

Dodge County Board of Commissioners
Monday, September 21, 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, Manager Conner Bearden, Clerk Kimberly Smith-Parkerson

Call to Order – Amend Agenda

The Dodge County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting at the Dodge County Pearl Bates Courthouse Annex on Monday, September 21, 2026, with Chairman McCranie presiding. He opened at 6:00 p.m. and Commissioner Greene made a motion to amend the agenda to add “Set Public Hearings for the Millage Rate” under old business. Commissioners Flanagan and Watkins seconded. All voted favorably, and the agenda was amended. Next, Chairman McCranie led the Pledge of Allegiance and read a devotion from 1 Samuel 16:5. Afterward, he led a prayer.

Elected Officials/Department Heads

Nothing presented.

Approval of Minutes

A. Minutes – September 08, 2026 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve the minutes, as presented with no corrections or deletions. Commissioners Flanagan/Watkins seconded. All voted in favor. Motion passed.

Old Business

A. Sheriff SPLOST Request

Chief Deputy Tony Riddle requested 12 vehicular laptop units, plus two spares, to reduce travel time, fuel costs, and overtime for deputies. Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve the SPLOST request in the amount of \$33,455 for the initial purchase, set-up and installation, alongside a recurring monthly software subscription fee of \$1,200, with the stipulation the subscription fee must be incorporated in the 2027 fiscal year budget. Commissioner Flanagan seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

B. Community Development Block Grant – Resolution/Contract

Commissioner Greene made a motion to approve the resolution and contract, as detailed below, for a community development block grant in fiscal year 2027 for up to one million dollars without specifying a project. Commissioner Flanagan seconded the motion. All voted favorably.

DODGE COUNTY
Board of Commissioners
RESOLUTION

TO APPLY FOR FY2027 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

WHEREAS, Dodge County considers the provision and maintenance of street and drainage improvements necessary to the health and general welfare of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, Dodge County has agreed to pursue a FY2027 Community Development Block Grant from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs in an amount of up to \$1,000,000.00 to be used to assist funding costs associated with the rehabilitation of streets and drainage; and

WHEREAS, the County commits to cover the cost of the required cash match, as well as any costs over the grant and required cash match amount associated with the completion of the project; and

WHEREAS, the project will develop and improve the standard of living within Dodge County; and

WHEREAS, the project will benefit primarily low to moderate income residents of the Dodge County; and

WHEREAS, such improvements will be for the public good and welfare; and

WHEREAS, the project will promote the general welfare of the State of Georgia; and

WHEREAS, the direct object of the County financing of the project is to accomplish said purposes:

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Dodge County Board of Commissioners hereby approves this Resolution to submit an application to the Department of Community Affairs for the FY2027 Community Development Block Grant program to fund street and drainage improvements.

Adopted and made effective this 21st day of September, 2026.

**CONTRACT
STATE OF GEORGIA
DODGE COUNTY**

PART I – AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT, entered into this 21st day of September, 2026 by and between DODGE COUNTY, hereinafter called the "COUNTY" and THE HEART OF GEORGIA ALTAMAHA REGIONAL COMMISSION, hereinafter called "COMMISSION." WITNESSETH THAT:

WHEREAS, the County desires to implement Community Development Block Grant from Georgia Department of Community Affairs; and

WHEREAS, the County desires to engage the Commission to render certain services in connection with the preparation of a grant application and grant administration.

NOW THEREFORE, the parties do mutually agree as follows:

1. Scope of Services

Part II, Scope of Services, is hereby incorporated by reference into this Agreement.

2. Time of Performance - The services of Commission shall commence on execution of this agreement. In any event, all of the services required and performed hereunder shall be completed no later than closeout of the project.

3. Access to Information - It is agreed that all information, data, reports and records and maps as are existing, available, and necessary for the carrying out of the work outlined above shall be furnished to the Commission by the County and its agencies. No charge will be made to Commission for such information and the County, and its agencies will cooperate with Commission in every way possible to facilitate the performance of the work described in the Agreement.

4. Compensation and Method of Payment – The Commission will provide grant writing and application services at no charge to the County. In the event of a grant award, the Commission shall invoice the County fees for grant administration services for the project after grant funding is received. The maximum amount of compensation and reimbursement to be paid hereunder shall not exceed **\$60,000**. The Commission shall submit invoices to the County in order to be compensated by the County.

5. Indemnification – Commission shall comply with the requirements of all applicable laws, rules and regulations, and shall exonerate, indemnify, and hold harmless the County and its agency members from and against them, and shall assume full responsibility for payments of Federal, State and local taxes-on contributions imposed or required under the Social Security, workers compensation and income tax laws.

6. Miscellaneous Provisions

a. This Agreement shall be construed under and accord with the laws of the State of Georgia, and all obligations of the parties created hereunder are performable in the City of Eastman.

b. This Agreement shall be binding upon and insure to the benefit of the parties hereto and heir respective heirs, executors, administrators, legal representatives, successors and assigns where permitted by this Agreement.

c. If one or more of the provisions contained in this Agreement shall for any reason be held to be invalid, illegal, or unenforceable in any respect, such invalidity, illegality, or unenforceability, shall not affect any other provision

thereof and this Agreement shall be construed as if such invalid, illegal, or unenforceable provision had never been contained herein. All other terms hereof shall remain in full force and effect.

d. If any action at law or in equity is necessary to enforce or interpret the terms of this Agreement, the prevailing party shall be entitled to reasonable attorney's fees, costs, and necessary disbursements in addition to any other relief to which such party may be entitled.

e. This Agreement may be amended by mutual agreement of the parties hereto and a writing to be attached to an incorporated into this Agreement.

7. Termination of Contract – If, through any cause, the Commission shall fail to fulfill in a timely manner its obligation under this Contract, or if the Commission shall violate any of the covenants, agreements, or stipulations of the Contract, the County there upon shall have the right to terminate this Contract by giving written notice to the Commission of such termination and specifying the effective date thereof, at least five days before the effective date of such termination. In that event, all finished or unfinished materials prepared by the Commission under this Contract shall become the property of the County and the Commission shall be entitled to receive just and equitable compensation for any satisfactory work completed on such materials. If such termination of this Contract by the County shall be for violation or breach of any contract terms on the part of the Commission, the County shall have full recourse of such administrative, contractual, or legal remedies as may be appropriate, together with such necessary and reasonable sanctions and penalties against the Commission as may be appropriate.

8. Contract Variations and Modifications – This Agreement constitutes the entire Agreement between the Commission and the County and there are no other written or oral understandings or agreements with respect thereto. No variation or modification of the Agreement, and no waiver of its provisions, shall be valid unless in writing and signed by the Commission's and the County's duly authorized representatives.

9. Funding Termination – In the event that funding is terminated or otherwise unavailable for the purpose of compensating the Commission, this Agreement is null and void, releasing the County and Commission from further obligations contained herein.

IN WITNESSETH HEREOF, the parties have hereunto set their hands and seals.

PART II

PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT SCOPE OF SERVICES

The COMMISSION shall provide the following scope of services:

A. Project Management

1. Develop a recordkeeping and filing system consistent with program guidelines.
2. Maintenance of filing system.
3. Provide general advice and technical assistance to County personnel on implementation of the project and regulatory matters pertaining thereto.
4. Assist in the procurement of professional consulting engineering services through the request for proposal process, if applicable, and as required by the Department/Agency regulations.
5. Furnish County with necessary forms and procedures required for implementation of project.
6. Assist the County in meeting all special award condition requirements that may be stipulated in the Financial Assistance Award between the County and Department/Agency.
7. Prepare and submit to Department/Agency documentation necessary for amending the Contract.
8. Conduct re-assessment of environmental clearance for any program amendments.
9. Prepare and submit quarterly progress reports.
10. Prepare Recipient Disclosure Report form for County signature and submittal.
11. Establish procedures to document expenditures associated with local project administration.
12. Provide guidance and assistance to County regarding acquisition of property as detailed in Section D below.
13. Adherence to all requirements in the 2027 CDBG Applicants' and Recipients' Manuals as well as other directives issued by DCA

B. Financial Management

1. Assist the County in proving its ability to manage the Department/Agency financial assistance funds to the state's audit division.
2. Assist the County in establishing and maintaining a bank account (Direct Deposit account) and/or separate local bank account, journals, and ledgers.

3. Assist the County in submitting the required Accounting System Certification letter, Direct Deposit Authorization Form (if applicable), and/or Depository/Authorized Signatory form to Department/Agency.
4. Prepare all fund drawdowns on behalf of the County to ensure orderly, timely payments to all contracting parties within the allotted time period.
5. Review invoices received for payment and file back-up documentation.
6. Provide general advice and technical assistance to County personnel on implementation of project and regulatory matters
7. Assist the County in establishing procedures to handle the use of any Department/Agency program income.

C. Environmental Review

1. Prepare appropriate environmental review document, including possibly an environmental assessment.
2. Coordinate environmental clearance procedures with other federal or state agencies and interested parties responsible for implementing applicable laws.
3. Document consideration of any public comments.
4. Prepare any required re-assessment of environmental review document.
5. Ensure compliance with Executive Order 11988 for projects in the flood plains, as amended by Executive Order 13690.
6. Prepare Request for Release of Funds and certifications to be sent to Department/Agency.

D. Acquisition

1. Prepare and submit required reports concerning acquisition activities, including those related to acquisitions of real property, to Department/Agency.
2. Serve as liaison for the County during any monitoring visit by Department/Agency staff.

E. Construction Management

1. Assist the County in documenting compliance with all federal and state requirements related to equal employment opportunity.
2. Assist the County in documenting compliance with all federal and state requirements related to minimum wage and overtime pay requirements.
3. Provide assistance to or act as local labor standards officer.
4. Notify Department/Agency in writing of name, address, and phone number of appointed labor standards compliance officer.
5. Request wage rates from Department/Agency.
6. Provide all applicable equal opportunity provisions and certifications for inclusion in bid packet.
7. Provide sample Department/Agency contract documents to engineer.
8. Verify construction contractor eligibility with Department/Agency.
9. Review construction contract.
10. Conduct pre-construction conference and prepare minutes.
11. Submit any reports of additional classification and rates to Department/Agency.
12. Issue Notice of Start of Construction to Department/Agency.
13. Review weekly payrolls, including compliance follow-ups.
14. Conduct employee interviews.
15. Process and submit change orders to Department/Agency prior to execution.
16. Obtain Final Wage Compliance Report and submit to Department/Agency.
17. Provide general advice and technical assistance to County personnel on implementation of project and regulatory matters.

F. Audit / Closeout Procedures

1. Prepare the Final Acceptance Report for appropriate signatures to submit to the Department/Agency.
2. Assist the County in resolving any monitoring and audit findings.
3. Assist the County in resolving any third-party claims.
4. Provide auditor with Department/Agency audit guidelines.

C. Public Hearings for Millage Rate

The county manager noted that because the recommended millage rate exceeds the rollback rate—with a maximum discussed rate of 11 mills—three public hearings are required by law. The scheduled hearing dates are September 29 at 10:00 a.m., September 29 at 6:00 p.m., and October 6 at 6:00 p.m., aligning

with the school board's schedule. A called meeting will be held on October 6 immediately following the final public hearing for the board to vote and set the final countywide millage rate. Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve the schedule. Commissioner Greene seconded. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

New Business

A. Approval of Accounts Payable

Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve the accounts payable report totaling \$1,035,665.93. Commissioner Watkins seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

B. Comprehensive Plan Resolution

Upon a motion by Commissioner Watkins and a second by Commissioner Greene, the board unanimously voted to approve the Comprehensive Plan Resolution, as detailed below:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires all local governments in Georgia to prepare a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," effective October 1, 2018, under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 for coordinated and comprehensive planning, including standards and procedures for the preparation of local comprehensive plans and implementation thereof, community involvement, and coordinated review; and

WHEREAS, Dodge County, Georgia has participated with the municipalities of Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine in a coordinated and comprehensive planning process under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning through the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee, and with the assistance of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, to update its existing adopted comprehensive plan with a new full plan update; and

WHEREAS, this coordinated and comprehensive planning process has resulted in the development of a new joint comprehensive plan, Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural, for Dodge County and the municipalities of Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine; and

WHEREAS, the new joint comprehensive plan has been previously submitted to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review; and

WHEREAS, the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan, Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and

WHEREAS, Dodge County is now desirous of adopting Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural as its official comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Dodge County Board of Commissioners hereby approves and adopts the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan, Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural, as Dodge County's official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Dodge County Board of Commissioners hereby instructs and directs that formal notification of said adoption be forwarded to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and to other agencies, as appropriate.

SO RESOLVED, this 21st day of September, 2026.

C. 2027 LMIG

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to approve the 2027 LMIG road list, as detailed in the table. Commissioner Jones seconded. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

Road	Beginning	End	Work
Pine Rd	Pine Crest Dr	End of Pavement	Asphalt
24 th Ave	Hwy 23	Amanda Dr	Asphalt
25 th Ave	Hwy 23	Amanda Dr	Asphalt
26 th Ave	Hwy 23	Amanda Dr	Asphalt
Amanda Dr	26 th Ave	23 rd Ave	Asphalt
Sanders Dr	26 th Ave	Dead End	Asphalt
23 rd Ave	Sanders Dr	Amanda Dr	Asphalt
West Chicken Rd	County Line	Cook Rd	Asphalt
Kelly Farm Rd	Hwy 165	Ebenezer Church	Asphalt
Free Gift Rd	Edna Moore Rd	Isham Springs Rd	Asphalt

D. 2026 LRA

Manager Bearden presented two bids for the 2026 LRA project, as follows. He stated the LRA grant came in at \$1,184,273.27 with no county match required.

- Griffin Grading and Concrete - \$1,152,832.48
- Scruggs Company - \$1,118,899.80

Commissioner Watkins made a motion to accept the low bid from Scruggs. Commissioner Jones seconded. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

E. Right-of-Way Policy

Manager Bearden requested the board review a proposed right-of-way policy for discussion at the next meeting.

Commissioner Reports

- Commissioner Flanagan commended the comprehensive plan and suggested having a joint meeting with cities and the county, facilitated by the development authority, to clarify businesses of interest.
- Commissioner Flanagan and Derek Hutchinson discussed airport needs for additional pavement/apron space. The board requested a drawing to evaluate funding needs.

County Manager Report: Conner Bearden

- Manager Bearden updated regarding a decrease in insurance premium tax revenue due to a state mandate. Also, he stated the Dodge County Boat Landing survey was initiated.

Adjourn

With no other business to come before the board, Commissioner Greene made a motion to adjourn at 6:44 p.m. Commissioner Flanagan seconded. All voted in favor, and the meeting adjourned.

Attested:

Approved:

Kimberly Smith-Parkerson, County Clerk

Dan McCranie, Chairman