

**MINUTES
WORK SESSION
WARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MONDAY, MAY 11, 2026
3:30 p.m.**

The Ware County Board of Commissioners held a Work Session, Monday, May 11, 2026, at 3:30 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 Leonard Burse, Commissioner Barry Cox, Commissioner Jon Tindall
COMMISSIONERS ABSENT	Commissioner Timmy Lucas
STAFF PRESENT	County Manager James Shubert, Assistant County Attorney Jennifer Herzog, County Clerk Melinda Brooks
PRESS	Danny Bartlett, WJH
INVOCATION	Commissioner Leonard Burse
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE	Chairman Elmer Thrift

GUEST SPEAKER(S):

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH:

Human Resources Director Theresa Young Scott Callahan as Employee of the Month. He was nominated by his supervisor, Joe Meadows, Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor. County Manager James Shubert presented him with a \$100 check in appreciation of his dedication.

AGENDA ITEMS:

- A. Bid Award – 2026 LMIG Resurfacing Projects**
County Manager James Shubert advised the Commission that Statewide Engineering sent out a request for bids to resurface portions of East Ware Street, Tara Road, and Gibbs Street/8 Mile Post Road. This project will be funded by a portion of the 2026 Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (LMIG). The remaining amount of the 2026 LMIG will be added to the 2025 CDBG funds to complete the approved 2025 CDBG project at Josephine Park. Mr. Shubert noted that there will be a change to the portion of Gibbs Street that will be paved. The original project was written to pave from the city limits to Huckleberry Road. However, the section to pave will begin at Old Shop Road and go

toward the City Limits. Commissioner Burse clarified that Gibbs Street and 8 Mile Post Road are the same road.

The name changes in the middle of the big curve. The bidders were East Coast Asphalt, Thrift Brothers, LLC, The Scruggs Company, and Curb and Gutter Professionals. Statewide Engineering conducted the bid opening. The low bidder was East Coast Asphalt, LLC for \$459,455.54.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

B. Bid Award – 2026 Safety Action Plan for Restriping County Roads

County Manager Shubert explained the County received a Safety Action Plan (SAP) grant from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) for striping/restriping approximately 63 miles of County roadways. Statewide Engineering handled the bidding process. NPR South, LLC (Douglas, GA) was the low bidder at 427,542.99, which exceeded the grant amount by \$18,331.99. Mr. Shubert explained that Beach Road and Lucy Moore Road were included on the original application. However, they have been included in a different project, so Zion Hill Road and South Plant Avenue/Griffin Road were substituted. This brought the cost of the project down to \$409,900.93, which is only \$689.93 above the grant amount. Commissioner Burse clarified that a 10% County Match was required.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

C. Bid Award for Audit Services

County Manager Shubert explained that proposals were sent for auditing services, and the following were received: Carr, Riggs, & Ingram (CRI) – \$325,815 (included price for single audit), Mauldin & Jenkins – \$344,000, McNair, McLemore, Middlebrooks & Co – \$388,200. According to Accounting Supervisor Beverly York, the history of all three companies seems to be the same. Commissioner Burse mentioned that it may be a good idea to switch up vendors since CRI has been the County's auditor since 2012. The request was for four years of service plus a single audit.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

D. Surplus Items – Office Phones

IT Director Carlos Jaime explained that a recent conversion to an updated phone system has left the County with many phones that need to be officially noted as surplus. He said they can be placed on govdeals.com in an attempt to sell them. Mr. Jaime noted the new phone system is saving the County several thousand dollars each month.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

E. Approve Contract for Iron Bridge Landfill Water Monitoring Services

County Manager Shubert explained to the Commission that this item is to approve the proposal for monitoring services at Iron Bridge Landfill. Bunnell Lammons Engineering (BLE) has handled the semi-annual reports for years. This is a formality to approve the \$10,500 for continued services, which includes two reports at \$4,500 each and on-call consulting for \$1,500.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

F. Recreation Department – Select Concept 1 or Concept 2 for Pickleball Courts

County Manager Shubert explained that LOSE Design came up with two designs for the new pickleball courts. Recreation Department Director Lance Adamson explained that he

and Mr. Shubert studied both designs and recommend Concept 1 because less work would be required for construction. It would be conveniently located off Wadley Road. The other design would have the pickleball courts in the back of the complex and would require more land clearing and other high construction costs. Mr. Adamson stated he is applying for a grant to help construct the courts. He can apply for up to \$1 million, but he explained it is a 50/50 match grant. County Manager explained State Representative James Burchett secured \$50,000 from the state budget to help construct the courts. There will be 8 courts, four on each side.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

G. Request to Accept Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Agreement

County Manager Shubert explained that this grant is intended to help pay for the Hazard Mitigation Plan, which is renewed every 5 years to meet the federal requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. The total approved cost is \$49,857 with a federal share of \$39,855.60, a state share of \$6,225.90, a local share of \$6,238.35, and subrecipient management cost of \$2,492.85. The total of the local share and subrecipient management costs is due from Ware County. The amount \$8,7321.20

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

H. Request to Extend Crowder Gulf Contract for 1 Year

County Manager Shubert explained to the Commission that bids were submitted last year for debris collection. Crowder Gulf was awarded the bid and submitted a 5-year contract that has to be renewed annually during the 5-year period. There is no cost to Ware County unless the contract is activated.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

I. Request to Extend Thompson Monitoring Consultants for 1 Year

This item is related to the previous item. A monitoring company must oversee debris collection to ensure accuracy. Thompson Monitoring Consultants won the bid last year, but their contract must also be renewed annually.

Added to Regular Meeting Agenda

J. Discussion – Appointment to Land Bank Authority

County Manager Shubert informed the Commission that he had received a letter from the City of Waycross Community Improvement Director, who is also the Chairman of the Land Bank Authority. The letter stated that William Simmons is requesting to step down because he is overextended in his obligations. He is now a Waycross City Commissioner. Mr. Shubert noted that the term does not expire until December 31, 2028, and that it is a county-appointed position. He asked that the Commission be considering candidates to nominate at the meeting in May.

COUNTY MANAGER REPORT:

County Manager Shubert announced to the Commission that the latest TIA deposit was \$979,703.56. These are discretionary funds received from GDOT Regional TSP/LOST. Chief Tax Appraiser Billy Carter informed the Commission that the County has been released from the consent order for property re-evaluation. He advised the next review will be in 2027.

COMMISSION COMMENTS: None

Commissioner Burse offered a shout-out to State Representative James Burchett for his work in securing \$50,000 to install pickleball courts at the Trembling Earth Complex. He also noted that U.S. Senator Jon Osoff made \$92,000 available to Satilla Advocacy Services to upgrade its interview rooms with audiovisual equipment.

ADJOURN:

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to adjourn the Work Session. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The Work Session adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Date proposed to be approved: June 8, 2026


Elmer Thrift, Chairman


Melinda L. Brooks, County Clerk

6-12-2026
Date

