

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
WARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2025
5:00 p.m.**

The Ware County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting, Monday, October 13, 2025, at 6:22 p.m. in the Ware County Commission Chambers, 305 Oak Street, Suite 201, Waycross, Georgia 31501, with Chairman Elmer Thrift presiding.

CALL TO ORDER	Chairman Elmer Thrift
COMMISSIONERS PRESENT	Commissioner Barry Cox; Commissioner Leonard Burse; Commissioner Jon Tindall
COMMISSIONERS ABSENT	Commissioner Timmy Lucas
STAFF PRESENT	County Manager James Shubert; Assistant County Attorney Jennifer Herzog; County Clerk Melinda Brooks
PRESS	Mittie Vaughan – Waycross Press Express
INVOCATION	The invocation was waived from the Work Session
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE	The Pledge of Allegiance was waived from the Work Session

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to approve the agenda with the amendment adding an Executive Session at the end. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

GUEST SPEAKER: **None**

AGENDA ITEMS

A. ESG – Industrial Park Water Interconnection

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to table this item until the next meeting because no representative of ESG or the City of Waycross was present. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jon Tindall-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-

ABSENT; Commissioner Barry Cox-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

B. Ordinance 2025-03: Weight Limit for Winn Clay Drive

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-03, noting a four-way stop is to be added at the intersection of Stetson Drive and Mesa Drive. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jon Tindall-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-ABSENT; Commissioner Barry Cox-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

C. Request to Add Veteran's Day to Ware County Approved Holidays

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Burse made a motion to add Veterans' Day to the list of Ware County Approved Holidays. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion. All Commissioners agreed that this is a good idea.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jon Tindall-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-ABSENT; Commissioner Barry Cox-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

D. Approve Radio Tower Leases

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve each Ware County department's radio lease for one year as follows: EMA \$255 per month; Public Works \$125 per month; EMS \$130 per month; Fire Rescue \$230 per month; Ware County Sheriff's Office \$130 per month. Commissioner Tindall seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Pope-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-ABSENT; Commissioner Barry Cox-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

E. Resolution 2025-20: Approve Rural Public Transit Grant Application

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-20, which authorizes the filing of the regional transportation grant. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion. Commissioner Tindall pointed out that this grant has been in effect for several years, and there is no cost to the County.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jon Tindall-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-ABSENT; Commissioner Barry Cox-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

F. Resolution 2025-21: Approve ROTH IRA Contribution Option

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-21 to authorize an amendment to the ACCG 457 (b) Deferred Compensation Plan for Ware County Employees. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift called for discussion. Commissioner Tindall said the Roth IRA is adding an option for employee retirement as a post-tax investment.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jon Tindall-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-ABSENT; Commissioner Barry Cox-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

G. Alcohol License Request: 2501 Plant Avenue

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to approve the alcohol license request. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jon Tindall-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-ABSENT; Commissioner Barry Cox-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

H. Alcohol License Request: 1900 Alma Highway

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve the alcohol license request for 1900 Alma Highway. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift called for discussion. Commissioner Tindall explained that this is just a change in ownership. The store already has an alcohol license.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jon Tindall-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-

ABSENT; Commissioner Barry Cox-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

I. Alcohol License Request: 1902 Alma Highway

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to approve the alcohol license request. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift called for discussion. Commissioner Tindall explained that this is just a change in ownership. The store already has an alcohol license.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jon Tindall-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-ABSENT; Commissioner Barry Cox-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

J. Approve Borrow Pit

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve the borrow pit agreement between Ware County and Mark Beeson. Commissioner Tindall seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jon Tindall-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-ABSENT; Commissioner Barry Cox-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

K. Request for Article VIII Text Amendment Changing Minimum Rear Setback requirements for Limited Industrial to the same as General Industrial

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Burse made a motion to approve the request to amend Article VIII, changing the minimum rear setback requirements for Limited Industrial (LI) from 100 feet to 25 feet, the same as the requirements for General Industrial (GI). Commissioner Tindall seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jon Tindall-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-ABSENT; Commissioner Barry Cox-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

L. Request to Rezone Specific Parcels from IP and SDD IP to GI and SDD GI

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to rezone Parcels "050 03 001", "050 03 002", "050 03 015", "050 03 016", and "050 03 0210" from IP and SDD IP to GI and SDD GI. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift called for discussion. Commissioner Tindall explained that by rezoning these parcels, it would open them up for general use with fewer restrictions.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jon Tindall-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-ABSENT; Commissioner Barry Cox-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

M. Request to Rezone 2401 State Street from R-90 to C-3

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to rezone 2401 State Street from R-90 (Residential District) to C-3 (General Commercial District). Commissioner Tindall seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift called for discussion. Commissioner Tindall explained that this property is already in a commercial area, so rezoning will not affect other properties.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jon Tindall-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-ABSENT; Commissioner Barry Cox-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

N. Request to Rezone 840 McKinley Road from R-75 to R-75MH

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to table this item until the applicant, Dongray Johnson, could be present and explain to the Commission exactly what he plans to do with the property. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-aye; Commissioner Jon Tindall-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-ABSENT; Commissioner Barry Cox-aye; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

O. Request to Close/Abandon Unopened Section of Center Street in South Deenwood Subdivision

Assistant County Attorney Jennifer Herzog read O.C.G.A 32-7-2(b)1: *“When it is determined that a section of the county road system has for any reason ceased to be used by the public to the extent that no substantial public purpose is served by it or that its removal from the county road system is otherwise in the best public interest, the county, by certification recorded in its minutes, accompanied by a plat or sketch, and, after notice to property owners located thereon, after notice of such determination is published in the newspaper in which the sheriff’s advertisements for the county are published once a week for a period of two weeks, and after a public hearing on such issue, may declare that section of the county road system abandoned. Thereafter, that section of road shall no longer be part of the county road system, and the rights of the public in and to the section of road as a public road shall cease.”* It has to be determined if it is in the interest of the public to have this as a public road.

Before a motion was made, Commissioner Tindall asked Assistant County Attorney Jennifer Herzog if the County could decide to take a tractor in and start building the roads at any time, simply because they are drawn on the plat. She responded that a judge would have to decide because, although the plat is evidence that it is a County road, all other evidence indicates it was never a County road. There is no proof of maintenance, there is no deed, it does not appear that a road was ever built, and it is not included on the list of County roads. Commissioner Burse asked Mrs. Herzog whether or not this is considered an unopened County road. She said the best evidence available tonight is that until the property owner began this work, it was listed on a plat, but it wasn't a road that was built or maintained. Commissioner Burse said he is trying to figure out a workable solution that would allow the Kirkharts to have access to their property and Mr. Poole to retain rights to his part of the property. She noted that several options had been discussed, but that is outside of the Commission's concern. What the Commission has to decide is whether or not it would be in the public interest to have this as a public road.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to approve the request to close and abandon the 50' x 400' platted, but unopened section of Center Street. Chairman Thrift seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift called for discussion.
Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Leonard Burse-NO; Commissioner Jon Tindall-aye; Commissioner Timmy Lucas-ABSENT; Commissioner Barry Cox-NO; and Chairman Elmer Thrift-aye.

****Assistant County Attorney Jennifer Herzog explained to the Commission that due to the tie vote, this will be considered as "no action taken".**

Request to Enter Executive Session

Commissioner Burse made a motion to go into Executive Session. Commissioner Tindall seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The Commission, Assistant County Attorney, County Manager, and County Clerk entered Executive Session at 6:55 p.m.

Exit Executive Session

The Commission returned to the Commission chambers, and Commissioner Tindall made a motion to exit the Executive Session. Commissioners Cox and Burse simultaneously seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The Commission exited Executive Session at 7:33 p.m.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS: None

ADJOURN

Commissioner Burse made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Date proposed to be approved: December 8, 2025


Elmer Thrift, Chairman

ATTEST:


Melinda L. Brooks, County Clerk

12-11-2025
Date

