

**Dodge County Board of Commissioners**  
**Monday, August 18, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**



**Commissioners Present:** Chairman Dan McCranie, Sharon Cobb Flanagan – District 1, Leigh Ann Greene – District 2, Vice-Chair Brian Watkins - District 3, Jeffrey Jones - District 4

**Also Present:** Attorney John Harrington, Attorney Ron Daniels, Manager Conner Bearden, Clerk Kimberly Smith-Parkerson

**Call to Order**

The Dodge County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting at the Dodge County Pearl Bates Courthouse Annex Monday, August 18, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. with Chairman McCranie presiding. He called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Next, he delivered a devotion from Matthew, chapter 19, entitled "Where to Run." Afterward, he led a prayer.

**Elected Officials/Department Heads**

**A. DCFD Chief Jamey Wilkinson**

Chief Wilkinson was unable to be present, but Manager Bearden stated there were 92 calls in July with 56 being medical.

**B. EMS Director Michael Johnson**

EMS Director Johnson reported 367 medical calls for July and revenues of \$100,926.19.

**Approval of Minutes**

**A. Minutes – August 04, 2025 Regular Meeting**

Commissioner Flanagan made a motion to approve the minutes with no additions, corrections, or deletions. Commissioner Watkins seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

**Old Business**

**A. WPA Road Repair**

Manager Bearden reported a FEMA reimbursement of \$209,290 for the damages from Hurricane Helene on WPA Road. Commissioner Watkins made a motion to bid the project, with Commissioner Greene seconding. All voted favorably, and the motion passed.

**New Business**

**A. Approval of Accounts Payable**

Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve the accounts payable report totaling \$279,193.88. Commissioner Greene seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

**B. 2025 Quarter 2 Financial Report**

Manager Bearden reported the second quarter financials with revenues of \$4,522,615 and expenditures of \$3,729,009.98.

**C. 2025 Quarter 2 Work Order Report**

Manager Bearden reported an average of 14.3 days on the second quarter work order report.

#### **D. FY '27 5311 Grant Resolution**

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the resolution authorizing the filing of the 5311 Grant application with DOT for 2027, as detailed below. Commissioner Jones seconded. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

#### **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, FOR A GRANT UNDER TITLE 49 U.S.C., SECTION 5311.**

**WHEREAS**, the Federal Transit Administration and the Georgia Department of Transportation are authorized to make grants to non-urbanized (rural) areas for mass transportation projects; and

**WHEREAS**, the contract for financial assistance will impose certain obligations upon Applicant, including the provision of the local share of project costs; and

**WHEREAS**, it is required by the United States Department of Transportation and the Georgia Department of Transportation in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, that in connection with the filing of an application for assistance under the Federal Transit Act, the applicant gives an assurance that it will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the United States Department of Transportation requirements thereunder; and

**WHEREAS**, it is the goal of the Applicant that Minority Business Enterprise (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise and Women's Business Enterprise) be utilized to the fullest extent possible in connection with this project, and that definitive procedures shall be established and administered to ensure that minority business shall have the maximum feasible opportunity to compete for contracts and purchase orders when procuring construction contracts, supplies, equipment contracts, or consultant and other services.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY Dodge County Board of Commissioners hereinafter referred to as the "Applicant",

1. That the Designated Official Conner Bearden, hereinafter referred to as the "Official", is authorized to execute and file an application on behalf of Dodge County Board of Commissioners with the Georgia Department of Transportation, to aid in the purchase of bus transit vehicles and/or the planning, development, and construction of bus transit-related facilities pursuant to Section 5311 of the Federal Transit Act.
2. That the Official is authorized to execute and file such application and assurances, or any other document required by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Georgia Department of Transportation effectuating the purpose of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
3. That the Official is authorized to execute and file all other standard assurances, or any other document required by the Georgia Department of Transportation or the U.S. Department of Transportation in connection with the application for public transportation assistance.
4. That the Official is authorized to execute grant contract agreements on behalf of the Applicant with the Georgia Department of Transportation.
5. That the Official is authorized to set forth and execute Minority Business Enterprise, DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise) and WBE (Women Business Enterprise) policies and procedures in connection with the project's procurement needs as applicable.
6. That the applicant while making application to or receiving grants from the Federal Transit Administration will comply with FTA Circular 9040.1G, FTA Certifications and Assurances for Federal Assistance 2024 as listed

in this grant application and General Operating Guidelines as illustrated in the Georgia State Management Plan.

7. That the applicant has or will have available in the General Fund the required non-federal funds to meet local share requirements for this grant application.

**E. Sawmill Junction Solar Project – Set Public Hearing Date and Time, App #2**

Commissioner Jones made a motion to table this item with Commissioner Watkins seconding. All voted in favor and the motion to table passed.

**F. Work Authorization – WSP**

Commissioner Greene made a motion to approve the work order for the road engineer group WSP (formerly known as Wood Environment & Infrastructure) for \$53,500. Commissioner Watkins seconded. All voted unanimously, and the motion passed.

**G. Work Authorization and Work Session – Parrish**

Manager Bearden presented the work authorization for the design and preconstruction phase with Parrish Construction for the courthouse project. Commissioner Flanagan made a motion to schedule a work session to discuss the next phase. Commissioner Watkins seconded. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

**H. Eagle View – Second Flight Approval**

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve an invoice from Eagle View in the amount of \$24,210.40, which provides the second flight for the tax assessors' aerial parcel maps. Commissioner Flanagan seconded. All voted in agreement, and the motion passed.

**I. GTIB Loan and Grant Award**

A letter from the State Road and Tollway Authority confirmed the award of both a grant and a loan package from the Georgia Transportation Infrastructure Bank. The documents for completion were made available for review, with discussions planned for a future meeting in September.

**J. County Manager Contract**

Attorney Harrington stated the county manager contract was updated with names and dates and ready for signatures and approval. After a motion by Commissioner Watkins and a second by Commissioner Jones, the contract was unanimously approved by the board.

**K. Proclamation for John L. Battle, Sr.**

Commissioner Flanagan voted to approve the joint proclamation with the City of Eastman for John L. Battle, Sr. Day on November 20, 2025. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion, and all voted favorably. The proclamation, as follows:

**PROCLAMATION OF THE CITY OF EASTMAN AND THE DODGE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
2025-001**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Eastman and the Dodge County Board of Commissioners recognize John L. Battle, Sr., on the anniversary of his birth on November 20, 1946, and his contributions to the City of Eastman and Dodge County and now establishes a special day to be known as John L. Battle, Sr. Day in recognition of his community commitment and his accomplishments; and,

**WHEREAS**, John L. Battle, Sr., was born and raised in Dodge County, Georgia, attended and graduated from Peabody High School in Dodge County, Savannah State University and Ft. Valley State University; and,

**WHEREAS**, John L. Battle, Sr. was a highly decorated combat veteran, awarded the Purple Heart and retired from Warner Robins Air Force Base with an Honorable Discharge; and,

**WHEREAS**, John L. Battle, Sr. lived a life of service, leadership, and purpose and exemplified community commitment throughout his life; and,

**WHEREAS**, John L. Battle, Sr., was instrumental in assisting the City of Eastman in celebrating Juneteenth Celebrations and restoring the Historic Peabody High School with the United Concerned Citizens of Dodge County, Inc.; and,

**WHEREAS**, the City Council and Board of Commissioners recognize that John Battle was honored by the NAACP Georgia State Conference, and that John Battle served as President of the Dodge County NAACP Branch and State District Coordinator, and was a dedicated servant leader and unwavering in his commitment to justice, equality, and community; and,

**WHEREAS**, it is fitting that John L. Battle, Sr. Day be observed throughout the City of Eastman and Dodge County; and,

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED** by the City Council of the City of Eastman and the Dodge County Board of Commissioners, it is hereby resolved by the authority of same as follows:

That they do hereby declare November 20, 2025, John L. Battle, Sr. Day in the City of Eastman, Georgia, and Dodge County and urge all citizens to celebrate his accomplishments and remember his work toward the improvement of the quality of life of all residents of Dodge County, regardless of sex, race, color, national origin or religion.

**SO PROCLAIMED**, this the 18<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2025.

**L. FY '26 Budget Review Date**

The county manager proposed setting a work session date for the fiscal year 2026 budget discussion for the last week of October, anticipating public hearings in November and final approval in December. The board was asked to review their calendars to find a suitable date for the budget review.

**M. Howard Warnock – Citizen Concerns**

Howard Warnock expressed concerns regarding solar farms entering Dodge County. He proposed amendments to the county's solar ordinance.

## **N. Wallace Mullis – Citizen Concerns**

Wallace Mullis distributed a map for the sawmill junction solar project and asked for confirmation of location from the board and county manager. He also discussed the county's ordinance and asked for clarification and amendments.

## **Commissioner Reports**

- Commissioner Flanagan reported from the legislative session. She noted that jail inmate medical (before sentencing) was an item pushed to the forefront, as the burden of medical expenses falls on the county housing the inmate. Also, she reported from the Airport Authority meeting that the Airport Layout Plan is being updated.
- Commissioner Greene reported that she would be attending training in September to see power generation and management facilities, a solar farm, and a data center.
- Commissioner Jones made a motion to stop taking solar applications until the current solar ordinance has been reviewed and amended in a work session. Commissioner Greene seconded. Upon recommendation from counsel, Commissioner Jones amended his motion to stop processing solar applications until the current solar ordinance can be reviewed and amended in a work session. Commissioner Greene amended her second motion. All voted in favor, and the amended motion passed.

## **County Manager**

Manager Bearden stated August 25 is a hard date for receiving the consolidated tax digest. Also, the sales ratio study from the Department of Audits and Accounts has been received, and Dodge County is not in compliance. State requires the county be within 36-42%. The county is at 35.03% for 2024.

## **Public Comments**

Several citizens expressed their thoughts regarding solar farms.

## **Adjourn**

With no other business to come before the board, Commissioner Greene made a motion to adjourn at 8:33 p.m. Commissioner Jones seconded. All voted in favor, and the meeting adjourned.

Attested:

Approved:

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Kimberly Smith-Parkerson, County Clerk

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Dan McCranie, Chairman