

**HABERSHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES
6:00 P.M., MONDAY, JUNE 30, 2025
HABERSHAM COUNTY COURTHOUSE
JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM
295 LLEWELLYN STREET, CLARKESVILLE, GA 30523**

The Habersham County Board of Commissioners held a special called meeting on Monday, June 30, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the Jury Assembly Room of the Habersham County Courthouse located at 295 Llewellyn St, Clarkesville, GA 30523.

Present was Chairman Jimmy Tench, Vice Chairman Bruce Harkness, Commissioner Dustin Mealor, Commissioner Ty Akins, Commissioner Kelly Woodall, County Manager Tim Sims, County Attorney Donnie Hunt, County Clerk Brandalin Carnes, staff, members of the media and the public.

Chairman Jimmy Tench called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Commissioner Woodall lead the invocation.

Commissioner Mealor lead the pledge of allegiance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Akins, seconded by Commissioner Woodall and voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the agenda as presented.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

a. Second Reading of the Proposed FY 2026 Budget

Financial Administrator Kiani Holden gave the Commission a presentation on the proposed FY 2026 budget. This presentation went over much of the same information as the presentation given during both the June 16, 2025 work session and the June 23, 2025 special called meeting. Financial Administrator Kiani Holden gave the Commission a presentation on the proposed FY 2026 budget. This presentation went over much of the same information as the presentation given during the June 16, 2025 work session. She informed the Commission that the budget being proposed tonight for FY 2026 across all funds is \$80.37 million, which is a decrease of 5.23% from the FY 2025 budget of \$84.57 million. This proposed FY 2026 budget has a general fund of \$40.88 million, which is a 4.19% increase from the FY 2025 general fund of \$39.17 million. After having reviewed the \$3.15 million in requested CIP projects from the Departments, only \$1.082 million in capital improvements are being recommended for inclusion in the FY 2026 budget, of which \$1.01 million will be covered with existing fund balance. This includes the Commissioners request to add the \$150,000 needed for remodeling the dugouts back into the budget per their request at the June 16th work session. There were several requests for new positions and reclassifications, however adding any of these positions into the FY 2026 budget was left to the discretion of the Commissioner. At this time, Ms. Holden has only received a consensus from the Commission to add a new Deputy Coroner position back into the budget. This budget also includes a 3% salary increase for employees starting mid-year in January 2026, for which she had a consensus from the Commission to include.

County Manager Tim Sims informed the Commission that he had been told they would receive the tax digest last Friday, however the Tax Assessors Office has run into issues with both the WinGap software conversion as well as an issue with the program updates to the states system from HB 581 having doubled exemptions from what they were supposed to be.

County Attorney Hunt opened the meeting up to the public to provide individuals who wished to do so an opportunity to address the Commission regarding the proposed FY 2026 budget. There were none present from the public who wished to speak.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Consider/Approve Resolution 2025-06-003 Adopting FY 2026 Budget

Motion by Commissioner Mealor, seconded by Commissioner Woodall, to approve the FY 2026 Habersham County Budget Resolution #2025-06-003 for the General Fund \$40,883,429 and totaling \$80,366,107 for all County Funds as well as authorizing the Chairman to sign and execute the budget resolution and any other needed documents. Motion carries 4-1 with Commissioner Harkness dissenting.

- b. Consider/Approve Resolution 2025-06-004 Amending the Habersham County Fee Schedule for FY 2026

Motion by Commissioner Woodall, seconded by Commissioner Akins, to approve Resolution #2025-06-004 amending the Habersham County Fee Schedule for FY 2026. Motion carries 4-1 with Commissioner Harkness dissenting.

- c. Consider/Approve Resolution 2025-06-005 for FY 2025 Budget Amendments

Ms. Holden addressed the Commissioners, informing them that this is not an addition of funds to the FY 2025 budget, but rather a reallocation of money between individual department budgets to make them balance. This will allow them to move money from the Departments who were under budget to cover the Departments who went over their budget rather than having to use contingency funds. After all the Departmental budgets are balanced, any additional funds leftover are moved into the fund balance.

Motion by Commissioner Akins, seconded by Commissioner Mealor, to approve Resolution #2025-06-005 for the FY 2025 Budget Adjustment. Motion carries 4-1 with Commissioner Harkness dissenting.

- d. Consider/Approve FY 2025 Audit Engagement Letter with Rushton & Company

Financial Administrator Kiani Holden informed the Commission that this letter allows Finance to move forward with contracting Ruston and Company to complete the FY 2025 Audit.

Motion by Commissioner Woodall, seconded by Commissioner Harkness, and voted unanimously (5-0) to approve engaging the services of Rushton and Company for the year end June 30, 2025 audit in the amount of \$95,000.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The Commission recognized tonight as being Attorney Hunts final meeting as County Attorney and thanked him for his dedicated service to the Board of Commissioners.

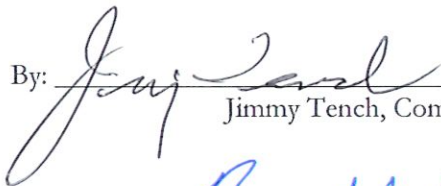
The Commission expressed appreciation to the Finance Staff for their hard work on the FY 2026 budget. Commissioner Harkness expressed his gratitude as well, wanting them to know that he is not trying to be disagreeable, however he felt that he needed to vote the way he feels and that he had several concerns with the FY 2026 budget being proposed that he won't go into at this time.

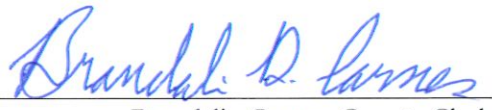
Commissioner Woodall congratulated Sheriff Krockum on the recent birth of his first grandchild.

ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Akins, seconded by Commissioner Mealor, and voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

By:  _____
Jimmy Tench, Commission Chairman

Attest:  _____
Brandalin Carnes, County Clerk

