

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
WARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 2026
5:00 p.m.**

The Ware County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting, Monday, January 12, 2026, at 5:00 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 Timmy Lucas
COMMISSIONERS ABSENT	Commissioner Jon Tindall
STAFF PRESENT	County Manager James Shubert; Assistant County Attorney Jennifer Herzog; County Clerk Melinda Brooks
PRESS	Danny Bartlett, WJH
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 Lucas made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

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

GUEST SPEAKER: None

CONSENT ITEMS:

A. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

- September 8, 2025: Work Session (left off of December Meeting)
- December 8, 2025: Work Session, Public Hearing, Regular Meeting

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

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

Appointments:

A. Vice-Chairman of Ware County Board of Commissioners

Chairman Thrift called for a motion on this item.

Commissioner Lucas made a motion to appoint Commissioner Burse as Vice-Chairman of the Ware County Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Discussion: Chairman Thrift asked Commissioner Burse if he would accept the appointment. Commissioner Burse responded in the affirmative.

Roll Call Vote:

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

B. Ex-Officio for Waycross-Ware County Public Library

Chairman Thrift called for a motion on this item.

Commissioner Burse made a motion to appoint Commissioner Cox as Ex-Officio representative for Waycross-Ware County Public Library. Commissioner Lucas seconded the motion.

Discussion: Chairman Thrift asked Commissioner Cox if he would accept this appointment. Commissioner Cox responded in the affirmative.

Roll Call Vote:

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

AGENDA ITEMS

A. Approve Airport Land Lease

Chairman Thrift called for a motion on this item.

Commissioner Burse made a motion to approve the lease as printed. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Discussion: County Manager clarified that the hangar would be placed at an angle to allow it to square up to the apron.

Roll Call Vote:

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

B. Completion of Paving on Emerson Park Roads

Chairman Thrift called for a motion on this item.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to hold off on the paving of the remaining short streets in Emerson Park until a drainage study could be completed and moved to another area of the County. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Discussion: The money will be better spent if a drainage study is done before the area is paved.

Roll Call Vote:

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

C. Approve Contract for The Scruggs Company – Phase 2 Local Funds Paving

Chairman Thrift called for a motion on this item.

Commissioner Lucas made a motion to approve the contract for The Scruggs Company in the amount of \$657,638.57. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Discussion: All of the funding for this project will come from the Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (LMIG) from GDOT.

Roll Call Vote:

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

D. Approve Proposal for the Trembling Earth Complex Master Plan - Pickleball

Chairman Thrift called for a motion on this item.

Commissioner Burse made a motion to approve the proposal of \$12,650 by Lose Design to update the master plan for Trembling Earth Complex to include pickleball courts. Commissioner Lucas seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote:

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

E. Reappointment to the Board of Zoning and Appeals: Audra Padgett and Amelia Teston

Chairman Thrift called for a motion on this item.

Commissioner Lucas made a motion to reappoint Audra Padgett and Amelia Teston to the Board of Zoning and Appeals. Commissioner Barry seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote:

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

F. Alcohol License Request – 512 E. Waring Street

Chairman Thrift called for a motion on this item.

Commissioner Lucas made a motion to approve the alcohol license request for Mr. Tariq at 512 E. Waring Street. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Discussion: This license will allow Mr. Tariq to a sell alcohol inside the store.

Roll Call Vote:

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

G. Resolution 2026-01: Set Qualifying Fees

Chairman Thrift called for a motion on this item.

Commissioner Burse made a motion to approve Resolution 2026-01 to set qualifying fees for County Commissioners, Solicitor, and Board of Education members. Commissioner Lucas seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote:

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

H. Resolution 2026-02: VOCA Grant Application

Chairman Thrift called for a motion on this item.

Commissioner Lucas made a motion to approve Resolution 2026-02 to allow submission of an application for the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Discussion: Commissioner Burse explained that the money is for the District Attorney's office. The County acts as a pass-through because the money is sent to the County, which then forwards it to the DA's office.

Roll Call Vote:

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

I. Resolution 2026-03: Memorandum of Understanding for Recreation Dept BOOST Grant
Chairman Thrift called for a motion on this item.

Commissioner Lucas made a motion to approve Resolution 2026-03 to allow for an MOU with GA Parks and Recreation for the BOOST Grant (\$45,000). Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Discussion: The BOOST grant supports learning acceleration and academic development for students when school is not in session.

Roll Call Vote:

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

J. Purchase Pipe for Public Works

Chairman Thrift called for a motion on this item.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to purchase driveway pipe inventory for \$14,7040.87. Commissioner Lucas seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote:

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

K. 2% Cost of Living Adjustment for all Employees

Chairman Thrift called for a motion on this item.

Commissioner Burse made a motion to approve the 2% Cost of Living Adjustment for all employees. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Discussion: County Manager Shubert explained the COLA would be effective with the January 18 payroll cycle.

Roll Call Vote:

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

L. Rezoning 2590 Cactus Street from A-Agriculture/Forestry to C-2 Highway Commercial
Chairman Thrift called for a motion on this item.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve the rezoning of 2950 Cactus Street from A to C-2. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote:

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

COUNTY MANAGER COMMENTS:

County Manager Shubert thanked the Commission for approving the 2% COLA, noting it is cheaper to retain employees than to retrain new ones. He also explained that the work for the safety striping grant will be bid in February. A portion of the LMIG will be used to supplement the striping grant. The Commission discussed the need for weight limit signs on some roads.

The preliminary plans for the Albany Avenue overpass have been approved. The County Attorney will update the County on any houses to be condemned. Also, the ROW will have to be secured before it is bid out.

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

The surveyors' work on McDonald Road has been corrected to match the design, and paperwork has been sent to the attorney. Commissioner Cox noted that Lucy Moore Road at Bickley Highway needs restriping and rumble strips. He commented that there was recently a bad wreck there. Bickley Hwy and Beech Hwy both need striping.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Lucas made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p. m.

Date proposed to be approved: February 9, 2026


Elmer Thrift, Chairman

ATTEST:


Melinda L. Brooks, County Clerk

2-10-2026
Date

