

MINUTES
MERIWETHER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FEBRUARY 24, 2026
6:00 PM

Commissioners Present: Chairman Emmett Collins, Vice Chairman Jennifer Snelson, Commissioner Gene King, and Commissioner Adam Worsley.

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Bryan Threadgill

Staff Present: County Administrator John Gorton, County Clerk Allyson Stephens, Deputy County Clerk Hailee Palmer, Finance Director Tammy Lackey, 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 Collins.

II. INVOCATION

The Invocation was given by Preacher Mark Harrington with Greater Atlanta Pentecostal in Senoia, GA.

III. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

All.

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

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

V. PRESENTATIONS

There were no Presentations.

VI. FINANCE REPORT

Finance Director Lackey presented the Finance Report to the Board. She stated that the first page of the report reflected the County's bank balances as of that afternoon. She advised that the LOST, SPLOST, and TSPLOST distributions for the month of February were expected to be received by the end of the week. Director Lackey explained that the SPLOST balance reflected a negative balance of \$248,000. She noted, however, that detailed information was listed at the bottom of the page reflecting Phase One of the Courthouse project. She stated that the first payment had been made to River City Contracting, which included the two approved change orders, and that this accounted for the current balance reflected in the report. She further reported that the TSPLOST balance was \$973,000. County Administrator Gorton added that the 2026 SPLOST allocation, which was approved by voters in November, should appear in the upcoming February allocation. He stated that the next report would reflect the 2026 allocation rather than the prior 2020 SPLOST.

VII. DEPARTMENT HEADS

County Clerk Allyson Stephens, addressed the Board and stated, "Good evening, Commissioners. Thank you for allowing me to give a brief update from the Clerk's Office. She expressed that she was grateful for the opportunity to serve in her role and stated that she would like to share what the team worked on in 2025 and what they are continuing to focus on moving forward. She explained that, as County Clerk, her responsibility was to make sure the Board's actions were properly recorded, legally compliant, and accessible to the public. She stated that

she approaches the role with a strong sense of responsibility and integrity, and that the Clerk's Office works daily to ensure Agendas, Minutes, Ordinances, and Resolutions are accurate and properly maintained in accordance with state law. She emphasized that her goal is to carry out these duties with fairness, accountability, and respect for the citizens served by the County. County Clerk Stephens reported that in 2025, the office prepared Agendas and documentation for 40 meetings, including Regular Meetings, Work Sessions, and Special Called Meetings. She explained that preparation for each meeting includes assembling Agenda Packets, coordinating supporting documentation, ensuring proper posting, attending meetings, and preparing detailed Minutes afterward. She stated that the office continues working to keep meetings organized and consistent so both the Board and the Public have clear and reliable documentation. She then discussed public access and transparency, stating that in 2025, the Clerk's Office processed 268 Open Records Requests. She reported that so far in 2026, 61 requests had been processed. She explained that each request requires logging, coordination with departments, document review, timely response, and proper record retention. She stated that the office strives to handle each request with professionalism, fairness, and a service mindset. County Clerk Stephens further reported that she handled the County's annual Property and Liability Insurance renewal in 2025 and that the 2026 renewal was currently underway. She explained that this process involves gathering updated information from departments, coordinating with the insurance carrier, reviewing documentation, and ensuring coverage remains current. She stated that this is an important responsibility that supports the stability and protection of the County. She noted that beyond the required Clerk duties, the team also assisted with special projects and research. She stated that the office helped compile and organize road lists, worked with departments on documentation and follow-up items, attended additional meetings when support was needed, and prepared Agendas and documentation for the Lake Meriwether Advisory Board, the Recreation Advisory Board, and the Airport Authority. She stated that the office strives to remain flexible and supportive wherever possible to help County operations move forward smoothly and responsibly. County Clerk Stephens noted that in January, the Board appointed Ms. Hailee Palmer as Deputy County Clerk, and she described her as a strong addition to the team. She stated that Ms. Palmer has taken the initiative in learning the records system, assists with Agenda preparation, helps coordinate Open Records Requests, and supports daily office operations. She further stated that the office hired a part-time Administrative Assistant, Ms. Aniston Jones, which allows responsibilities to be divided efficiently while remaining mindful of taxpayer dollars. She stated that together the team works to serve the Board and the County with diligence and respect. Looking ahead, County Clerk Stephens stated that as the office moves forward through 2026, it intends to continue improving organization and efficiency. She stated that one improvement she would like to explore is adding the invoicing feature to the Open Records system. She explained that this would allow citizens to pay securely online, improve tracking, reduce manual processing time, and make the process easier for everyone involved. She stated that the goal is to improve service and be good stewards of the responsibilities entrusted to the office. In closing, she stated that she is pleased with the progress the team has made and the steady support provided to the Board and the citizens of Meriwether County. She emphasized that she takes the role seriously and approaches it with gratitude and a strong sense of duty. She concluded by stating that her goal is to continue serving with integrity, consistency, and a heart for the people of the County. She thanked the Board for their continued support and for the opportunity to serve. Following her remarks, Commissioner Worsley thanked her and Ms. Palmer and stated that the Clerk's Office does a fantastic, professional, and

responsible job and that it was appreciated.

County Administrator John Gorton, addressed the Board and stated that the Commissioners had heard reports over the past several meetings from department heads regarding 2025 accomplishments. He stated that he was presenting his 2025 report to the Commissioners and, most importantly, to the citizens of Meriwether County. County Administrator Gorton reported that the County has begun transitioning to commercial handheld radios and rebuilding the radio infrastructure for the Sheriff's Office, E911, and the Fire Department. He explained that the project is being funded through LGIP interest income earned on the County's fund balance reserves, allowing the County to complete these critical public safety upgrades without placing any additional burden on taxpayers. He stated that in 2025 the County utilized LMIG funds to resurface roads throughout the County and 2024 LRA funds to repair culverts and bridges, enhancing the safety and reliability of infrastructure. He further stated that projects for the 2025 LRA funds would be assigned at the March 9th meeting. County Administrator Gorton explained that through SPLOST, a one-cent sales tax, and TSPLOST, an additional one-cent sales tax — totaling two cents generated by everyone who shops in Meriwether County — the County has continued to reinvest directly into the community. He reported that with SPLOST funds the County remounted an ambulance box onto a new chassis, purchased and outfitted new Sheriff's Office vehicles, acquired Public Works trucks, added a recreation concession trailer, and completed multiple building renovations. He stated that the largest share of SPLOST funding supports building improvements, including the initial phases of the Courthouse renovation project. He noted that this work addresses the roof and third-floor courtroom and included exterior restoration and upgrades to the first-, second-, and third-floor HVAC systems, as well as interior renovations. County Administrator Gorton further explained that TSPLOST funds are dedicated exclusively to roads and equipment. Using those funds, the County placed gravel on numerous dirt roads, widened Alvaton Road and Judson Bulloch Road, and leased equipment to launch an in-house paving program scheduled to begin in 2026, covering 8.98 miles. He added that the County has also purchased essential road equipment, including a mini excavator, dump truck, and flatbed pickup, to support paving operations. Looking ahead, he stated that TSPLOST will continue to focus primarily on gravel for dirt roads, asphalt for in-house paving, and the equipment necessary to properly maintain roads throughout Meriwether County. County Administrator Gorton concluded by stating that it has been an honor and privilege to work alongside the Commissioners to initiate and complete these projects. He stated that he will continue to advise the Commissioners on the most effective and responsible ways to invest taxpayers' dollars. He further stated that his office door remains open to every County employee and every citizen of Meriwether County, and that with continued input and collaboration, the County can work together to make 2026 an even better year. He concluded by thanking the Board and wishing everyone a blessed evening. Following his remarks, Commissioner Worsley stated that the list of projects presented was significant and represented the most work seen coming out of the County in quite some time. He noted that it takes considerable effort from staff and others to accomplish that work and expressed hope that citizens are paying attention and recognizing the effort. He thanked County Administrator Gorton for the report.

VIII. CITIZEN COMMENT

There were no Citizen Comments.

IX. MINUTES

1. Minutes, February 9, 2026, Regular Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

County Clerk Stephens announced that she had made a few typographical and grammatical errors that were brought to her attention before the meeting. She noted that the copy of the Minutes in the Commissioner's Agenda Packet did not reflect the changes that she made. A motion was made to Approve the Minutes by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner King. All were in favor.

X. PUBLIC HEARING

There were no Public Hearings.

XI. APPOINTMENTS

There were no Appointments.

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no Unfinished Business.

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval to Open Local Government Investment Pool Account (LGIP)

a. 2025 TSPLOST

County Administrator Gorton stated that staff was seeking approval to open a Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) account titled "2025 TSPLOST" in order to deposit those funds into the LGIP, which yields a higher interest rate. Commissioner Worsley asked if this was the same process that had been used for previous accounts. County Administrator Gorton confirmed that it was, explaining that this was simply the new 2025 TSPLOST account. He also noted for clarification that the resolution related to the account would appear later on the Agenda. During discussion, it was noted by Commissioner Worsley that these are the funds generating interest revenue that has been used to assist with major projects, including the initial phases of the Courthouse renovation and other building improvements, without placing an additional tax burden on citizens. County Administrator Gorton confirmed that the additional income is generated through earned interest. A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson to approve the opening of the 2025 TSPLOST LGIP account. All were in favor.

b. 2026 SPLOST

County Administrator Gorton then stated that staff was seeking approval to open a Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) account titled "2026 SPLOST" in order to deposit those funds into the LGIP to earn a higher interest rate. A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson to approve the opening of the 2026 SPLOST LGIP account. All were in favor.

2. Approval to Update Resolutions for Local Government Investment Pool Account (LGIP)

a. General Account

County Administrator Gorton stated that this update is completed annually due to changes in authorized signers. Staff requested approval to update the resolution to reflect the current authorized check signers for 2026 on the LGIP account titled "General Account," which is the Landfill LGIP account. He explained that the updated resolution would include the current

account number and the revised list of authorized signers and that the resolution must be signed by the Chairman, with identification verified by LGIP. He further stated that the documents included in the packet were generic resolutions and that the specific account information had not yet been input. Staff recommended approval of the updated resolution and authorization for the Chairman to execute the resolution. A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson to approve the updated resolution for the General Account LGIP. All were in favor.

b. General Fund

County Administrator Gorton stated that this item was the same as the previous one but applied to the General Fund LGIP account, which currently holds approximately \$14,165,153.46. He explained that the resolution simply needed to be updated to reflect the current authorized signers for 2026. A motion was made by Commissioner King and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson to approve the updated resolution for the General Fund LGIP account. All were in favor.

c. 2020 SPLOST

County Administrator Gorton stated that this item pertained to the 2020 SPLOST LGIP account, which is titled "2020 SPLOST" with the State of Georgia. He explained that the account title cannot be corrected without closing and reopening the account, so it would remain as currently titled. This item was to update the resolution to reflect the current authorized signers for 2026. A motion was made by Commissioner King and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson to approve the updated resolution for the 2020 SPLOST LGIP account. All were in favor.

d. General Fund Projects

County Administrator Gorton stated that this was the final resolution update for 2026 signers and applied to the General Fund Projects LGIP account, which consists of former ARPA funds and currently holds approximately \$3,763,281.53. A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner King to approve the updated resolution for the General Fund Projects LGIP account. All were in favor.

3. Approval to Sign New Resolution for Local Government Investment Pool Account - (LGIP)

a. 2025 TPLOST

County Administrator Gorton stated that a new resolution would need to be signed for the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) account titled "2025 TSPLOST," using the same authorized check signers for 2026. A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Chairman Collins to approve the new resolution for the 2025 TSPLOST LGIP account. All were in favor.

b. 2026 SPLOST

County Administrator Gorton stated that this item was the same as the previous one but would apply to the LGIP account titled "2026 SPLOST." It was noted that the issue paper contained a spelling error, which would be corrected to reflect "SPLOST." A motion was made by Commissioner King and seconded by Commissioner Worsley to approve the new resolution for the 2026 SPLOST LGIP account. All were in favor.

Following approval, Commissioner Worsley wanted to provide additional clarification regarding the County's use of LGIP accounts. County Administrator Gorton explained that this practice had been in place prior to his arrival but had been utilized more heavily since August 2023. He stated that the County has placed taxpayer funds, including SPLOST and TSPLOST revenues, into the high-interest LGIP accounts managed through the State of Georgia in order to earn a

greater return. He noted that approximately \$250,000 invested in LGIP generates roughly \$800 in interest, close to \$1 million generates approximately \$3,000, and approximately \$3 million generates around \$11,000 in interest — significantly more than what would typically be earned in a traditional bank account. He emphasized that this program allows the County to invest funds and receive a return similar to an individual investment account. Commissioner Worsley further stated that in 2025 the County generated over \$700,000 in additional income through interest earnings without raising taxes, but rather by investing existing tax revenues. He described it as a great program and opportunity and noted that those funds are now available when needed. County Administrator Gorton added that the use of LGIP accounts helps prevent the need to increase the millage rate and provides additional funding projects within SPLOST, TSPLOST, and the General Fund. Commissioner Worsley noted that this has been a significant financial advancement for the County over the past two to three years, and thanked County Administrator Gorton.

4. Approval to Close Local Government Investment Account — (LGIP) — 2020 TSPLOST

County Administrator Gorton stated that staff was requesting approval to close the 2020 TSPLOST LGIP account, as all remaining funds would be dispersed upon completion of the 2025 LMIG project, which is anticipated to be completed in March. He explained that the remaining funds would be transferred to the 2020 TSPLOST bank account at F&M Bank and remitted to C.W. Matthews upon receipt of the final invoice. Staff recommended transferring the remaining balance to the 2020 TSPLOST bank account and formally closing the 2020 TSPLOST LGIP account. County Administrator Gorton further stated that he had not previously closed an LGIP account and was unsure what documentation might be required. Therefore, staff requested authorization for the Chairman to execute any necessary documents required to finalize the closure of the account. A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson to approve transferring the remaining funds, closing the 2020 TSPLOST LGIP account, and authorizing the Chairman to execute any required documentation. All were in favor.

5. Budget Amendment for In-House Paving — Director Tammy Lackey

Finance Director Lackey presented a request for a budget amendment related to in-house paving. She stated that the request was to reallocate funds in the amount of \$1,088,903 for in-house paving. She explained that the current budget in Fund 541 under Site Improvements was \$1,530,101, and that reallocating \$1,088,903 would leave a remaining balance of \$441,198 in the Site Improvements account. Director Lackey stated that the \$1,088,903 was available within Fund 541 Site Improvements and would be transferred to the Fund 541 Site Improvements Repaving account. She explained that this budget amendment was necessary to properly allocate the in-house paving expenditures for accounting purposes. She further noted that the amendment would require the signatures of the Chairman and the Finance Director and that the accounting debits and credits were included in the documentation. During discussion, it was clarified that this amendment related to the in-house paving work that had already been approved by the Board and that the funds had already been budgeted; the amendment simply moved the funds into the appropriate account for financial tracking. A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson to approve the budget amendment for in-house paving. All were in favor.

6. Consideration of Resolution Establishing a Temporary Moratorium on New Data

Center Development

Chairman Collins introduced the item regarding consideration of a resolution establishing a temporary moratorium on new data center development. County Administrator Gorton stated that County Clerk Stephens would read the proposed resolution, as it related to the County's ordinances. County Clerk Stephens stated that staff was requesting the Board consider adopting a temporary moratorium on the acceptance and approval of new data center development within the unincorporated area of Meriwether County. She explained that data centers are currently an allowable use within the Planned Industrial District under Appendix A, Zoning, of the County Code of Ordinances. She stated that the purpose of the moratorium was to allow the County a limited period of time to evaluate whether existing public infrastructure — including water supply, distribution, and fire protection capacity — is sufficient to support the demands associated with data center facilities. She further explained that the moratorium would also allow the County to ensure that its Service Delivery Strategy is current and adequately addresses the impacts of such development. Given the infrastructure requirements typically associated with data centers, staff believed that additional review was appropriate prior to further approvals. County Clerk Stephens stated that the proposed moratorium would become effective February 24, 2026, and would remain in place through August 23, 2026, unless earlier terminated by the Board. She clarified that the moratorium would apply only to new applications submitted after the effective date and would not affect permits already issued or complete applications lawfully submitted prior to February 24, 2026. She noted that a draft resolution had been prepared and reviewed by legal counsel and that staff recommended approval. During discussion, Commissioner Worsley asked whether there were currently any applications or requests submitted. Director of Planning, Zoning, and Community Development Cassandra Jones confirmed that there were none at that time. Commissioner King addressed concerns about the County's obligation to provide infrastructure if a permit were issued prior to adequate preparation. It was noted by Director Jones that if a permit were lawfully issued, the County would be obligated to provide services required under existing regulations. Chairman Collins expressed that there were still unanswered questions. Commissioner King stated that the County needed to ensure it was prepared before allowing such developments, particularly to avoid placing unexpected infrastructure costs on taxpayers. A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner King to approve the resolution establishing the temporary moratorium on new data center development. All were in favor.

7. Approval of Grant Writing Proposal from Ms. Tara Coe

County Administrator Gorton introduced the item regarding approval of the grant writing proposal from Ms. Tara Coe and requested that the Board consider tabling the item to the March 9th Regular Meeting. He stated that he had not yet received a response from Ms. Coe regarding the revisions suggested by legal counsel to the proposed contract. During discussion, it was clarified that the proposal had been reviewed by legal counsel and returned to Ms. Coe with suggested revisions during the latter part of the previous week. Attorney Hill explained that there were specific areas—particularly regarding compensation—that required additional clarification to ensure the agreement clearly defined how payment would be handled. He stated that the delay was part of the negotiation process and not indicative of any broader timing concerns related to grant opportunities. County Administrator Gorton noted that Ms. Coe had requested access to SAM.gov in order to conduct the initial grant study; however, final contract details needed to be resolved before moving forward with full grant writing services. A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner King to table the item to

the March 9, 2026 Regular Meeting, at 6:00 p.m. All were in favor.

8. Discussion and Consideration to Purchase SmartCop Software — Sheriff's Office, E911, and Fire Department

County Administrator Gorton introduced the item regarding discussion and consideration to purchase SmartCop public safety software for the Sheriff's Office, E911, and the Fire Department. He stated that the Sheriff's Office was recommending adoption of the SmartCop public safety platform to replace the Sheriff's Office legacy Eagle records management system, which has been in use for over 20 years. He further explained that the system would also replace E911's current aging CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) system and GCIC/NCIC interface. He noted that the current systems are office-based, lack mobile capability, and cannot meet modern operational standards required by the State of Georgia, including compliance with the new mobile driver's license requirement effective July 1, 2027. Sheriff's Office Sergeant Justin Krause explained that the State of Georgia passed legislation requiring all law enforcement agencies to be able to accept and verify mobile driver's licenses by July 1, 2027. Upon reviewing available solutions, the Sheriff's Office determined that SmartCop not only addresses that requirement but also upgrades the County's records management system, jail management system, and overall public safety software platform. It was explained that the current system requires deputies to return to the Sheriff's Office in Greenville to complete reports. For example, if a deputy takes a report in another part of the County, they must drive back to Greenville to enter it, which increases travel time, fuel usage, vehicle wear, and response delays. The SmartCop system would allow deputies to complete reports in the field, reducing travel time and improving response times. It was noted that more than 1,300 incident reports were completed in the prior year, and even reducing return travel for half of those would represent substantial time and cost savings. Sergeant Krause added that the system would unify the Sheriff's Office, E911, and Fire Department data onto a single platform, allowing all departments to collaborate and share information in real time. He emphasized that collaboration was the primary benefit of the system. The new system would also restore AVL (Automatic Vehicle Locator) capabilities that were lost during the previous radio system upgrade. This feature would allow real-time tracking of deputies and, if a deputy exits their vehicle during a pursuit, the system would switch to cell phone tracking to ensure officer safety. EMA and E911 Director Brin Jones further explained that the current CAD system is approximately ten years old and due for replacement. The SmartCop system would allow dispatchers to generate reports directly without requiring additional manual steps and would streamline the overall reporting process. During the discussion, Commissioner Worsley questioned discrepancies between figures in the issue paper and the packet. It was clarified that earlier cost figures were based on an initial proposal and that the corrected figures reflected the removal of a previously included 911 position. The total purchase price reflected in the issue paper was \$378,271. It was further clarified that current annual maintenance expenses for existing systems — approximately \$24,500 for Ryzylant, \$3,500 for E-Agent, and approximately \$25,000 for the Sheriff's current system — would be replaced under the SmartCop system, resulting in a net reduction in annual maintenance costs of approximately \$12,000. County Administrator Gorton explained that the proposed financing would be structured as a five-year lease at \$91,000.50 per year beginning in 2027. He stated that the County would have approximately one year to determine the final funding source and could potentially pay the full balance early if funds were secured, thereby eliminating interest costs. County Administrator Gorton noted that the estimated total interest over five years would be approximately \$73,000 if financed for the full term. He further noted that SmartCop was

currently the only provider capable of meeting the State's mobile driver's license scanning requirements and that the contract is available through Sourcewell cooperative purchasing agreement, eliminating the need to bid the service. County Administrator Gorton cautioned that costs are expected to increase significantly if the County delays implementation. It was clarified that legal counsel had reviewed the agreement and submitted revisions, which SmartCop had agreed to, pending final confirmation of revised contract language. A motion was made by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson to approve the purchase of the SmartCop software platform, contingent upon final legal approval and with the funding source to be determined and presented to the Board at a later date. The motion included authorization for the Chairman to execute all related documents, including financing agreements. All were in favor.

XIV. REPORT FROM ACCG LEGISLATIVE COORDINATOR

Vice Chairman Snelson provided an update on legislative matters currently being tracked through ACCG. She stated that the Senate Bill addressing ambulance fees, which she had previously mentioned, is progressing quickly through the Senate. She explained that the bill would mandate that ambulance transportation fees be covered by insurance providers, even if the ambulance service is considered out-of-network, thereby preventing local governments from absorbing those upfront costs. She further reported on House Bill 1063, which would require electric utilities to structure data center contracts in a manner that ensures all infrastructure and service costs associated with data centers are borne by the data center entities themselves rather than being passed down to residential or retail customers. She noted that this bill had passed the House and was continuing through the legislative process, and that it addressed concerns about costs being shifted to citizens. Vice Chairman Snelson also referenced a proposed constitutional amendment that would establish industrial-use property and data centers as a separate class of property for ad valorem tax purposes. She noted that such a change could be relevant as the County evaluates its ordinances, as it would distinguish data centers from other industrial classifications. Additionally, she reported on House Bill 1280, which would provide for the election of a Chief Tax Appraiser as a constitutional officer rather than having the position appointed by the Board of Assessors. She stated that the bill was currently under negotiation. She noted that ACCG is presently opposed to the measure, as it could allow an elected individual to assume the position without prior certification, requiring certification to be obtained after election, and removing oversight by the Board of Assessors. Vice Chairman Snelson also noted that, being an election year, new County Commissioner training requirements were being emphasized. She stated that failure to complete required training within the specified timeframe could result in forfeiture of compensation. Finally, she reported on House Bill 1252, which proposes a 30-day waiting period for institutional real estate investors seeking to purchase single-family residences. The bill would require that such properties be listed for at least 30 days and that a homebuyer be given an opportunity to purchase before an institutional investor could acquire the property. She explained that the intent of the legislation is to prevent developers or large investment groups from immediately purchasing homes upon listing. The Board thanked Vice Chairman Snelson for the update.

XV. REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

County Administrator Gorton reported that cameras have been installed at the Red Oak Covered Bridge and are currently operational using solar panels for power. He stated that he is continuing to adjust and fine-tune the camera settings to ensure optimal performance. He further reported

that cameras for Lake Meriwether are expected to be installed during the week, noting that the solar panels are fully charged and, based on the success at the Covered Bridge, he anticipates similar efficiency at Lake Meriwether. He advised that the County has already observed vehicles approaching the Covered Bridge and turning around, indicating that the closure and camera installation are effectively restricting unauthorized access. County Administrator Gorton also reported that he has met with Chip Metters of the Roosevelt Institute and has held department head meetings regarding Board-related matters. He stated that he continues to monitor the progress of the courthouse renovation project, including reviewing the EMC report and overseeing ongoing work by River City Contracting with Mr. Travis Evans. He noted that it has been a busy week administratively, including conducting interviews. He reported that the County has hired an administrative assistant and is preparing to interview candidates for the Recreation Director position. He concluded by stating that those were all the updates he had to report.

XVI. REPORT FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Adam Worsley: Commissioner Worsley expressed appreciation for the work being done across the County and thanked staff for their continued efforts, noting that there is a great deal of positive progress underway. He stated that, as it is an election year, there has been noticeable activity surrounding local government, which he described as encouraging. He emphasized the importance of clear communication with citizens regarding the role of the Board of Commissioners, explaining that there is often confusion—particularly on social media—about what the Board is and is not responsible for. He encouraged fellow commissioners to clearly communicate the Board's authority and limitations when speaking with constituents, especially during campaign season. He stated that it takes time to complete required training and to fully understand the scope of authority as a commissioner, and that it also takes time to build a team and gain traction on long-term initiatives. He noted that the groundwork has been laid for continued progress over the next three to five years and expressed appreciation for working with the current Board.

Vice Chairman Jennifer Snelson: Vice Chairman Snelson stated that she was pleased with the accomplishments achieved over the past several years and particularly during the most recent year. She shared that she had seen social media content from visitors from Atlanta who had posted positive videos about Lake Meriwether, highlighting its beauty and amenities. She remarked that it was encouraging to see individuals from outside the County speak positively about the community and expressed pride in Meriwether County.

Commissioner Gene King: Commissioner King thanked County staff and Public Works employees for their continued efforts. He noted that social media has helped identify potholes and road concerns, as citizens frequently post about issues they observe. He explained that while some residents assume commissioners directly monitor road conditions daily, it is helpful when citizens report issues directly so they can be addressed promptly. He shared that a recent complaint posted on social media was addressed by Public Works the following day. He emphasized that many citizens are unaware of the limits of the Board's authority and that certain matters fall under other governing bodies, such as the School Board or administrative functions. He stated that educating the public about these distinctions is important and that continued teamwork between citizens, staff, and commissioners is essential for progress. He concluded by thanking staff for their hard work and reminding attendees of the State of the Union address scheduled for that evening.

Chairman Emmett Collins: Chairman Collins thanked County staff and workers for their

efforts and also thanked citizens for reporting potholes and other concerns so they can be addressed. He concluded by thanking those in attendance for coming to the meeting.

XVII. REPORT FROM COUNTY ATTORNEY

County Attorney Michael Hill had nothing to report.

XVIII. FUTURE MEETINGS & NOTICES

The Future Meetings & Notices were read by Chairman Collins before entering into Executive Session.

XIX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made to enter into Executive Session at 6:46 p.m. by Commissioner King and seconded by Vice Chairman Snelson. All were in favor.

A motion was made to exit Executive Session at 7:23 p.m. by Commissioner King and seconded by Commissioner Worsley. All were in favor.

A motion was made to go back into Regular Session at 7:25 p.m. by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner King. All were in favor.

There was no action taken in Executive Session.

XX. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 p.m. by Commissioner Worsley and seconded by Commissioner King. All were in favor.

Approved by:

Attest:

Date:

Majority Vote of the Board of Commissioners
Allison S. Stephens, County Clerk
March 9, 2026