Effingham County Georgia
Board of Commissioners



**REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES**
**AUGUST 18, 2026**

The Board of Commissioners of Effingham County, Georgia, Mr. Damon Rahn, Mr. Forrest Floyd Mr. Roger Burdette, Mr. Jamie Deloach, Ms. Elizabeth Helmly, and Mr. Phil Kieffer met in regular session at 5:00 pm on Tuesday, August 18, 2026 in the Commissioners Meeting Chambers at the Effingham County Administrative Complex located at 804 South Laurel Street Springfield, Georgia 31329.

**STAFF PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Tim Callanan – County Manager, Mr. Edward Newberry – County Attorney, Ms. Stephanie Johnson – County Clerk, Ms. Tasheena Shiggs – Deputy Clerk Mr. Clint Hodges – Fire Chief & EMA Director, Ms. Marie Todd – Executive Assistant, Mr. Jack Burgin Jr. – Sr. System Administrator, Ms. Sarah Mausolf – Director of Human Resources, Ms. Danielle Carver – Director of Procurement and Contract Services, Ms. Pamela Melser – Director of Development Services, Ms. Akela Wright – Planning Manager, Ms. Kimberly Barlett – Senior Planner, Ms. Lauren Shuman – Engineering Project Coordinator Shuman, Mr. Tre Wilkins – Project Manager, Mr. Johnathan Hulme – County Engineer, Mr. Josh Moody – Building Official, Mr. Ted Goudeau – Facilities Maintenance Director, and Mr. Mark Lastinger – Public Information Coordinator.

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

Steve Watkins, Joel Jurado, Austin Williams, Raymond Carver, Jennifer Mataloni, Brooke Jarrett, Emma Smith Ruth Brown, Donald Brandt, Amber Waters, Wanda Beasley, Alden Strandberg and Joe Pritchard

**I- CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Rahn called the meeting to order at 5:09pm

**II- ROLL CALL**

Damon Rahn, Chairman
Forrest Floyd
Roger Burdette
Jamie Deloach
Beth Helmly
Phil Kieffer, Vice Chairman

**III – INVOCATION**

Commissioner Burdette offered the invocation.

**IV– PLEDGE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG**

The pledge was led by Commissioner Burdette.

**V – AGENDA APPROVAL**

County Clerk Johnson announced changes to the agenda, including the addition of Resolution No. 026-025 (honoring the life of Mary Jane Holloway Hamilton) to the Consent Agenda, the removal of Unfinished Business Item #2, and the transfer of Consent Agenda Item #5 to New Business as Item 8A for separate discussion.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the agenda with the noted changes. Vice Chair Kieffer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**VI – MINUTES**

**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 4, 2026 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES (1):**

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**VII – PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chairman Rahn stated comments shall pertain to the agenda items only. Should you wish to make remarks, clearly state your full name into the microphone before commencing to speak.

**VIII – CORRESPONDENCE**

Chairman Rahn stated documents from this meeting are located in the Clerk's office and on the Board of Commissioner's website.

**IX – CONSENT AGENDA**

Vice Chair Kieffer made a motion to approve the following Consent Agenda items: **(2026-369)** Consideration to ratify and affirm acceptance of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) Grant to Update the Countywide Hazard Mitigation Plan. **(2026-371)** Consideration to ratify and affirm the Permanent and Temporary Easement rights associated with Bryan County for the Regional Water Supply Project. **(2026-372)** Consideration to ratify and affirm the Contract Amendment No. 1 with Legacy Water Group, LLC for CMAR Phase I - Effingham Regional Water Supply Facilities. ~~**(2026-373)** Consideration to approve Amendment No. 1 to the Albeck Group, LLC Proposal for Program Management Services and address the continuation of professional program management services for vertical construction.~~ **ADDITION TO THE AGENDA** **(2026-392)** Consideration to approve Resolution# 026-025 honoring the life of MaryJane Holloway Hamilton. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

## X – UNFINISHED BUSINESS

**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE FIRST READING TO AMEND ARTICLE III, SECTION 3.4- BUFFERS OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF EFFINGHAM COUNTY (*Postponed, 08/04/2026 at request of Staff*) (1):**

Planning Manager Wright explained the proposed text amendment to Section 3.4 of the County Zoning Ordinance clarifies and refines buffers by: defining terms already used in the ordinance but not defined; reinserting AR-3 into the buffer matrix; establishing an enforceable written process and a civil penalty of $500 per day for continuing violations; streamlining the interstate frontage exemption with an alternative 15-foot landscape strip and adding a right-of-way portion; allowing the County to acquire land from an existing property and reduce the parcel land to maintain the required buffer; creating an objective formula to adjust the buffer based on remaining parcel depth after acquisition, with the adjustment limited to not be less than 15 feet and not exceed 50% of the original buffer; and implementing a clearer, more predictable process with enforceable tools for right-of-way projects.

Commissioner Helmly made a motion to approve the adoption of the proposed text amendment to Section 3.4 - Buffers. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT (IGA) BETWEEN EFFINGHAM COUNTY AND THE CITY OF RINCON ESTABLISHING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE DESIGN, RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION, UTILITY COORDINATION, CONSTRUCTION, COST SHARING, AND LONG-TERM MAINTENANCE OF THE SERN EAST-WEST ROAD PROJECT (*Postponed, 08/04/2026 at request of Staff*) (2):**

This item was removed at agenda approval.

## XI – NEW BUSINESS

**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE PROCLAMATIONS DESIGNATING AUGUST 22, 2026 AS EFFINGHAM CHAMPIONS DAY (1):**

County Clerk Johnson presented three proclamations designating August 22, 2026, as Effingham Champions Day to celebrate the state-level achievements of local recreation teams and individual athletes. The first proclamation recognized the 8U recreation softball team for an outstanding season. The second honored the 10U softball team for winning the State Championship in Whitfield County from July 23 to July 25, 2026, where they outscored opponents 43 to 1 during live-pitch tournament play. The third proclamation highlighted the achievements of GRPA state track finalists who earned top finishes across multiple events, including the 50-meter and 100-meter dashes, triple jump, long jump, and shot put.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the Proclamations celebrating August 22, 2026 as Effingham Champions. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND REGISTRATION, AND THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD TO CONDUCT THE CITY'S NOVEMBER 3, 2026 MUNICIPAL ELECTION (2):**

Director of Procurement and Contract Services Carver explained an intergovernmental agreement allowing Effingham County to conduct elections for the City of Springfield using a single consolidated ballot and polling location, with Springfield sharing in the operational costs.

Commissioner Burdette made a motion to approve and sign the intergovernmental agreements. Vice Chair Kieffer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE TO AMEND CHAPTER 14 – BUILDINGS AND BUILDING REGULATIONS. ARTICLE II – CONSTRUCTION CODES OF THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES (3):**

Building Official Moody explained a request regarding state building code updates, which Georgia adopts every six years. The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) provides local jurisdictions with the option to amend or adopt Chapter 1, which serves as the administrative framework governing permitting requirements, procedures, and permit validations.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve an amendment to the Code of Ordinances to include Chapter 1 of the International Building Code (IBC). Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE MODIFICATION NO. 1 TO THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH MOFFATT & NICHOL FOR CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION, INSPECTION, TESTING, AND PROJECT CLOSEOUT SERVICES ASSOCIATED WITH THE SAND HILL ROAD AND BLUE JAY ROAD ROUNDABOUT PROJECT (4):**

County Engineer Hulme explained Modification No. 1 to the professional services agreement with Moffatt & Nichol for construction administration, inspection, testing, and project closeout services for the Sand Hill Road and Blue Jay Road roundabout project. As the design engineer for the project, Moffatt & Nichol proposed an additional $219,225 to provide site monitoring and independent geotechnical verification. Engineer Hulme noted that the proposed fee falls slightly below the standard 7% rate for construction management services. Right-of-way acquisition is pending final clearance on one remaining parcel, after which the project is expected to go out to bid within one to two months, with an estimated construction duration of one year.

Commissioner Floyd made a motion to approve Modification No. 1 for construction administration services. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE TASK ORDER NO. 4B UNDER MASTER SERVICES CONTRACT NO. 23 RFQU-061 WITH THOMAS & HUTTON FOR CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING INSPECTION SERVICES ON FIVE ADDITIONAL ROAD PROJECTS (5):**

County Engineer Hulme explained contracting Thomas & Hutton for construction management across the Blue Jay Road widening, McCall Road roundabout, Goshen Road widening (Phases 1 & 2), SR 30/Midland Road roundabout, and Effingham Parkway modifications. Thomas & Hutton was selected due to local staffing availability and the fact that design firm Pond does not offer construction management. The agreement is established on a time-and-materials basis with a not-to-exceed authorization.

Vice Chair Kieffer made a motion to approve Task Order No. 4B with Thomas & Hutton. Commissioner Helmly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE TO RATIFY AND AFFIRM THE EXECUTION OF LOAN DOCUMENTS RELATED TO GEORGIA ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE AUTHORITY (GEFA) LOAN GFAAPP001A (6):**

Finance Director Barnes requested ratification and approval of loan execution agreements for the second segment of GEFA funding for the drinking water plant. The agreement requires a 21-day advance notice and limits withdrawals to one draw per month, requiring finance staff to coordinate draw schedules closely across three active project contractors.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the GEFA Loan GFAPP001A agreement and authorize the County Manager to execute all related documents. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION# 026-024 TO AMEND THE FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET (7):**

Finance Director Barnes explained a minor budget adjustment that creates a separate line item for the events budget, distinct from the Recreation Department's general operating budget, and reallocates funds to the Health Department, Building Design, and Engineering accounts.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the resolution to amend the budget for FY27. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO THE ALBECK GROUP, LLC PROPOSAL FOR PROGRAM MANAGEMENT SERVICES AND ADDRESS THE CONTINUATION OF PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR VERTICAL CONSTRUCTION (8A):**

Director of Procurement and Contract Services Carver presented Amendment No. 1 to the professional services agreement for vertical construction program management. The amendment formally ratifies services provided to date and establishes August 31, 2026, as the official expiration date of the current agreement prior to considering a subsequent contract.

Constituent Austin Williams raised concerns regarding a potential conflict of interest, noting that the principal of the contracting firm, Slade Helmy, serves as an appointed member of the Effingham County Industrial Development Authority (IDA) and received a non-competitive hourly contract for county services.

Commissioner Burdette requested public clarification after a constituent questioned a potential conflict of interest regarding an IDA board member's firm. County Manager Callanan explained that no financial conflict exists because the Board of Commissioners has no discretionary budget authority over the IDA, which receives a state-mandated two-mill levy, and the County's role is restricted solely to appointing five of the eight IDA board members.

Commissioner Burdette made a motion to approve the selection of Nichols, Cauley & Associates, LLC, for Audit Services pursuant to RFP No. 26-RFP-125. Vice Chair Kieffer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH ALBECK GROUP, LLC FOR PROGRAM MANAGEMENT FOR VERTICAL CONSTRUCTION FOR THE PERIOD OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2026 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2029 (8):**

The Board resumed discussion regarding the contract term for vertical construction program management services with Slade Helmly's firm. County Manager Callanan recommended shortening the proposed agreement to a one-year term (running through June 30, 2027) with a standard 30-day cancellation clause. This timeframe ensures uninterrupted oversight of active county building projects while staff prepares a Request for Proposals (RFP) to incorporate vertical construction management into the county's broader Indefinite Delivery Contracts (IDC) framework by early 2027.

Local resident Raymond Carver cited Georgia ethics and conflict of interest laws, asserting that appointed members of the Effingham County Industrial Development Authority (IDA) should not utilize public standing or advance knowledge for private commercial gain.

Chairman Rahn and County Manager Callanan explained that the IDA operates separately from county facility decisions, leaving no opportunity for conflict. Staff highlighted significant cost savings generated by the firm, including warranty enforcement and change-order reduction on major building projects, while confirming that the shortened contract allows the county to issue RFP and transition the service to a competitive multi-vendor framework in 2027.

Commissioner Burdette made a motion to is to extend the professional services contract from September 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, maintaining the existing 30-day cancellation clause. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE AWARD OF RFP NO. 26-RFP-125, AUDIT SERVICES, TO NICHOLS, CAULEY & ASSOCIATES, LLC. (9):**

Procurement and Contracts Manager Carver explained the evaluation results of a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) for professional auditing services. Proposals were evaluated across several criteria, including governmental audit experience, team qualifications, audit methodology, past performance, references, and proposed fee structures. Staff recommend awarding the contract to the highest-ranked proposer, Nichols, Cauley & Associates.

Commissioner Helmly made a motion to approve the selection of Nichols, Cauley & Associates, LLC for Audit Services pursuant to RFP No. 26-RFP-125. Vice Chair Kieffer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**CONSIDERATION TO ACKNOWLEDGE A PETITION FOR ANNEXATION AS SUBMITTED BY THE CITY OF RINCON FOR A PROPERTY OWNED BY MILTON JR. AND GLENDA RAHN CONSISTING OF APPROXIMATELY 39.58 ACRES LOCATED ON LEXINGTON AVE EXT MAP# 447 PARCEL# 13C01 (10):**

County Clerk Johnson explained the annexation notice from the City of Rincon concerns a parcel adjacent to previously annexed properties. The city received the annexation application on July 23, 2026, and will formally consider it on August 24, 2026. The parcel, currently zoned AR-1 (Agricultural Residential), is proposed to be rezoned to PD (Planned Development) upon annexation.

County Manager Callanan explained County and City of Rincon officials met prior to the vote to align key infrastructure improvements for the project. To accommodate proper travel lanes and traffic flow, staff recommended expanding the existing 30-foot right-of-way to 60 feet and constructing a new connector road to route traffic directly to the planned Highway 21 signal at the Coastal Trade Center.

Vice Chair Kieffer made a motion to approve to Acknowledge the Petition Requesting Annexation as presented by the City of Rincon. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**XII – REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS & ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

***County Manager Callanan***

- Project Camellia public workshop: Saturday August 29th, 10:00am to 1:00pm
- Sixth consecutive property tax rollback: the proposed rollback lowers the M&O millage rate from 5.596 to 5.466 mills.

***County Clerk Johnson***

- Project Camellia public workshop agenda will be posted on Wednesday as standard publishing procedures.

***Commissioner Burdette***

- Dual Panel Discussion with Chamber of Commerce Susan Kraut

***Commissioner Deloach***

- Update on establishing a multi-jurisdictional Water and Sewer Authority and securing a financial consultant

***Commissioner Helmly***
- Logistical details and venue requests for the upcoming public meeting

***Chairman Rahn***
- Highlight expectations for the upcoming August 29th public meeting

**XIII – EXECUTIVE SESSION**
There was no discussion of personnel, property, and pending litigation.

**XIV – EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES**
At 7:36 pm, Vice Chair Kieffer made a motion to go into an executive session for discussion of personnel, property, and pending litigation. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

At 8:02 pm, Commissioner Deloach made a motion to reconvene. Vice Chair Kieffer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**XV – PLANNING BOARD – 6:00 pm**

**MELISSA REAGAN – PUBLIC HEARING (01):** Consideration to approve an application by Melissa Reagan for a conditional use to allow for an Agritourism business in AR-1 located at 580 Ralph Rahn Road, Map # 411 Parcel # 24 in the Fourth District

Planning Manager Wright explained a conditional use request for seasonal agritourism at 580 Ralph Rahn Road (zoned AR-1). The applicant has operated an annual October event (10 days per year) under assemblage permits since 2019, utilizing 300 on-site parking spaces. Citing minimal traffic and noise impacts due to the limited schedule and alignment with the area's agricultural character, staff recommended approval subject to operational conditions addressing hours of operation, parking layout, lighting, and traffic circulation.

Speaking for: Melissa Reagan provided updated site details, noting that tree removal to the right of the site plan expanded on-site parking capacity alongside seasonal event attractions.

Commissioner Helmly made a motion to approve of the Conditional Use Permit for Agritourism at 580 Ralph Rahn Road. Vice Chair Kieffer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**MELISSA REAGAN – SECOND READING (02):** Consideration to approve the Second Reading for an application by Melissa Reagan for a conditional use to allow for an Agritourism business in AR-1 located at 580 Ralph Rahn Road Map # 411 Parcel # 24 in the Fourth District

Commissioner Helmly made a motion to approve the 2nd Reading. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**NORMAL LIFE OF GEORGIA** as agent for **MID TOWN GEORGIA – PUBLIC HEARING (03):** Consideration to approve an application by Normal Life of Georgia as agent for Mid Town Georgia for a conditional use to allow for a group home in AR-1 located at 208 Lord Effingham Drive, Map #465H Parcel # 6B in the Second District

Planning Manager Wright explained a conditional use request for a group home serving up to three residents at 208 Lord Effingham Drive (zoned AR-1). The operation will include 24/7 on-site support staff, zero resident-owned vehicles, and a single company 15-passenger van. Because the site utilizes existing public water and sewer utilities and operates at a scale similar to a single-family home with negligible traffic impacts, staff determined the request is fully compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood.

Speaking for: Jennifer Mataloni, Brooke Jarrett, and Emma Smith spoke in favor of establishing a three-person group home for individuals with developmental disabilities in Effingham County. Jarrett highlighted how the facility fosters neighborhood inclusion, while Smith shared her daughter Candice's eager anticipation to join the home as an active member of the Gateway Day Program and Effingham Navigators.

Speaking in objection: Ruth Brown, Donald Brandt, Amber Waters, Wanda Beasley, and Joe Pritchard expressed concerns regarding neighborhood character, traffic, maintenance, and public notice.

Jennifer Mataloni provided detailed operational specifics regarding the proposed three-resident group home to address Board and public inquiries.

The Board discussed conflict between supporting a worthy social cause and protecting single-family residential zoning rules.

Commissioner Burdette made a motion to deny. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**NORMAL LIFE OF GEORGIA** as agent for **MID TOWN GEORGIA – SECOND READING (04):** Consideration to approve the Second Reading for an application by Normal Life of Georgia as agent for Mid-Town Georgia for a conditional use to allow for a group home in AR-1 located at 208 Lord Effingham Drive Map # 465H Parcel # 6B in the Second District

This item was denied due to previous action.

**JENNIFER MADDALONI** as agent for **MID-TOWN GEORGIA, LLC – PUBLIC HEARING (05):** Consideration to approve an application by Jennifer Maddaloni as agent for Mid-Town Georgia, LLC for a conditional use to allow for a group home in AR-1 located at 124 Westwood Drive, Map # 455H Parcel # 208A in the Second District

Planning Manager Wright Planning Manager Wright stated that the conditional use request for congregate living services at 124 Westwood Drive is supported, as the scale of use, existing infrastructure, and projected traffic and parking impacts align with the surrounding residential area.

Commissioner Burdette made a motion to deny. Commissioner Deloach seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**JENNIFER MADDALONI** as agent for **MID-TOWN GEORGIA, LLC – SECOND READING (06):** Consideration to approve the Second Reading for an application by Jennifer Maddaloni as agent for Mid-Town Georgia for a conditional use to allow for a group home in AR 1 located at 124 Westwood Drive Map # 465H Parcel # 208A in the Second District

This item was denied due to previous action.

**STEVE WATKINS** agent for **CASEY TESSANNE – PUBLIC HEARING (07):** Consideration to approve an application by Steve Watkins agent for Casey Tessanne for a conditional use to allow for a telecommunication tower in AR-1 located at 464 Fourth Street Extension, Guyton Map # 320 Parcel # 11 in the Third District

Planning Manager Wright explained this is a conditional use request for a 195 feet tall monopole communications tower in the AR-1 district. The tower would improve wireless coverage in the Guyton area and along several surrounding corridors and would be about 400 feet from the nearest residence.

Speaking for: Steve Watkins, representing Gulf South Towers, anchor tenant T-Mobile, and property owner Casey Tessanne, addressed questions regarding the proposed monopole telecommunications tower.

Local resident Alden Strandberg expressed a neutral stance on the proposed 175-foot telecommunications tower, balancing the clear community need for improved coverage against proximity and operational questions.

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve Conditional Use Permit CU-26-28. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**STEVE WATKINS** agent for **CASEY TESSANNE – SECOND READING (08):** Consideration to approve the Second Reading for an application by Steve Watkins as agent for Casey Tessanne for a conditional use to allow for a telecommunication tower in AR-1 located at 464 Fourth Street Extension Map # 320 Parcel # 11 in the Third District

Commissioner Deloach made a motion to approve the 2nd Reading. Commissioner Burdette seconded the motion.

**XVI – ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:02 pm, there being no further business, Commissioner Deloach made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Floyd seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

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Damon Rahn, Chairman Stephanie D. Johnson, County Clerk

**APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**
**SEPTEMBER 1, 2026**