

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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



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

June 26, 2025
5:00 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.

OFFICIAL SESSION:

Call to Order

Chairman Lee Hearn called the June 26, 2025 Board of Commissioners meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. A quorum of the Board was present.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance by Chairman Lee Hearn

Chairman 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. Vice Chairman Edward Gibbons seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

PROCLAMATION/RECOGNITION:

1. Recognition of the Fayette County State Court Summer Interns.

State Court Judge Jason Thompson recognized State Court law school student interns. Fayette County State Court had the opportunity to host several internships during the 2024-2025 school year. Judge Thompson acknowledged the hard work and dedication of High School students: Taylor Bonner, Sheefa Keshawani, Ansley Nieber, Dominic DeGeorge, Hastee Mehdipour, Elizabeth Toth, Brandon Smith, and Keanu Macayan; College students Maya Wilson, Thalia Tran, Sara Matthews, Isabel Bland, Madeline Sheffield, Nicholas Skipper, Liam Prouty, Taliah Chestnut, and Olivia Holm; and Law School students Madeline Sparks, and Dennis Martinez.

PUBLIC HEARING:

2. Second of two Public Hearings on Fayette County's proposed annual budget for Fiscal Year 2026 which begins on July 1, 2025 and ends June 30, 2026 and to approve Resolution 2025-06 to adopt the Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Budget.

Fayette County Chief Financial Officer Sheryl Weinmann began the 2nd Public Hearing on Fayette County's proposed annual budget for Fiscal Year 2026 by provided the Board with the estimated fund balance for FY2025 financial projection which was \$30.2M. In review of the FY2026 Budget Summary she stated that the two yellow highlighted line items noted adjustments

included in the budget as directed from the Board at the June 12th budget presentation hearing. The General Fund and the Vehicles/Equipment fund were the line items that were affected by the adjustments. She noted as a point of clarification that these adjustments did not affect the monetary figures. The positive net impact to the General Fund's fund balance was still \$2,363,693.

Chairman Hearn stated that it was really important to note that the County's total revenue was \$158M but the total expenses was \$150M, [correction: \$151M] which meant "we were living within our means" and spending conservatively.

Ms. Weinmann continued stating that at the June 12th budget presentation, staff advised the Board of the Griffin Judicial Circuit transition. She stated that for the past ten years there had been a separate account established for the Griffin Judicial Circuit to handle its accounting. Considering the decision to transition to an external audit firm handling their accounting, the management of the County books needed to be changed. Ms. Weinmann explained that there were ten people that would remain on County payroll, three Juvenile court staff and seven Superior Court staff. She stated that the total cost for these expenses was \$973,155. Ms. Weinmann stated that the County would be receiving a \$125K grant for the Juvenile Judges, which would reduce the cost to about \$850K. As a point of clarification, the County was only responsible for paying \$630,228 but because of the staff remaining on County payroll, that cost was increased. As a result, there was a \$217,927 difference that would be owed to the County. She stated that the plan was to bill the third-party accounting firm \$18,797 each month requesting those fund to recoup the over payment. Ms. Weinmann noted that previously these individuals were paid out of the Griffin Judicial Circuit fund with the transition they now would be paid out of the General Fund, which was the change that would be reflected on the County's books. She continued stating that this did not make any changes to the net dollar amount as outlined previously and the positive net impact to the General Fund's fund balance remained \$2,363,693. Ms. Weinmann stated that as of July 1, 2025, the accounting for the Griffin Judicial Circuit (GJC) would transition to an external audit firm. Fayette County would still retain the management and tracking of the ARPA Judicial grant through the end of 2025. This transition would require modifications in the financial system as to where the employees in the GJC would be paid from as discussed.

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

- Millage Rate remains at 3.763
- General Fund impact from maintenance & operations is positive
- Proposed Budget increases General Fund Balance \$2,363,693
- Funds Rolling 5 Year Capital Improvement Program of \$7,132,551
- Changes in Personnel levels protect the existing outstanding service delivery to our Citizens.
- Budget continues to maintain the commitment to balance current year revenues with current year expenses.
- Maintains Employee Benefits – Medical/Dental/Vision & Retirement
- County-Wide departmental cooperation continues to yield positive results.

Ms. Weinmann asked the Board to adopt the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget and to approve Resolution 2025-06.

Mr. Rapson noted that this budget also included the mileage rates adjustments made to Fire and Emergency Management Services funds.

No one spoke in favor or opposition.

Vice Chairman Gibbons moved to approve Fayette County's proposed annual budget for Fiscal Year 2026 which begins on July 1, 2025 and ends June 30, 2026 and to approve Resolution 2025-06 to adopt the Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Budget. Commissioner Oddo seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Chairman Hearn extended his appreciation to staff and the Finance Department for a job well done in putting the budget together, noting this was not an easy or simple task.

3. Consideration of Amendments to Chapter 110. Zoning Ordinance, regarding Article IV- District use requirements. - Sec. 110-146. – M-1 (Light Industrial District), to add Pet Crematory (animal remains only) as a conditional use.

Planning and Zoning Director Deborah Bell read the Introduction to Public Hearings.

Ms. Bell stated that this request was for amendments to Chapter 110. Zoning Ordinance, regarding Article IV- District use requirements. - Sec. 110-146. – M-1 (Light Industrial District), to add Pet Crematory (animal remains only) as a conditional use. Ms. Bell stated that the applicant noted that there were no pet cremation providers in Fayette County despite a high demand for ethical pet aftercare. Ms. Bell noted that to allow pet crematory was distinct from a human facility and posed minimal traffic and environmental burdens. The proposed facility would meet all fire, health, and safety requirements including afterburner and emissions compliance. This business would provide a compassionate service that many residents were forced to leave the county to obtain. Ms. Bell provided a staff assessment stating that the current zoning ordinance provided for a human crematorium in conjunction with a human cemetery in A-R & C-H districts as a conditional use. It allowed pet cemetery in A-R & C-H districts as a conditional use but made no mention of a pet crematory. The applicant was not proposing a pet cemetery, but a standalone pet crematory in the M-1 district. On June 5, 2025, the Planning Commission voted 4-0 to recommend that the matter be presented to the Board of Commissioners for further consideration. If the Board of Commissioners determined that they would like this amendment to proceed, staff recommended adding Pet Crematory as a Conditional Use in the M-1 zoning district, with the following condition: 1. A crematorium shall be set back 300 feet from all property lines.

Applicant Olisa Rainey stated that she appreciated the opportunity to speak before the Board. She noted that this request was intended to fill a need in the County by providing a respectful pet-only cremation service that was small in scale, clean in operation and grounded in compassion. She noted that her proposal was U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) compliant and would be appointment based and fully distinct from any human or cemetery related use. She stated that she supported the setback condition.

No one spoke in favor or opposition of this petition.

Vice Chairman Gibbons moved to approve Amendments to Chapter 110. Zoning Ordinance, regarding Article IV- District use requirements. - Sec. 110-146. – M-1 (Light Industrial District), to add Pet Crematory (animal remains only) as a conditional use. Commissioner Oddo seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Commissioner Eric Maxwell stated that he would be voting for the request but asked where she was planning to locate this facility.

Ms. Rainey stated that she was awaiting approval, and if approved she would be evaluating properties in the M-1 districts to determine which best met her needs and fell within the outlined requirements.

Commissioner Maxwell stated that this sounded like a service that was needed and asked if there was similar facility near Fayette County.

Ms. Rainey advised that the closest facility for these type services was in Fairburn, Georgia.

Commissioner Charles Rousseau asked about a note mentioned on the agenda request form that stated the request was to be presented to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

County Attorney Dennis Davenport stated that was a typo.

Commissioner Rousseau asked, as a point of clarification, if the M-1 zoning district prohibited fresh meats and/or raw food processing.

Ms. Bell stated that was correct. It was outlined as part of the list of conditional uses included in the backup.

Commissioner Rousseau stated that he wanted noted, as a concern, related potential cross contamination.

Commissioner Oddo asked why the original ordinance was written with human crematorium in conjunction with a human cemetery and allowed pet cemetery use but made no mention of a pet crematory.

Ms. Bell stated that was just how it was written originally and there was just no provision for a pet crematory anywhere. And with this request the applicant specifically asked for it to be added to the M-1 zoning district.

Vice Chairman Gibbons moved to approve Amendments to Chapter 110. Zoning Ordinance, regarding Article IV- District use requirements. - Sec. 110-146. – M-1 (Light Industrial District), to add Pet Crematory (animal remains only) as a conditional use. Commissioner Oddo seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jamie Harmen of Fayetteville expressed her concerns regarding having safe and appropriate elections voting locations. She relayed a recent instance at a voting location where the HVAC system was not working and subsequently had a roof collapse that triggered having to move to a alternate voting location. Ms. Harmen asked the Board for an additional election and voting registration office in Tyrone. Ms. Harmen also asked about the monitoring fee associated with new water meters in Fayette County.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Vice Chairman Gibbons moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Oddo seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

1. **Approval of Board of Assessors' recommendation to approve a disposition of tax refund, as requested by Landis L. Brown, in the amount of \$1,161.39 for tax year 2024.**
2. **Approval of Board of Assessors' recommendation to approve a disposition of tax refund, as requested by Jennifer Burr, in the amount of \$2,466.68 for tax year(s) 2022, 2023, and 2024.**
3. **Approval of Board of Assessors' recommendation to approve a disposition of tax refund, as requested by Barbara Edwards, in the amount of \$810.59 for tax year(s) 2022, 2023, and 2024.**
4. **Approval of Board of Assessors' recommendation to approve a disposition of tax refund, as requested by Terri Harper, in the amount of \$8,308.44 for tax year 2024.**
5. **Approval of Board of Assessors' recommendation to approve a disposition of tax refund, as requested by Joy Hay, in the amount of \$1,679.06 for tax year 2024.**
6. **Approval of June 12, 2025 Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes.**

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS:

7. **Request to renew Contract #1447-S, Renewal 4 for Carbyne, Inc. in the amount of \$285,500 to provide maintenance and support for continued operation of the 911 phone system for the period January 29, 2025 through January 28, 2026.**

Mr. Rapson started that this request was to renew the Carbyne contract. He stated that the Carbyne contract was a calendar year contract and ran from January 29, 2025 through January 28, 2026. Staff was asking that the Board to ratify this contract today. Mr. Rapson stated that staff was in the process of converting this to a fiscal year contract so the Board would either receive either a 6- month or 18- month contract to get back on track with the appropriate fiscal year cycle.

Vice Chairman Gibbons moved to approve to renew Contract #1447-S, Renewal 4 for Carbyne, Inc. in the amount of \$285,500 to provide maintenance and support for continued operation of the 911 phone system for the period January 29, 2025 through January 28, 2026. Commissioner Oddo seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

8. Request to approve Contract #2550-B: Water Treatment Chemicals for Brenntag Mid-South, Inc., Chemtrade Chemicals US LLC, and Southern States Chemicals, for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$579,681.74.

Water System Director, Vanessa Tigert, stated that this request was a house keeping item seeking approval of Water Treatment Chemicals for Brenntag Mid-South, Inc., Chemtrade Chemicals US LLC, and Southern States Chemicals, for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$579,681.74.

Commissioner Maxwell brought the Water System's water flyer mentioned in public comments. He asked what the term "eligible customer" noted on the flyer, referred to.

Mr. Rapson stated that it referred to someone who had adopted into the leak detection program. He noted that each Water System customer was automatically enrolled into the leak detection program but could elect to opt-out of the program. Mr. Rapson continued stating that the leak detection program was an insurance program as it related to water leaks. At the County Retreat there was discussion about reducing the leak detection program from \$3 to \$1. So, the leak detection fee would be set at \$1, the remaining \$2 would be converted to a technology fee associated with the AMI system which included the technology, monitoring, and staff support.

Commissioner Maxwell stated that he had downloaded the Water System app and was able to review his account information including his water usage which was a wonderful feature. He noted that he wanted all customers to know about the program and the new water meters and the advancement of this project. He noted the flyer needed some tweaking to ensure it was as informative as possible. He encouraged publicizing the flyer that outlined the new system as much as possible.

Vice Chairman Gibbons moved to approve Contract #2550-B: Water Treatment Chemicals for Brenntag Mid-South, Inc., Chemtrade Chemicals US LLC, and Southern States Chemicals, for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$579,681.74. Commissioner Oddo seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORTS:

Mr. Rapson stated in response to public comments that there was only one Elections and voter registration Office, which was in Fayetteville. He noted that the specific polling precinct mentioned in Tyrone was the old City Hall and did have an issue with the air conditioning system. The Elections Director immediately had fans put in place to rectify the issues subsequently, however, there was a water leak and roofing issues that required the location to be closed, and voting was moved to the library with the Secretary of State's approval. Mr. Rapson stated that the original voting precinct was in the process of being renovated because that was the preferred location for voting.

Mr. Rapson advised that a Life South blood donation trailer was parked in the Stonewall Administrative Complex for the next 3-months and taking donations via an initiative with the Fayette County Fire and Emergency Services Department. He also announced an additional Fayette County Fire and Emergency Services aluminum can recycling initiative located at McCurry Park.

Hot Projects

Mr. Rapson stated that he provided the Board the Hot Topics with updates to the Water System AMI System, Parks and Recreation Multi-Use Facility, Starrs Mill Tunnel, Coastline Bridge Improvements, North Bend Ct. Culvert Replacement, QTS Traffic Signal, Tyrone Road Quad Rail Project, and the Old Ivy Stormwater Replacement.

- A. Contract #1431-P: Transportation Engineer of Record; Task Order #35: SR92/Hampton Rd Survey Database and Construction Documents Prep; Change Order #2: Enlarged Footprint
- B. Contract #2036-Q: Fayette County Resurfacing FY2022; Task Order #3: Materials Testing Services
- C. Contract #2537-A: Kenwood and Kiwanis Park Court Resurfacing
- D. Contract #2592-S: Fayette Senior Services Renovation – A&E Services

ATTORNEY'S REPORTS:

Notice of Executive Session: County Dennis Davenport stated that there were six items for Executive Session. Three items involving threatened litigation, one item involving pending litigation, one personnel item and the review of the June 12, 2025 Executive Session Minutes.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS:

Commissioner Maxwell

Commissioner Maxwell extended a heartfelt thank you and appreciation for the cards, calls, texts and condolences he received in reference to losing his mother.

Commissioner Oddo

Commissioner Oddo extended a Happy (upcoming) Independence Day and relayed a Happy 23rd Anniversary to his wife.

Commissioner Rousseau

Extended a kudos and job well done to Public Works Director Phil Mallon and his team for the work being done on Redwine Road.

Chairman Hearn

Chairman Hearn also expressed his appreciation to Public Works Director Phil Mallon and his team and the contractor for the work being done on Redwine Road.

Chairman Hearn relayed impressive numbers and funding potential that was discussed at the recent Atlanta Regional Commission meeting highlighting the value, growth, and development taking place in the region.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Three items involving threatened litigation, one item involving pending litigation, one personnel item and the review of the June 12, 2025 Executive Session Minutes. Commissioner Oddo moved to go into Executive Session. Vice Chairman Gibbons seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

The Board recessed into Executive Session at 5:45 p.m. and returned to Official Session at 6:27 p.m.

Return to Official Session and Approval to Sign the Executive Session Affidavit: Commissioner Gibbons moved to return to Official Session. Commissioner Oddo seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Commissioner Oddo moved for the Chairman to sign the Executive Session Affidavit. Vice Chairman Gibbons seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that this year the Board had chosen to give merit-based pay increases in four pay bands with the top pay band being 6.25% for the most outstanding County employees. He noted the County Administrators contract limited him to a 2.5% pay increase. Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that in his opinion there was no more outstanding employee than Mr. Rapson.

Vice Chairman Gibbons moved to give Mr. Rapson a 6.25% merit-based pay increase. Chairman Hearn seconded.

Commissioner Hearn thanked Mr. Rapson for the good work and leadership he provided for the County.

Commissioner Rousseau stated that Mr. Rapson had done an outstanding job, however he had reservation doing a merit increase outside of his contract negotiation period.

As a point of clarification, Mr. Davenport stated that he wanted to ensure he understood how to amend the contract. He reiterated that this merit increase was effective for this year only and subsequent contract years would be decided at that time, based on Board directions.

Commissioner Gibbons stated that was correct.

Vice Chairman Gibbons moved to give Mr. Rapson a 6.25% merit-based pay increase. Chairman Hearn seconded. The motion passed 4-1, with Commissioner Rosseau voting in opposition.

Approval of the June 12, 2025 Executive Session Minutes: Commissioner Oddo moved to approve June 12, 2025 Executive Session Minutes. Vice Chairman Gibbons seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT:

Vice Chairman Gibbons moved to adjourn the June 26, 2025 Board of Commissioners meeting. Commissioner Oddo seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

The June 26, 2025, Board of Commissioners meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Marlena Edwards, 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 10th day of July 2025. Attachments are available upon request at the County Clerk's Office.