

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
WARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025
5:00 p.m.**

The Ware County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting, Monday, December 8, 2025, at 5:45 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	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

CONSENT ITEMS:

A. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

September 22, 2025	Called Meeting
October 13, 2025	Work Session, Public Hearing, Regular Meeting
October 27, 2025	Called Meeting
November 10, 2025	Work Session, Public Hearing, Regular Meeting

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

GUEST SPEAKER:

Ferrell Malone – Macedonia Baptist Church and Concerned Clergy of South Georgia

Rev. Malone spoke to the Commission regarding a resolution for reducing excessive use of force by law enforcement. He acknowledged that the Commission does not have authority over the Sheriff. He would like to get support from the City and County for use of force reform to retrain post

certified officers in de-escalation techniques, requiring mandatory use of body cam, and the establishment of a citizen review board. He has emailed a resolution to the County Manager that he would like the Commission to consider adopting as a show of support.

Commissioner Jon Tindall – Referendum for Bypass/Perimeter Road

AGENDA ITEMS

A. Board of Assessors: Reappoint Darrell Roberson

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

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to reappoint Darrell Roberson to the Board of Assessors. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked was if there was any discussion. No 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. Recreation Board: Reappoint Carlos Nelson to Post 1 and Ramona Thrift to Post 5

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

Commissioner Burse made a motion to reappoint Carlos Nelson to Post 1 and Ramona Thrift to Post 5 of the Recreation Board. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion. Commissioner Tindall noted this motion is to reappoint the board members to posts they are already serving.

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. Approve Electrical Contractor for EMA Storage Building

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

Commissioner Burse made a motion to approve the bid for Carter Electric in the amount of \$16,994.93. Commissioner Tindall seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion. Commissioner Tindall pointed out that Carter Electric is a local company, and the Commission likes to use local businesses when possible.

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. Bid Award: 2023 Local Funds Phase 2- The Scruggs Company

Vice Chairman Cox asked if there was a motion on this item.

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to approve the bid from The Scruggs Company Bid for the 2023 Local Funds Phase 2 in the amount of \$657,638.57 Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Vice-Chairman Cox asked if there was any discussion. There was none.

Roll Call Vote:

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

E. Approve County Manager Contract

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

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to approve the contract for the County Manager. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion. Commissioner Tindall commended Mr. Shubert for the progress he has made in his first year as County Manager. He expressed his pride in the work done so far and his efforts to learn and encouraged him to continue. Commissioner Burse echoed Commissioner Tindall's comments. All of the Commission spoke positively about Mr. Shubert's first year on the job and expressed their appreciation in his willingness to work with them.

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. Approve Work Order 25-15 with Passero Associates, LLC for Tree Obstruction Study and Removal Project Phase 1

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

Commissioner Burse made a motion to approve work order 25-15 with Passero Associates, LLC for tree obstruction study and removal phase 1. Commissioner Tindall seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion on this item. Commissioner Burse noted that GDOT has cited the airport for the trees being in the glide pattern, and gave an ultimatum to remove the obstruction or lose federal funding. Commissioner Cox asked if the trees had to be removed completely or if they could be cut back. County Manager Shubert responded that he believed that depending on the location, some trees could be cut back rather than being removed.

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. Approve Work Order 25-12 with Passero Associates, LLC to Rehabilitate Runway 1/19 (Design)

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

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to approve work order 25-12 with Passero Associates, LLC to rehabilitate Runway 1/19 (design). Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion on this item. Commissioner Tindall explained the cost of the design for the runway rehab is \$137,516.00. Ware County is only responsible for 2.5% of the total cost, which is approximately \$3,700.00. Chairman Thrift commented that this will be a large project and will require a lot of asphalt.

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. Road Closing/Abandoning: Center Street Located in the South Deenwood Subdivision

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

Commissioner Burse made a motion to close the section of Center Street. Commissioner Tindall seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion on this item. Commissioner Tindall explained that two public hearings have been held on this matter because the tax map shows a platted/proposed subdivision that never came to fruition. The applicant's property is split by this proposed road. The property owners located behind the applicant's property have an alternative route to reach this side of their property. There is no evidence of the County ever maintaining this proposed road. He explained that per counsel, it is best to use proper procedure and close this road. Commissioner Burse pointed out that the other landowners would not be landlocked. They have an alternate route. They can pay to for the culvert pipe and dirt for the ditch on their property, just as Mr. Poole did for his property.

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. Resolution 2025-25: Approve Language Access Plan (LAP) for CDBG

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

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-25 to approve the Language Access Plan for CDBG. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion on this item. Commissioner Tindall explained the County is required to adopt and approve a Language Access Plan for every CDBG that is funded.

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. Alley Closing/Abandoning: Block 218 of Emerson Park Subdivision

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

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve the request to abandon/close the alley on block 2158 of Emerson Park Subdivision. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion on this item. Commissioner Tindall noted that only the proposed ROW for utilities that was never used is being closed. The land will be given to the property owner and go back on the tax rolls.

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 to Rezone 355 E. Blackshear Avenue from R-50MH (Residential) to C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial)

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

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to approve the request to rezone 355 E. Blackshear Avenue from R-50MH (Residential) to C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial). Commissioner Cox seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion on this item. Commissioner Tindall clarified that the existing building on the church property is to be used as a recording studio for television, audio, and film purposes. There are already local businesses in the area.

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 Northern Portion of Parcel 036H03 002 from RS (Residential Single-Family) to A-1 (Agriculture-Forestry)

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

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to deny the request to rezone from RS to A-1. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

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

M. Request to Rezone Portions of Parcels 051C05 012, 051C05 013, and 051C05 014 from R-75 (Residential) to C-3 (General Commercial)

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

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to approve the request to rezone portions of Parcels 051C05 012, 051C05 013, and 051C05 014 from R-75 to C-3. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion.

Chairman Thrift asked if there was any discussion on this item. Commissioner Tindall noted this item to clean up the zoning map and eliminate some split-zoned parcels.

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. Ware County Zoning Resolution Text Amendment: Article III, Subsection 302.67; and Article VII, Subsections 707.5 and 706.3

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

Commissioner Burse made a motion to approve the Ware County Code of Ordinances text amendment for Article III, Subsection 302.67 and Article VII, Subsection 707.5 and 706.3. 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.

O. Ware County Code of Ordinances Text Amendment: Chapter 78, Article V Ware County Solar Farm Ordinance

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

Commissioner Burse made a motion to approve the Ware County Code of Ordinances Text Amendment: Chapter 78, Article V, Sec 78-160 (b) subsection 7 & 8 to remove the 10,000 linear feet minimum distance buffer between solar farms. 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.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT:

County Manager Shubert expressed his appreciation for the confidence the Board of Commissioners has placed in him. He acknowledged that he could not do his job without the dedicated staff members who work with him

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Cox noted that Sand Hill Farm Road and Nabors Road need weight limit signs.

County Manager Shubert said he would check to see if a weight limit exists. If not, it would have to be brought before the Commission to set weight limits for these roads. He also noted the staff was given a 3% adjustment in June, and the plan was to see if the budget would allow for another increase. Mr. Shubert explained the plan is to check in January at the halfway mark to see where the budget stands.

Commissioner Tindall reminded everyone that the DC Downtown has a food distribution twice weekly. Currently there are fresh satsumas in addition to the dry goods. He noted that people can go in and pick up what they need for no charge, but donations are accepted to help with the costs. This work is done through Destination Church and is headed up by Nicki Spivey, Director of Food Ministry.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Tindall made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting. Commissioner Burse seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Date proposed to be approved: January 12, 2026


Elmer Thrift, Chairman

ATTEST:


Melinda L. Brooks, County Clerk

1-13-2026
Date

