 31. Chief Stephens reported the department had received 20 new radios with an additional 20 on the way and stated the radios had been inventoried and prepared for deployment along with associated training. He reported two 4,000-gallon tankers remained on schedule for delivery around mid-April. During discussion, Vice Chairman Snelson asked about open positions, and Commissioner Threadgill asked the impact of transport time, including hospital transfer delays that can extend unit downtime. Chief Stephens confirmed there were open EMS positions posted but stated no applications had been received, and he explained that recruits would also complete Advanced EMT training. Vice Chairman Snelson inquired about the telemedicine options and asked Chief Stephens if he had looked into that. Chief Stephens stated that it is still a very relatively new concept and believed there are two departments using he would like to wait and see how it works for them. Chief Stephens is awaiting feedback on how it is working out and emphasized a lot of the issue is a transportation issue. Commissioner Threadgill asked if the telehealth was only social workers or if it included MDs as well. Chief Stephens confirmed it included MDs as well. Chief Stephens also discussed that a lot of places are slowly implementing due to kinks that need to be worked out and the legalities of the program. Commissioner Threadgill stated that he would like to hear a presentation from the company. Chief Stephens stated that he could possibly get the company to present to the Board.

**Director of Recreation Allan Fordham** provided an update on Recreation Department operations and accomplishments. Director Fordham thanked the Board of Commissioners for its continued support and stated 2025 had been a positive and productive year while recognizing additional needs remain. He reported departmental improvements including establishment of a sponsorship program, acquisition of a concessions trailer (used at Lake Meriwether, the ball fields, and other events), and implementation of the RecDesk program for registration, scheduling, and point-of-sale transactions. He reported that the Recreation Advisory Board had been established, though meetings had been challenged in recent months, and he stated the department looked forward to continuing collaboration to strengthen recreational opportunities countywide. Director Fordham reported equipment and facility updates including new freezers, Coke coolers at concession areas, a flat-top griddle, new football equipment (shoulder pads and

helmets), a portable scoreboard, an inflatable tunnel and breakaway banners for teams, and wall padding behind basketball goals with installation anticipated that week. He listed major events hosted during the year, including GRPA district and state baseball/softball tournaments, Dizzy Dean baseball district tournament, professional wrestling events, AA travel basketball games, and the Harlem Legends event. He reported upcoming scheduled events including the CGYSA girls basketball tournament (10U) on February 13–14, the GRPA 12U boys district tournament on February 27–28, the GRPA 14U boys Class C state tournament on March 6–7, and the GRPA men’s open basketball tournament on March 13–14. Director Fordham also reported team achievements, including the Dizzy Dean 10U boys’ team as district champions and state runner-up, the 8U football team reaching the semifinals, and the 9U football team winning the CGYSA championship. He stated short-term goals included successfully hosting upcoming tournaments, increasing participation, improving RecDesk usage, and completing the trailer decal installation, and long-term goals included expanding activities, increasing adult programming, improving facilities, and increasing participation rates.

**EMA and E911 Director Brin Jones** provided an annual update and reviewed 2025 call statistics and operational improvements. Director Jones reported that from January through December 2025, E-911 answered 13,730 calls and handled 27,443 administrative (non-emergency) calls, for a total of 41,749 CAD-documented incidents. He noted that multiple calls can be associated with a single incident. Director Jones reported that the national average for answering a 911 call is 10 seconds and stated the County’s average was 3.22 seconds. He reported average call handling time was approximately two minutes, with dispatch normally occurring within 45 seconds for serious calls. He reported 603 abandoned (hang-up) 911 calls were handled in 2025, with calls answered within 99.89% of the time, and stated 14 calls exceeded the 12-second threshold during periods of multiple simultaneous calls with limited staffing. Director Jones reported key staff changes that occurred in 2025 and stated efforts were made to improve employee morale, the employee experience, and training. He reported that the department implemented Virtual Academy to document and track training progress, including daily observation reports, and stated the system also supports continuing education; he reported many dispatchers had completed well beyond the required hours. Director Jones reported there were currently eight openings at the E-911 center. He stated the department currently had three trainees and planned to hire a fourth, explaining the center can train four at a time due to staffing and training capacity, and that training a dispatcher costs approximately \$28,000 over six months. Director Jones stated the department provides 100% on-the-job training, supplemented by a one-week course through Forsyth after the employee meets certain milestones.

Commissioner Worsley asked clarifying questions regarding training limitations; Director Jones responded and indicated additional questions could be addressed separately. Director Jones also provided an update on the new radio system, thanked the Board for supporting the upgrade, and stated that while some issues remained, the Sheriff’s Office was currently using the radios and the department continued working with vendors to integrate the new and old systems. Director Jones reported EMA received approximately \$140,000 in grant reimbursements related to 2023 storms, which supported radio-related expenses.

**Planning, Zoning, and Community Development Director Cassandra Jones** reported that she and Mrs. Leslie Parsley attended soil erosion “red card” training, and both passed the course. She reported she attended a zoning administrator conference and stated the department is fully staffed and operating smoothly.

**County Coroner David Boyd** reported that in 2025 the Coroner’s Office handled 120 death calls. He reported that 32 bodies were stored in the Meriwether County morgue, which he described as a body cooler located in the IT Department, and stated there have been ongoing

issues with the facility. He reported that three bodies had to be stored at the Coweta County morgue due to temperature issues, and that in another instance he had to transport a body to a funeral home because the Coweta County facility had no space. Coroner Boyd stated he had previously provided information to the Board regarding what can and cannot be done at the morgue, stated he had discussed equipment needs with County Administrator Gorton, and stated that Vice Chairman Snelson was aware of the situation. Coroner Boyd stated he would bring additional matters forward later.

#### **VIII. CITIZEN COMMENT**

There were no Citizen Comments.

#### **IX. MINUTES**

##### **1. Minutes, January 27, 2026, Regular Meeting at 6:00 p.m.**

Before the approval of the minutes, County Clerk Stephens announced that she had made corrections to the minutes prior to the meeting, although the Board's agenda packets wouldn't reflect those corrections. A motion was made by Commissioner King and seconded by Commissioner Threadgill to approve the Minutes from the January 27, 2026, Regular Meeting at 6:00 p.m. 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. (This was tabled from the January 27, 2026, Regular Meeting).**

Chairman Collins called for the continued public hearing on Case #PC25-14, a request from James Flournoy (140 Sheri Lynn Lane, Parcel #074-02) for the special use of three lots in his manufactured home park to allow recreational vehicles. A motion was made to continue the Public Hearing at 6:37 p.m. by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson. All were in favor. Planning, Zoning, and Community Development Director Cassandra Jones informed the Board that since the January meeting, staff had contacted Sharon Bowen, who works with a veteran's assistance resource, and learned that three manufactured homes may be available at no cost to Mr. Flournoy to place on the three lots in question. Director Jones stated that the associated fees would be covered through that program, but Mr. Flournoy would need to come into compliance to proceed. She further stated that Mr. Flournoy was not present at the meeting and staff had been unable to reach him that day to determine how he wished to move forward. Chairman Collins discussed that under the current ordinance, Mr. Flournoy is allowed to have mobile homes on the property. Director Jones confirmed that he is allowed to have manufactured homes under the current ordinance, and stated it was her understanding that because the property originally had both mobile homes and RVs, but then went strictly to mobile homes, the property is now strictly subject to the current ordinance allowing manufactured homes only. Commissioner Threadgill asked whether the three manufactured homes referenced by Director Jones would meet state and federal requirements for transport and placement. Director Jones stated they would have to meet those requirements and stated that Sharon Bowen had done this before in Meriwether County and in other counties and was aware of the regulations that must be met. Director Jones also stated that the County inspector would have to inspect them as well. Commissioner Worsley clarified that the manufactured home option was irrelevant to the decision before the Board and stated the question before the Board was whether to allow RV parking on the property through a special use permit. Commissioners discussed that if the Board denied the request for RVs, Mr. Flournoy could still move forward with manufactured homes, but would

have to obtain building permits and address the electrical service. Director Jones stated the power poles currently have 50-amp breakers, and if manufactured homes were placed, the County would need to ensure the electrical service was upgraded appropriately. The Board also discussed timeframes related to cleaning up the property and moving the existing RVs. Chairman Collins asked how long it would take for the property to be cleaned up. Director Jones stated it was up to the Board and staff would do what the Board wished. Commissioner Threadgill asked whether there was an ordinance that dictates a timeframe. Director Jones stated the County normally gives a 30-day warning, and if the property owner is working with the County during that warning period, an additional 30 days may be granted for a total of 60 days. Commissioner King referenced an example of a property near where he lived where the County had been working with the property owner for several months, and Director Jones stated that property now has a court date. Attorney Lee stated that the issue before the Board that night was not code enforcement or cleanup timeframes, but the special use permit request to allow RVs, and reiterated that the only question before the Board was whether to grant a special use permit for RV placement. Chairman Collins asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of or against the request. No one came forward. A motion was made to close the Public Hearing at 6:42 p.m. by Vice Chairman Snelson and seconded by Commissioner Threadgill. All were in favor. After discussion, a motion was made to deny the request by Chairman Collins and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson. All were in favor.

## **XI. APPOINTMENTS**

1. **Appointment to the Lake Meriwether Advisory Board, District 2. This is a 2-year term that will expire on January 28, 2028. (This was tabled from the January 27, 2026, Regular Meeting).**

A motion was made to appoint Mr. Chip Walton by Vice Chairman Snelson and seconded by Chairman Collins. All were in favor.

2. **Appointment to the Three Rivers RDC Board. This is a one-year appointment that will expire on December 31, 2026. This is a Board appointment.**

County Clerk Stephens advised the Board that there were two appointments for this board: one currently held by Ms. Purdue as a non-public member, and the second seat required a Board member. Commissioner King he had served on the board the prior year and noted that while it was often the Chairman, any Commissioner could serve. Chairman Collins stated he would be glad to serve. A motion was made to appoint Chairman Emmett Collins by Commissioner Threadgill and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson. Voting in favor were Vice Chairman Snelson, Commissioner King, Commissioner Threadgill, and Commissioner Worsley. Chairman Collins abstained from the vote.

## **XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. **Consideration of Engineering Services for the Administration of the 2026 LMIG Bid Process. (This was tabled at the January 27, 2026, Regular Meeting).**

County Administrator Gorton advised that EMC Engineering Services had submitted a proposal in the amount of \$62,810 to administer the 2026 LMIG process, which is estimated at \$1,675,000. He stated that Mr. Chris Brazell with EMC Engineering Services was present to answer any questions and that, if approved, the agreement would require the Chairman or Vice Chairman's signature. Commissioner Threadgill asked how much the service had cost the previous year and was advised that it had been approximately \$40,000. Mr. Brazell explained that the fee is percentage-based and that although the dollar amount is higher this year due to the increased project estimate, the percentage actually decreased from 4% last year to 3.75% of total construction costs. He stated the estimate was based on staff's proposal, which included King Road, Coleman Creek Circle, and two miles on Alvaton Road, but the final fee would be based on the contractor's actual bid amount. Mr. Brazell clarified that the proposed fee included

pavement assessments, preparation of bid documents, administration of the bid process, recommendations for award, attendance at meetings, and full-time construction management and administration. He stated EMC would have inspectors on site and would work alongside county staff and contractors, serving as an extension of the County. Commissioner Threadgill asked how many projects EMC currently handled for the County. County Administrator Gorton responded that EMC was administering the 2025 LMIG project, serving as engineer/architect for the Courthouse project alongside River City as construction manager, and providing on-call plan review services. Discussion followed regarding the proposed timeline for the 2026 LMIG project. Mr. Brazell stated that, based on conversations with County Administrator Gorton, EMC planned to advertise the bid by the end of March and bring a recommendation for award in April or May, depending on the Board's schedule. He expressed a desire to keep the project within the current paving season and avoid carrying it into the fall. It was noted that contractors were nearing completion on current work and that positive feedback had been received from citizens regarding the quality of work performed. Further discussion addressed the possibility of amending the current 2025 LMIG contract to use remaining funds, as well as the option to increase the 2026 LMIG budget. Mr. Brazell stated that up to three years of LMIG funds could be stacked, allowing for potential expansion of the project. He emphasized the importance of working with staff on a comprehensive pavement management plan to focus on preservation rather than solely rebuilding the worst roads first. Commissioner Worsley asked what staff's recommendation would be. County Administrator Gorton stated that staff recommended moving forward with EMC under professional services and authorizing the Chairman or Vice Chairman to execute the agreement. He noted that the County did not currently have in-house staff capable of overseeing this type of work, referencing prior oversight by Mr. Bill Cawthorne. A motion was made to approve the proposal as presented and authorize the Chairman or Vice Chairman to sign the agreement by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner King. It was further stated that the Board would like to explore the possibility of hiring someone in-house in the future to oversee bid preparation and related engineering services.

### **XIII. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **1. Set Work Session for 2026 Goals and Objectives**

County Administrator Gorton advised that staff were requesting the Board of Commissioners schedule a Work Session to discuss the County's 2026 goals and objectives. He stated that participants would include department heads from Public Works, Animal Shelter, E-911, Recreation, Finance, and Administration. Vice Chairman Snelson requested that Fire and EMS would also be included. County Administrator Gorton confirmed that they would be there, and they were left off by mistake. He explained that the purpose of the work session would be to provide guidance from the Board regarding priorities and direction for growth and planning in 2026, noting that the earlier the session was held, the more effectively staff could move forward with implementation. He further stated that the work session could be held prior to a regular meeting or scheduled on a standalone day. Discussion followed regarding scheduling. Commissioner Threadgill noted that late afternoons worked best for his work schedule. Commissioner Worsley noted that his schedule was the least flexible due to work travel. County Clerk Stephens suggested that the work session be held prior to the March 9, 2026 Regular Meeting, beginning at 4:00 p.m. A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley to hold a work session for 2026 goals and objectives on March 9, 2026 at 4:00 p.m., prior to the Regular Meeting. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson. All were in favor.

#### **2. Consideration and Approval of a Grant Study**

County Administrator Gorton advised that a meeting was held on Monday, February 2, 2026,

with Ms. Tara Coe, along with Chairman Collins and Vice Chairman Snelson, during which Ms. Coe discussed providing grant writing services for Meriwether County. County Administrator Gorton stated that Ms. Coe had prepared a proposal, which he received that day and had submitted to legal counsel for review, to pursue grant opportunities on the County's behalf. He further stated that the County may also need a resolution to allow Ms. Coe to act as an agent for the County if the Board moved forward, and he would confirm that requirement with legal counsel. County Administrator Gorton explained that Ms. Coe advised an initial study would be required to assess the County's demographics and identify eligible grant opportunities. He stated that the study would also support the Finance Department's efforts in applying for the GFOA Award for Excellence in Government Finance. County Administrator Gorton noted that the study would be funded through a grant, and no County funds were anticipated to be used. He further stated that the grant writing services would likewise be funded through the grant, and if County funds became necessary, the matter would return to the Board of Commissioners for consideration. County Administrator Gorton stated that staff recommended approval for Ms. Coe to apply for the grant and complete the study and requested authorization for the Chairman or Vice Chairman to execute the grant paperwork prior to submission, noting this was the first step the County needed in order to move forward with pursuing grants. A motion was made by Commissioner Threadgill and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson to approve the request. All were in favor.

**3. Approval of Roads Proposed for In-House Paving — Director Brian Griffith**

County Administrator Gorton presented on behalf of Public Works Director Brian Griffith a list of twenty (20) roads proposed for in-house paving across all five districts. He stated the total mileage was 8.98 miles with an estimated cost of \$1,088,903 to be funded through T-SPLOST. County Administrator Gorton advised that if approved, the Finance Department would bring a budget amendment before the Board at the next meeting to properly appropriate the funds for expense tracking. He noted that the only change from the prior packet provided to the Board was the removal of Wrightsville Road and the addition of Dallas Mill Road, as crews would already be working in that area. He stated that Director Griffith had assessed Dallas Mill Road and determined it needed paving due to the number of potholes. Commissioner Worsley inquired about the cost associated with Dallas Mill Road and was advised that the estimated cost was \$185,000. County Administrator Gorton confirmed that the total project cost would increase to \$1,088,903, after removing Wrightsville Road, bringing the total mileage to nearly nine miles, and noted the increase was approximately \$122,000 due to the additional 1.2 miles, which is the longest stretch to be completed under the in-house paving plan. Discussion was held regarding the budgeted funds for asphalt paving. County Administrator Gorton stated that approximately \$1.5 million had been included in site improvements within the budget, which included up to \$1 million for in-house paving and \$500,000 for gravel. He clarified that the Board had previously approved the allocation of funds when it approved the purchase and lease of the paving equipment, and that the current action would not commit additional funds but would approve the specific roads selected. He further explained that the funds would simply need to be reclassified for proper financial tracking. After discussion, a motion was made by Vice Chairman Snelson and seconded by Commissioner King to approve the roads proposed for in-house paving at an estimated cost of \$1,088,903 to be funded through T-SPLOST. All were in favor. Director Griffith also advised that the in-house paving process would begin at E-911 the following day and invited any interested parties to observe the work.

**4. Consideration of Additional Funding for Road Paving**

County Administrator Gorton stated that staff had been asked to research whether the County

could feasibly provide an additional \$1 million toward the road paving project. He explained that funding options could include use of the General Fund and advancing funds to T-SPLOST to be reimbursed within one year through monthly T-SPLOST allocations or determining whether the General Fund could support the full amount independently. He noted that EMC Engineering would charge approximately 3.75% in administrative fees if an additional \$1 million were added to the project. County Administrator Gorton reviewed the action paper provided to the Board. He stated that the FY2024 financial statement reflected an uncommitted fund balance of \$11,382,351. He further explained that the County's total annual budget is approximately \$24 million, requiring roughly \$12 million to maintain a six-month operating reserve. Based on those figures, the current fund balance is slightly below the recommended reserve level. He advised that the FY2025 surplus or deficit cannot be determined until the annual audit is completed, which has a deadline of March 31, 2026. County Administrator Gorton stated that \$1 million in the General Fund had been designated as a potential advance for SPLOST for the courthouse project if needed, subject to repayment within one year. He reported that total estimated T-SPLOST revenue for the year is approximately \$3.1 million, with commitments including the 2025 LMIG and previously lease-committed amounts totaling \$328,820.44, approximately \$1 million for in-house paving (as just approved), and \$732,955 from T-SPLOST for the 2026 LMIG. He noted that anticipated LMIG funding is \$942,445, requiring approximately a 30% match of roughly \$270,000, along with an additional \$400,000 for paving coming from T-SPLOST. After those commitments, he stated that approximately \$1 million would remain available for equipment purchases, gravel, and related needs. County Administrator Gorton recommended waiting until the FY2025 audit is complete before allocating any additional funding. He further noted that 2025 LRA funds are already committed to culvert and bridge repairs and that the Board would need to prioritize those projects. For reference, he stated that the in-house paving estimate of \$1,888,093 would cover 8.98 miles at an estimated \$122,494 per mile. He added that when combined with the 2026 LMIG mileage, approximately 16.26 miles would be paved in 2026, not including roads that were scheduled under the 2025 LMIG. Commissioner Worsley discussed whether previously scheduled 2025 LMIG roads shouldn't be counted in the current totals and clarified that those projects were part of the prior year's allocation. Discussion was also held regarding the distinction between General Fund, Special Projects, and SPLOST funds, including the use of ARPA-designated funds and restricted balances. County Administrator Gorton clarified that while the total fund balance reflects approximately \$14 million, about \$3 million of that amount is restricted. He further explained that 2024 LRA funds were largely allocated, including \$517,885.10 designated for LMIG, and that 2025 LRA funds—slightly over \$1 million—have not yet been allocated to specific projects and will need to be addressed by the Board. Commissioner Threadgill expressed a desire to review in-house paving performance before committing additional funds and agreed that 2025 LRA funds and other allocations should be discussed further during the upcoming Work Session. A motion was made by Commissioner Threadgill and seconded by Commissioner Worsley to wait until completion of the FY2025 audit before considering allocation of an additional \$1 million for road paving. All were in favor. County Administrator Gorton stated the item would be brought back before the Board once the audit is complete.

**5. Consideration and Approval of Change Order #1 — Courthouse Roof Project**

County Administrator Gorton stated that River City Contracting, Inc. submitted Change Order #1 for the courthouse roof project. He explained that the change order reflects a change in the

roof type from a TPO coating to a metal roof, resulting in a cost savings of \$25,000. County Administrator Gorton noted that the matter had previously been brought before the Board and discussed, but the Board had not formally approved and signed the change order. He advised that approval was required for the alternate roof selection, and that the AIA change order document would require signature from Commissioner Worsley, who was serving as Chairman at the time the change order was issued. County Administrator Gorton further stated that the change order for a dark bronze metal roof in place of the TPO roof would require signature from the Chair or Vice Chair and reflected the \$25,000 cost savings. A motion was made by Commissioner Threadgill and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson to approve Change Order #1 as presented. All were in favor.

**6. Consideration and Approval of Change Order #2 — Courthouse Roof Project**

County Administrator Gorton presented Change Order #2 submitted by River City Contracting for the courthouse roof project. He explained that the change order removes the 4-inch base layer of insulation at the roof gutter and changes the coping from pre-manufactured .50 aluminum to shop-formed coping. County Administrator Gorton advised that this modification results in a cost savings of \$7,200. He stated that approval of the change was required for the revised scope of work and would require the signature of the Chair or Vice Chair. He noted that he was pleased to bring forward another change order reflecting savings rather than additional expenditures. Following brief discussion, during which it was noted that the changes related to roofing specifications and engineering details, a motion was made by Vice Chairman Snelson and seconded by Commissioner Threadgill to approve Change Order #2 as presented and to authorize the appropriate signature. All were in favor.

**7. Agenda was Amended to Add: MOU for EM Grants Manager**

Chairman Collins stated that the agenda was amended to add an item regarding the EM Grants Manager Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and the numbering of subsequent items would be adjusted accordingly. County Administrator Gorton explained that in order to obtain access to the Georgia Emergency Management (GEMA) Grants Manager system, a Memorandum of Understanding must be approved by the Board and signed by the Chairman, pending legal review. He stated that legal counsel had reviewed the document and indicated no objections. County Administrator Gorton further advised that once approved, both the County Administrator and the Finance Director would be granted access to the system. He noted that this access was necessary because most individuals who previously had access to the EM Grants system were no longer employed by the County, and currently only E911/EMA Director Jones retained access. County Administrator Gorton explained that additional administrative access was needed to retrieve grant documentation, including information related to a cyber grant and FEMA grant funds recently received, as auditors had requested copies of documentation from the system. He stated that the only way to gain access was through formal Board approval and signature of the MOU. A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Threadgill to approve the MOU for the EM Grants Manager system, pending legal review, and to authorize the Chairman to sign the agreement. All were in favor.

**XIV. REPORT FROM ACCG LEGISLATIVE COORDINATOR**

Vice Chairman Snelson reported that she has been attending the weekly ACCG legislative update Zoom calls each Friday and provided an overview of several bills currently progressing through the General Assembly that may impact counties. She first discussed Senate Bill 462, which addresses compensation for out-of-network ambulance services. She explained that the

bill would require insurance companies to cover out-of-network ambulance transportation services. Currently, local governments are often responsible for paying upfront costs, and this legislation would ensure reimbursement, including for Medicaid transports. She stated that the bill is actively moving through the legislative process and is particularly relevant to the County's EMS operations. Vice Chairman Snelson next referenced House Bill 244, the Local Government Audit Extension Act. She explained that this bill would allow county governing authorities to request a 90-day extension to complete the annual audit if delays are caused by a constitutional officer or other individuals who fail to provide required information. The bill would also require all public officers and employees serving the county, as well as state officers and employees, to cooperate with the county in providing necessary documentation. She then discussed Senate Bill 437, which would allow for third-party inspections and permitting. She explained that the bill would permit builders to use qualified private professionals for building plan reviews and inspections and would require counties to accept those reviews. The bill would also shorten the permit decision timeline from 30 days to 10 days and provide that permits would be deemed approved if the county failed to issue a timely written denial. She noted that this is legislation the County should monitor closely due to its potential impact on local permitting processes. Vice Chairman Snelson also reported on Senate Bill 668, which proposes establishing industrial-use property and data centers as a separate class of property for ad valorem tax purposes. She explained that the bill, which would require a constitutional amendment, would allow the General Assembly to create this separate classification and would authorize local governments to levy a unique millage rate on those properties. Lastly, she referenced House Resolution 1243, which proposes the creation of the Georgia NextGen 911 Fund. She explained that the resolution would allow the General Assembly, through future legislation, to dedicate and deposit revenues from specified sources into a fund to assist counties in becoming Next Generation 911 compliant. The Board thanked Vice Chairman Snelson for her report.

#### **XV. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

Prior to the Report from County Administrator, County Clerk Stephens provided several announcements for the public. She stated that Georgia Power had issued notice that vegetative management would be conducted in and around the City of Manchester, including clearing the right-of-way along power lines. She advised that the notification included a phone number for citizens to contact if there were concerns. Commissioner Threadgill asked whether helicopters would be used again, and County Clerk Stephens responded that the notice did not mention helicopters or drones. County Clerk Stephens also announced that the Tax Assessor's Office would be offering outreach sessions to assist homeowners who may not be able to visit the office during normal working hours to apply for homestead exemptions. She stated that the Tax Assessor's Office would be at Luthersville City Hall on February 10, 2026, from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. She further stated that the Tax Assessor's Office would remain open on February 17, 2026, at the Tax Assessor's Office in Building A from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. She noted that the Manchester Library outreach location was being changed and was undetermined at that time; however, another session would be held on February 26, 2026, from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., and she stated that the location would be posted on the County website once confirmed. County Clerk Stephens further advised that she had received an email from Rhonda Fuller regarding Meriwether County Family Connection and collaborative partners sponsoring the Spring Annual Health Fair. She stated the event would be held on Saturday, April 18, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Manchester Recreation

Department on Perry Street. She noted that the organizers were seeking vendors and sponsorships for the event. County Clerk Stephens also reported that the LiHEAP program was currently ongoing and would continue for the next three weeks. She stated the group had been in the office the previous week and would be present Tuesday through Friday of the current week and Tuesday through Friday the following week.

She stated that the group would then take a break until April and noted that the program had been running well.

County Administrator Gorton reported that he had met with Ms. Tara Coe regarding grant writing services and stated that the County's SAM.gov registration had been renewed, and the County was set on that end for grants. He reported that cameras and signage had been installed at the bridge and stated that the picture quality was coming in well, though settings still needed minor adjustments. He stated that work would be performed at Lake Meriwether later in the week. County Administrator Gorton reported that the audit was underway and moving quickly. He stated the auditors were nearly at a pause and were waiting on third-party assistance to provide the fixed asset schedules. He reported that courthouse work was progressing and stated that exterior work would begin shortly. He stated that the crew should be at the cupola building during the week. County Administrator Gorton also provided an update regarding the Inlac Station doors. He stated that he had reached out to GDOT, that concrete had been scraped clean, and that he had taken photographs and sent them back to GDOT. He stated that the area still needed to be cleaned and possibly repainted and that a claim had been submitted. He reported that GDOT was having the contractors return to inspect the site and determine what could be done. County Administrator Gorton further stated that he had met with the Industrial Development Authority, and that Water and Sewer had held their meeting. He also reported that Clarity IT had come in and fixed the sound system for the public, and he expressed hope that citizens could hear more clearly and that the audio was no longer echoing. He stated the system had been tested in the Chambers on Friday and everything worked properly. Commissioner King commented that the sound was very loud and that it was good, and he stated that the ability to hear Director Jones through the speakers was an improvement and that he did not believe they had been able to do that previously. County Administrator Gorton concluded his report by stating that was all he had for the meeting.

## **XVI. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**Commissioner Bryan Threadgill:** Commissioner Threadgill stated he had nothing to report.

**Commissioner Adam Worsley:** Commissioner Worsley wanted to thank everyone for what they were doing and to keep moving forward.

**Vice Chairman Jennifer Snelson:** Vice Chairman Snelson stated that she had recently spoken with citizens who expressed appreciation for Director Brian Griffith and the Public Works Department. She stated that the citizens lived near the mechanical concrete scrap tire project and reported that their road no longer floods. Vice Chairman Snelson noted that the citizens were grateful to the County for accepting the grant and moving forward with the project. She stated that she was encouraged to hear positive feedback and that she was hearing many good and positive comments about the County, which made her happy. She concluded by thanking everyone.

**Commissioner Gene King:** Commissioner King stated that he was grateful for the staff and the work everyone is doing. He remarked that the meetings seem to improve every two weeks and that the teams are coming together and working collaboratively. He stated that citizens are beginning to see changes throughout the County and that the County is moving in the right

direction. Commissioner King added that it is great to finally see that progress and thanked the citizens for their encouragement and support in helping the County move forward.

**Chairman Emmett Collins:** Chairman Collins stated that he would like to thank the staff, all department heads, and county employees for their work. He also thanked the constituents for bearing with the Board. He echoed Commissioner King's comments, stating that the County is coming together, paving more roads, completing courthouse improvements, and making progress in multiple areas. He concluded by stating that those were all the comments he had.

#### **XVII. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY**

County Attorney Nathan Lee said he had nothing to report.

#### **XVIII. FUTURE MEETINGS & NOTICES**

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

#### **XIX. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A motion was made by Vice Chairman Snelson and seconded by Commissioner King to enter into Executive Session at 7:16 p.m. All were in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Threadgill and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson to exit Executive Session at 7:47 p.m. All were in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner Threadgill to enter Regular Session at 7:49 p.m. All were in favor.

Chairman Collins stated that no action was taken during Executive Session.

#### **XX. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner King and seconded by Commissioner Threadgill to Adjourn the Meeting at 7:49 p.m. All were in favor.

Approved by:

Attest:

Date:

Majority Vote of the Board of Commissioners  
Allison S. Stephens, County Clerk  
February 24, 2026