

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Lee Hearn, Chairman
Edward Gibbons, Vice Chairman
Eric K. Maxwell
Charles W. Oddo
Charles D. Rousseau



FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA

Steve Rapson, County Administrator
Dennis A. Davenport, County Attorney
Tameca P. Smith, County Clerk
Marlena Edwards, Chief Deputy County Clerk

140 Stonewall Avenue West
Public Meeting Room
Fayetteville, GA 30214

Minutes Special Called

May 22, 2025
4:00 p.m.

Welcome to the meeting of your Fayette County Board of Commissioners. Your participation in County government is appreciated. All regularly scheduled Board meetings are open to the public and are held on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at 5:00 p.m.

Call to Order

Chairman Lee Hearn called the May 22, 2025 Special Called meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. A quorum of the Board was present. Vice Chairman Edward Gibbons was absent.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Lee Hearn gave the Invocation and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Acceptance of Agenda

Commissioner Charles Oddo moved to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Charles Rousseau seconded. The motion passed 4-0. Vice Chairman Gibbons was absent.

BUDGET PRESENTATION:

1. **County Administrator Steve Rapson and Chief Financial Officer Sheryl Weinmann will provide a presentation regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Budget.**

Fayette County Chief Financial Officer Sheryl Weinmann provided the Board with a presentation regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Budget.

Economic Outlook

In review of the economic outlook, Ms. Weinmann briefly stated that it outlined some of the surrounding cities/counties in Metro Atlanta vacancy rates, noting that Fayette County's rate was 11.8%. The annual inflation rate for the United States was 2.3% for the 12 months ending April 2025. She stated that challenges in hiring new employees for vacant positions resulted in an increase in the unemployment rate in Fayette County, from 3.8% in August 2023, to 4% in August 2024. As of March 2024, the unemployment rate was 3.6%. Ms. Weinmann pointed out that allowing remote work was one of the most common recommendations to curb employee retention challenges. Since the inception of Fayette County's Hybrid Teleworking Program, the results have been positive and employee morale has increased. She mentioned as a side note that the current job vacancy in Fayette County was 12.07%.

Budget Principles

Ms. Weinmann stated that Fayette County followed these principles for several years. Revenues were conservatively budgeted based on an objective analytical process of detailed trending. The County did not use one-time revenues to fund current expenditures. Current revenues are used to pay current expenditures. There was a budgetary link between the capital budget

and the operating budget to ensure that ongoing expenses can be funded in the operating budget before putting projects or capital in place. She concluded by highlighting the fact that Fayette County was AAA bond rated and had been since 2014.

Planning Guidelines

Fayette County did not use deficit budgeting, which meant the County did not use any of the unassigned fund balance to meet the Maintenance & Operations (M&O) budget. There was a continued commitment to delivering outstanding customer service. There was a plan for a millage rate rollback this year which meant no tax increase. Since 2013, due to previous rollbacks, the saving to the citizens of Fayette County was over \$101 million. The new budget included a full five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) of \$7,132,551 and was allocated within the General Fund Balance. Employee benefits have been maintained and strengthening the medical reserves. Currently the stabilization was at \$1.5M. The plan was to increase it to \$2M in FY2026, and to continue to maintain insurance for staff.

Benefit Highlights

Ms. Weinman stated that there were no changes to the benefits from last year. The County would continue to offer the same two plans to staff. The Traditional Open Access Point of Service Plan (POS) with the Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) where the County funded \$2,000 for employee and \$4,000 for employee/spouse/children and \$4,000 for family. This goes into effect after the \$3,000 deductible was met. The other plan was the High-Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) with Health Savings Account (HSA). The County increased funding to the HAS high-deductible plan: \$1,500 for employees, \$1,750 for employee/spouse/children and \$2,000 for family. She noted that the High-Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) had a broader network of doctors for employees and their families to choose for services, treatment and care. She also advised that there had only been one employee premium increase in the past 11 years, in FY2021 for the HSA Plan where employee had to pay an additional \$5 to \$15 depending on the tier of coverage received. The deductible for the POS plan remained the same: Individual tier –remained at \$5,000 and Family tier – remained at \$10,000. For the HDHP the deductibles remained the same for the individual tier at \$3,000 and will remain the same for family tier at \$5,000. She highlighted that the HDHP plan for individual within a family deductible increased to \$3,300, per Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations. Ms. Weinmann stated that there had been a plan increase of approximately 4.5%, and the County absorbed those costs. She noted that for both the POS and the HDHP (HAS) plans, the out-of-pocket maximum remained the same- \$5K for individuals and \$10K for family. Ms. Weinmann stated that there was still a surcharge of \$75 per pay period for those who do not have their preventive care (physicals). There was a \$150 surcharge if a spouse had access to other insurance. Dental coverage remained the same and vision benefit would increase to a \$500 reimbursement to employees.

Ms. Weinmann spoke of the additional benefits, including enhanced partnership with Piedmont Hospital and Cigna providing an on-site Health Coach, Amanda Rogers-Beckley BSN, RN, NC-BC for one-on-one and face-to-face coaching at designated Fayette County locations. In an effort to continue the County's Employee Wellness Program- Cigna provided \$75,000 optional services fund allocation for Human Resources to assist in funding Health/Wellness Initiatives. The County also provided an additional \$80k to be used for Employee Appreciation, Health Mobile Screenings, and the Health Fair. Utilization of the digital lifestyle app, Omada, that helps employees get healthier by losing weight and incorporating healthy lifestyle activities. The Pharmaceutical Cigna 90Now program requires employees to get 90-day supply of maintenance medications for a greater cost savings for both the employee and employer.

Ms. Weinmann noted that Pharmacy networks now include CVS and Walgreens pharmacies. Both have over 55,000 pharmacy locations to choose from. Employees new to the plan or have not filled a Rx will automatically be placed in the CVS network. Employees that currently use the plan will be placed in the network used the most (CVS or Walgreens). She highlighted CIGNA Well-Being Solutions (formally Virgin Pulse) as a health engagement program for medical plan members. Ms. Weinmann also stated that the FSA contribution limit increased by \$150 to \$3,300.

She continued highlighting the new TextCare program – which was a text-based healthcare app. This benefit was available for all full-time employees and their households, regardless of enrollment in a health plan. TextCare provided access to one-to-one Health, and board-certified medical providers via text message or video chat. Services for primary care, pediatric care, urgent care, lab, x-rays, pharmacy and more. A County dedicated care team would triage the employees and household members to the

appropriate service. \$0 per visit. She stated that the County would maintain Omada, and Alliant Medicare Solutions and the services and care they provide.

General Fund

The financial projection for FY2025 fund balance was \$30,235,358. Of this amount, the inventories fund was estimated at \$78K. The Stabilization Fund increased to \$20 million based on the proposed M&O budget of expenses, which was three-months of expenses in case of emergencies. The emergencies fund remained the same at \$2M and the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) amount was \$7.11M.

Budget Summary

Ms. Weinmann stated that the budget for the General Fund left a positive impact of \$2.4M. She noted that the Capital and CIP budgets were also included.

General Fund Revenues

Property and sales taxes made up approximately 76% of the County's revenue. The Title Ad Valorem Tax (TAVT) FY2025 estimated revenue was \$7.2M, with a budget of \$7.8M in FY2026. The local options sales tax revenue was coming in at about \$19M, with an estimated budget of \$22M for FY2026. She stated that other taxes included TAVT, occupational tax certificates, etc. The local options sales tax revenue budget in FY2026 was projected at \$22M.

General Fund Expenditures by Function

Public Safety costs remain the largest expenditure in the General Fund at 41.5%, followed by General Government at 18.3 which included Administration, Board of Commissioners, Purchasing, Finance, Human Resources, and Information Technology all of which assisted in helping the County function.

General Fund Expenditures by Type

Personnel costs were the largest expense at 65.1% and included benefits, overtime, insurance, etc. Followed by services at 20.7%. She noted that Debt Services totaled 3.9%.

911 Fund Revenues

Revenues for 911 come from property taxes at 40.1% and the charges for services at 59.9.0%. She noted that the mileage rate for 911 was Millage Rate 0.210 and there would be no change in the coming fiscal year. Charges for services remained the largest source of revenue for 911 which was derived from the wireless/landline charge.

911 Fund Expenditures

Personnel costs are at 64.0% and services were 27.6%. She stated that because this was a separate fund there was an Admin cost allocation, 911 paid to the general government for services provided via its administrative functions (i.e. Administration, Board of Commissioners, Purchasing, Finance, Human Resources, and Information Technology). Services include a \$300k for the Carbyne project, 477k for the AT&T/Megalink landline agreement and \$248k for the cell tower leases.

Fire Fund Revenues

Almost 95% of this revenue was sourced via property taxes. She stated that there was an insurance premium tax which was put into the fire fund revenues and budgeted at \$5M this year and slightly increased each year. As discussed at Retreat the proposal was for the Millage Rate to be reduced to 2.820 for this fund. This would result in a revenue reduction totaling about \$1.2M.

Fire Fund Expenditures

Personnel costs were 84.3%. The transfers were \$725k to the Vehicle/Equipment Fund.

EMS Revenues

EMS Revenues were 66.1% from Property Taxes and 33.2% from Charges for Services. She noted that the charges for services were the ambulance transport charges. As discussed at Retreat the proposal was for the Millage Rate to be increased to 1.0. This would result in a revenue increase of approximately \$3.23M but would total \$2.06M considering the variance from the revenue loss via the Fire milage rate reduction.

EMS Fund Expenditures

The personnel cost was 73.8% and transfers were \$375K to the Vehicle/Equipment Fund.

Water System Fund Revenues

Water sales account for about 83.3% of all revenues for the Water System. Water System Fund and would be budgeted at \$20M for FY2026. Ms. Weinmann stated that the leak protection would decrease from the \$3 fee to a \$1 charge making up 1.6% of revenue. She added that the enhanced monitoring was a new fee set at \$2. So, the cost to the residents would be the same, however the allocations would be different. The Water System total budget for FY2026 was \$24M.

Water System Expenses

The Water System had several functions. Water System transfers included the \$3.2M CIP, as well as administrative cost, water billing, South Fayette and Crosstown Water Plants. Field operations were also a large expense because that was where most of the operations functions took place. The Water System Bond Debt was currently at 16.1% and set to be paid off in two years.

The two largest Water Systems' largest expenses were personnel costs and the bond debt for this fiscal year. Transfers were \$3,267,930 CIP and \$1,795,938 revenue and expenses.

Proposed Personnel Changes

Budget included funding for 823.135 County Wide employees. 810 full-time, 31 part-time positions, which was equivalent to 13.135 full-time employees.

Full-time employees (FTE) count was up 2.2%, 17.625 net, from FY2025. This included 17 new fulltime positions.

Fire / EMS Services - 6 Firefighter/AEMT's

Building & Grounds - 2 Building & Grounds Maintenance Technicians, 2 Building and Grounds Custodians of which one custodian position would be offset with reimbursement via the Department of Public Health.

Animal Control Building - 1 Kennel Supervisor, 2 Animal Control Officer

Water System - 1 Water Quality Technician, 1 Assistant Water System Director exchanged with the removal 1 Professional Engineer

Tax Assessor - 1 Administrative Assistant

Tax Commissioner 1 (deletion) - Removal of one 1 Tag Clerk

Sheriff/Jail - 1 Captain exchanged with the removal of 1 Deputy Sheriff

State Court Judge - 1 Case Manager paid via increased revenues

Accountability Court - 1 Accountability Court Coordinator moved from grant funded to funded via the General Fund paid via increased revenues

Solicitor 1 position - 1.0 Assistant Solicitor General former ARPA paid via increased revenues

Probate Court (0.625 position) – Part-time Deputy Court Clerk

Personnel Changes Title Change

Administration - 10 Seasonal HS Work Program Interns

Buildings and Grounds - 3 Seasonal Grounds Maintenance Technicians

Road Department / Public Works - Move 1 Position Administrative Specialist moved from Public Works to Road Department

Information Technology 1 - 1 Lead Network Administrator to IT Manager

Tax Assessor 1 - 1 Administrative Assistant to Sr. Administrative Assistant

Water System - 1 Administrative Secretary to Engineering Technician, 1 Customer Support Supervisor to Customer Support Manager, 1 Lead Customer Service Rep. to Account Service Analyst, 3 Grade Increase for Customer Service Representatives, and 1 Grade Increase for Warehouse Manager

Sheriff Field Operations - 1 Deputy Sheriff to Investigator, and 4 SWAT Team Incentives

Probate Court - 1 Deputy Clerk II to Deputy Clerk III

Juvenile Court - 1 Deputy Clerk I to Deputy Clerk III

Building Safety - 1 Inspector II to Inspector III, and 2 Inspector I to Inspector II

Road Dept. - 1 Equipment Operator II to Equipment Operator III

Tax Assessor - 3 Property Appraiser III to Property Appraiser IV, and 3 Property Appraiser II to Property Appraiser III

Sheriff's Office - 2 Dog Handler supplements which included in a 7 hour/pay period differential calculation as a part of the overtime costs

Water System - 3 Plant Operator II to Plant Operator I, 5 Plant Operator III to Plant Operator II, 1 Plant Maintenance Tech II to Plant Maintenance Tech I, and 5 Field Operations Tech III to Field Operations Tech II

Coroner's Office - Increase Case Rate from \$175 to \$200

Elections – Rate Adjustment for Advanced Voting

Designated Between the Roles Identified Below:

Clerk- \$18.01

Assistant Manager \$19.01

Manager \$20.01

Personnel Pay Study

In FY2025 there was a review and update to the classification and compensation plan for the following departments: Building & Grounds, Fleet Maintenance, Road Department, and Solid Waste Department.

The personnel pay study would assist in addressing recruitment issues and staffing challenges; with the goal of helping the County remain competitive. The project was in the final stages with anticipated increases estimated at this stage around \$150k to \$250k. There were some positions with proposed grade increase by one or two. These positions were already included in the budget with an impact of \$126k. Additional positions would be adjusted as part of the study; however, final numbers were still being calculated.

Mr. Rapson noted as a reminder that a large portion of the proposed personnel changes were attributed to the new County facilities becoming operational over the last 12- months including the Health Facility, Animal Control, and the Sheriff training Facility.

Proposed Forced Merit

Ms. Weinmann stated that merit distribution was allocated based upon performance and performance evaluations and used the same approach for the merit adjustment as used in the past, following our Personnel Policies 408.13 (Performance Pay) and 412.01 (Performance Appraisal), for a distribution of funds for performance pay. The alternative approach was to use a forced ranking system of a Bell Curve as a management tool to allocate merit pay. Based upon the department employee population, breakpoints within the curve are determined and applied to ascertain employee performance pay. The alternative approach was to use a forced ranking system of a Bell Curve as a management tool to allocate merit pay.

Mathematically the weighted percentage required to implement a forced ranking merit-based system would be 3.75% of total county payroll of eligible employees. The majority of employees would fall into average performers of 1.25%-2.50%-5.00% with top performers receiving a 6.25% increase.

The county had 40 Departments. Of these 40, 12 have more than 20 FTE's. Smaller departments use a combination of employee performance evaluations and the forced ranking system.

Who was eligible? All regular full-time and part-time employees in good standing, not subject to a Performance Improvement Plan, and employed as of December 31, 2024. Full-time and part-time employees who are at the maximum step with their respective grade, are in good standing, not subject to a Performance Improvement Plan, and employed as of December 31, 2024 will receive a one-time performance payment in lieu of merit.

Ineligible Employees: Employees who are currently subject to a Performance Improvement Plan; elected officials, board members, seasonal or temporary workers (including temporary election clerks and poll workers); employees in grant funded positions; employees in positions funded through the Griffin Judicial Circuit. Employees who are no longer employed at time of distribution.

She stated that the distribution of the merit increase across all funds was a total of \$2,309,476, averaging 3.75%.

FY2025 Maintenance & Operations

Defined Benefit Allocation – \$3.867M Allocation (across funds). The latest 2025 valuation shows a funded percentage of 81.6% down from last year's report of 82.9%. By maintaining the recommended fund per the valuation report, the County would be able to increase the funded percentage.

Defined Contribution Allocation – \$1.072M Employer Retirement Contribution
Deferred Compensation Allocation – \$819K Employer 2.5% Match

Road Resurfacing – \$2.5M Technical Services/Hauling/Asphalt - includes Road Resurfacing (Includes Micro, Hauling, Tack, HA5 etc.); 2 Miles Contractor Resurfacing; 7 miles Micro Surfacing; 25.5 miles Pavement Preservation (HA5, Crack Sealing & Rejuvenator

LRA26 Supplement – \$1.31M; No Match; 3.5 Road Resurfacing (Tyrone Road)

LMIG26 – \$1.26M State Road Resurfacing Allocation; includes \$291k Match; Road Resurfacing 3.5 Miles

Inmate Medical – \$1.79M Contract/Specialty Care

Property & Casualty Insurance – \$987k (Across all Funds)

Grant Match Funding (Admin) \$125k Future Required Grant Match

Tyler Software - \$272k non-departmental

PIO Marketing Promotion (Admin) \$150k Marketing and Promotion

GIS Services \$150k to augment GIS systems' analysis and architecture

Legal Litigation \$100k; decreased by \$50k

ARC – \$152k membership fees; ARC provides \$745k contribution towards senior services and operations

Wellness Program (HR) \$80k Future Employee Initiatives

Recreation – \$348k Recreation programs-\$160k Self-Sustaining, \$60k Board of Education (FCBOE), \$18k Tyrone, \$20k programming, \$37,500 Peachtree City (ends September 30, 2025), (\$150k Peachtree City, \$100k Self-Sustaining, \$60k FCBOE, \$18k Tyrone, \$20k programming)

Ms. Weinmann stated that for the Vehicle/Equipment replacement, the General Fund committed \$725,000. Fire committed \$750,000 and EMS committed \$375,000. \$390,000 will be transferred to the Jail Surcharge to cover inmate meals. \$65k transferred to Solid Waste to offset post closure landfill costs. \$32K would be allocated to Fund 291 which was the spay/neuter fund to facilitate that specific service.

Significant Operational Budget Considerations:

Fire Services / EMS

\$123k Bunker Gear Purchase

\$23k Paramedic Training

\$29k Firefighter Cancer Insurance Premium

\$24k PTSD Insurance Premium

\$42k Pharmaceutical Supplies

\$30k Medical Advisor & Chaplain Services

\$23k EMS Licensing/Professional Fees

\$73k Stryker Equipment Maintenance

\$88k Medical Services

\$169k EMS Medical Supplies

\$114k EMS Billing Services

\$500k Fire Overtime

\$150k EMS Overtime

911

\$300k Carbyne Project Operating License

\$477k AT&T/Megalink Landline Agreement

\$248k Cell Tower Leases

\$200k Overtime

Water System

Chemicals - \$1.1M Crosstown and South Fayette contracts

Electrical Services - \$1.3M Ga. Power & Coweta/Fayette EMC Utilities

Engineering Services - \$325k EOR Consulting & Design Services

Meters & Water Line - \$261k Maintenance & Repairs

USGS - \$292k - Stream Monitoring for Permit Requirement
Utility Locate Services - \$242k Large Project Locates
Leak Protection - \$250k Reimbursement for repaired leaks
Software Maintenance - \$444k Annual Maintenance & Subscriptions

Outside Agency budgets

Public Defender – \$1.049M; Decreased \$19k to \$609k; Lower State Ct Contract; Upper Superior Court Contract \$432k
Senior Services – \$467k; \$16k decrease
Mental Health Services – \$67k – Utilities at new building
Cooperative Extension – \$183k
Department of Public Health – \$37k for Base Fee & Utilities at new building
Department of Family & Children Services – \$39k; No change

Capital Improvement Plan, Water System, Expenditures and Vehicle/ Equipment

Ms. Weinman advised that the Capital Improvement Plan project overview portion of the PowerPoint presentation had been updated and now included columns highlighting the department, project name, status, and budgetary information, which was requested during the Retreat. As listed, 27 Capital Improvement projects completed, totaled \$3.1M, with 8 projects currently active, totaling \$28.3M. She reviewed SPLOST projects noting these projects were categorized by SPLOST year. She highlighted that SPLOST projects completed and/or in process, totaled \$51M, with a budget of \$85M. Water System completed projects totaled almost \$1.1M, with 23 projects in process, totaling \$24M, with a budget of \$34M. For Vehicles & Equipment 26 items were acquired totaling \$1.13M. Ms. Weinmann stated that for the Capital Improvement Program, as proposed, the green highlighted items noted on the PowerPoint presentation were newly funded items, the non-highlighted items were already in effect. She concluded by stating that FY2026 five-year CIP General Fund portion was set at \$7,132,551.

Ms. Weinman stated that the Vehicle/Equipment totaled almost \$2.24M for vehicles – including two ambulances from SPLOST at \$1.0M and 8 SO vehicles at \$788k.

Revenues are above expenses. The relationship between population and staffing increased. Fayette County current population was 126,684.

Unincorporated Fayette County is ranked 16 of 19 for the lowest millage rate across several local counties.

Ms. Weinmann concluded the presentation with the following budget highlights:

- Millage Rate Remains at 3.763
- General Fund impact from maintenance & operations was positive
- Proposed Budget increases General Fund Balance \$2,444,211
- Funds Rolling 5 Year Capital Improvement Program of \$7,132,551
- Changes in Personnel levels protect the existing outstanding service delivery to citizens
- Budget continued to maintain the commitment to balance current year revenues with current year expenses
- Maintained Employee Benefits – Medical/Dental/Vision & Retirement
- County-Wide departmental cooperation continued to yield positive results

The first public hearing will be held on Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. and the second public hearing and budget adoption will be held Thursday, June 26, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Rapson advised the Board, if they had any questions, please send them to him and he would get the answers and forward them back to the entire Board for review.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Oddo moved to adjourn the May 22, 2024 Special Called meeting. Commissioner Rousseau seconded. The motion passed 4-0. Vice Chairman Gibbons was absent.

The May 22, 2025 Special Called meeting adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

Marlena M. Edwards, Chief Deputy County Clerk

Lee Hearn, Chairman

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia, held on the 12th day of June 2025. Attachments are available upon request at the County Clerk's Office.