

Dodge County Board of Commissioners
Monday, July 20, 2026, 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 on Monday, July 20, 2026, with Chairman McCranie presiding. He opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. by leading the Pledge of Allegiance and dedicating the devotion to the memory of Superior Court Judge Howard C. Kaufold, Jr., who passed away on Sunday, July 19. Next, Chairman McCranie led a prayer for Judge Kaufold's family and the county's business.

Amend Agenda

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to amend the agenda to add "Surplus Government Property" as an item of old business. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Elected Officials/Department Heads

Nothing presented.

Approval of Minutes

A. Minutes – July 06, 2026

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

Old Business

A. Data Center Ordinance

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to table the data center ordinance to allow the board to schedule a work session, as requested by Commissioner Greene, to provide adequate time for review. Commissioner Greene seconded. All voted in agreement, passing the motion. Manager Bearden confirmed that this session would be coordinated with other pending discussions.

B. Old Courthouse – Attorney Ron Daniels

Attorney Ron Daniels presented two options for a potential referendum regarding the old courthouse: a binary choice regarding a 2.5-mill tax increase or a more granular, multi-choice poll ranging from no millage increase to 2.5 mills or greater. Commissioner Greene made a motion to accept the first-choice referendum. No second was forthcoming; motion died.

B. Surplus Government Property

Attorney Harrington discussed the abandonment of the old Dodge County Landing, noting that a new, serviceable landing is now in operation, and the old site is no longer viable for boat access. Commissioner

Watkins made a motion to abandon the old boat landing. Commissioner Flanagan seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Public comment, no name stated: Requested parking be expanded at the new boat landing.

New Business

A. Approval of Accounts Payable

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the accounts payable report totaling \$1,346,482.79. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. Chairman McCranie allowed for discussion from the board and the public. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

B. 2026 Local Roads Administration (LRA) Project Approval

Manager Bearden discussed the 2026 Local Road Administration grant, in the amount of \$1,184,273.47, for resurfacing projects on Ben Giddens Road, Pine Crest Drive, Jessica Lane, Arthur Cooper Road, and Nicholson Carr Road. The estimated project totaled \$1,427,426.23 with a \$243,152.76 variance, which would be funded by TSPLOST funds. Commissioner Flanagan made a motion to approve the LRA road list, as presented. Commissioner Greene seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Public comment, no name stated: A community member requested attention to potholes on Chicken Road, which the board indicated would be addressed once state bridge work is completed.

C. 2026 Mid-Year Budget Amendments

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the mid-year budget amendments, as tabled below. Commissioners Jones and Greene seconded. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Description	Revenue GL	Expense GL	\$ Amount
EMAG Grant	100-331150	7030-523500	\$989.00
Fireworks Grant	100-331150	7030-523900	\$22,500.00
GTIB	100-331080	4000-522204	\$4,429,108.00
LRA 2026	100-331080	4000-522204	\$1,184,273.00
ACCG Scholarship	100-331051	1100-523701	\$2,976.98
ACCG Scholarship	100-331051	1200-523710	\$2,500.00
Brace Grant	100-331290	8010-523900	\$7,500.00
Extension Office	7125-51110	7125-531131 7125-523610	\$1,500.00

D. Zoning Request

The board discussed a request from citizens to place a zoning referendum regarding solar farms and data centers on the ballot. The county attorney advised against "spot zoning," noting it is often unfavorable in court. Commissioner Watkins stated that the board uses ordinances covering the entire county rather than a targeted referendum. No motion was made.

E. Mr. Jessie Hilliard – Community Concerns

Resident Jessie Hillard requested crush and run be placed on Fair Haven Church Road since access to Eastman from his home is hindered by a state highway project.

F. Quarterly Reports

The financial quarterly report, according the county manager, reflected revenues of \$3,482,621.42 and expenditures of \$6,008,404.79. Manager Bearden stated funding of the road projects was over \$2 million. Commissioner Watkins added that grant funds covered most of the road projects.

Manager Bearden also noted that the quarterly road report indicated 66 works orders with an average completion of 9.05 days.

Commissioner Reports

- Commissioner Flanagan stated she has been appointed Vice-Chair of Natural Resources and Environmental by ACCG and is involved in the policy council if the board has any issues to be addressed. She also stated the comprehensive plan has an upcoming meeting, and the public is welcomed and encouraged to attend those meetings. She noted that she would be holding another town hall for opinions on the courthouse.

Motion to Close County Facilities in Honor of Judge Howard C. Kaufold, Jr.

- Commissioner Watkins made the following motion:

I move that, in recognition of the dedicated public service and lasting contributions of Judge Howard C. Kaufold, Jr. to Dodge County and the State of Georgia, the Dodge County Board of Commissioners authorize lowering the American flag to half-staff and the closure of all non-essential county offices and facilities on Wednesday, July 22, 2026, to allow county employees the opportunity to attend his funeral services and pay their respects.

Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

County Manager Report: Conner Bearden

Manager Bearden reported elections costs for the May 19 primary at \$26,000 and for the June 16 primary at \$15,900. He also noted the Comprehensive Plan final hearing will be on July 30 at 3:00 pm. Next, he stated the emergency alert system has 500 enrollees, and the road committee will be discussing the 2027 LMIG projects.

Work Session

The board scheduled a work session for August 4 at 8:30 a.m. to discuss the data center ordinance and tax digest.

Adjourn

With no other business to come before the board, Commissioner Watkins made a motion to adjourn at 6:57 p.m. Commissioners Jones and Flanagan seconded. All voted in favor, and the meeting adjourned.

Attested:

Approved:

Kimberly Smith-Parkerson, County Clerk

Dan McCranie, Chairman