

**Houston County Commissioners Meeting
February 17, 2026
Warner Robins, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, at the Houston County Annex in Warner Robins, Georgia. Chairman Perdue presided, and Commissioners Byrd, Gottwals, Robinson, and Talton were present. County Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Robbie Dunbar, and Director of Operations Brian Jones were also present.

Commissioner Byrd led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

County Administrator Robbie Dunbar gave the invocation.

Chairman Perdue reminded all those present and those watching online that it was an election day for State Senate District 18. He also stated that the polls for those in that district would be open until 7:00 pm.

Director of Administration Robbie Dunbar gave the first reading of the application for an alcohol license, for sale of beer, wine, and liquor, for off premise use. The application submitted by Mr. Saurin J. Patel is for Peach State Liquor to be located at 271 GA Highway 26 East in Elko, Georgia. The second reading, and Public Hearing will be conducted at the March 3, 2026 meeting.

Chairman Perdue stated that this was one of two applications already in process when the recent moratorium was placed on new liquor, vape and tobacco stores.

Mr. Byrd presented a request for approval of an agreement for a traffic study with concept plans.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Gottwals, and carried unanimously by all to approve signing an agreement with R.K. Shah & Associates, Inc., of Suwanee, Georgia in the amount of \$41,000, to conduct a comprehensive traffic study with concept plans for the North Houston Lake Road / Dunbar Road improvements. This project will be funded by the 2024 SPLOST and has a timeline of eight weeks from the Notice to Proceed.

Chairman Perdue stated that this was a planned 2024 SPLOST funded project with a budget of \$15.9 million and that R.K. Shah and Associates would assist the County in gauging the best use of these SPLOST dollars in terms of this project. He thanked Director of Operations Brian Jones and his Public Works team for their work on this project.

Mr. Byrd presented a request for approval of a bid for striping and other pavement markings for White Road, Dunbar Road, Story Road, Hatcher Road, Hunt Road, Sandy Run Road, Arena Road, Bear Branch Road, Felton Road, Kersey Road, Elko Road and Sandefur Road.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the acceptance of the bid from Mid-State Construction & Striping, Inc., of Perry, Georgia in the amount of \$351,741 for striping and other pavement markings on various County roads. This project will be funded through LMIG, with a 30% County match utilizing 2018 SPLOST funds.

Mr. Byrd commented on the bids received for this project, stating that he was thankful for the bids and how they save the County money.

Mr. Talton presented a request for approval of a trucking contract renewal.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all to approve a contract renewal with DeCarlton Mims d/b/a Mid Georgia Trucking, of Macon Georgia to haul and deliver leachate generated from the Houston County Landfill to a wastewater treatment facility with all contractual terms remaining the same. The current agreement is set to expire, and a contract renewal is needed for services to continue.

Chairman Perdue thanked Utilities Director Terry Dietsch and Landfill Superintendent Jeffery Smith for their efforts to continue the relationship with Mr. Mims. He stated that this agreement has been a good value for the County and that he has been hauling leachate for the County for a long time.

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Mr. Talton presented a request to declare items surplus and sell them on GovDeals.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Gottwals, and carried unanimously by all to approve declaring the following items surplus to be sold on GovDeals:

- One 2020 Ford F-550
- Five 10 lug Aluminum Wheels (11 R22.5)

Mr. Gottwals presented a request for a revised compensation and contract structure for Juvenile Court contract attorneys. The proposed structure establishes monthly contract amounts with defined hour thresholds to ensure consistent court coverage, align compensation with current market conditions, and provide predictable budgeting.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the revised Juvenile Court contract attorney compensation structure and to authorize staff to execute amendments to the current fiscal year agreement to reflect the proposed structure as follows:

Primary Juvenile Defense Contractor

- \$7,500 per month
- Covers up to 125 hours per month
- Hours exceeding 125 paid at \$65 per hour

Secondary Juvenile Defense Contractor

- \$3,600 per month
- Covers up to 60 hours per month
- Hours exceeding 60 paid at \$65 per hour

Chairman Perdue thanked the Board for their attention to this request and agreeing to alter the contracts mid-year. He added that it is difficult to staff these court-appointed attorneys who act as public defenders for juveniles appearing in court. He expressed his appreciation to Judge Wilburn for her work to get these changes enacted. He also thanked the County Attorney's office for their help and guidance on this action to attract attorneys to assist on a contractual basis.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request for approval of organizational and staffing changes within the MIS Department and also to appoint individuals to the two new vacant Assistant Director positions within the MIS Department.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve the renaming and reclassification of the following positions:

Rename the vacant Assistant Director position to Assistant Director – Infrastructure and Operations (Grade 27).

Reclassify one System Administrator II position to Assistant Director - Enterprise Systems & Data (Grade 27).

Rename the remaining System Administrator II position to Network / Systems Engineer (Grade 25).

To add a new position of Enterprise Application Specialist at Grade 22.

Additionally, to approve the appointment of the following individuals to the two vacant Assistant Director positions within the MIS Department.

Ryan Hale – Assistant Director, Infrastructure & Operations (Grade 27, Step F).

Eric Mitchell – Assistant Director, Enterprise Systems & Data (Grade 27, Step F).

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Mr. Byrd stated his appreciation for the organizational changes made within the MIS Department and quoted a memo from MIS Director Will Davis, "to better align the organization with current operational demands, cybersecurity requirements and best practices for local government information technology operations."

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$3,510,627.01.

Chairman Perdue closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened Public Comments.

Mr. Jim Brown addressed the Board regarding a noise concern involving a church located near his residence. He stated that reports concerning the issue had been made to local law enforcement.

Mr. Thomas Reynolds addressed the Board regarding several matters of concern, including property tax exemptions for senior citizens, the proposed cultural arts building, and the number of apartment complexes currently under construction in the County. He concluded his remarks by complimenting Assistant Fire Chief David Newman on a recent interaction he had with him.

Houston County Fire / HEMA Chief Chris Stoner thanked Mr. Reynolds for his positive comments regarding Assistant Chief Newman. Chief Stoner also expressed appreciation to the Commissioners for their continued strong support of the Fire Department, particularly in regard to staffing. He concluded by noting the historic milestone achieved the previous day, stating that all County fire stations are now staffed full-time.

There being no further comments Chairman Perdue closed Public Comments and opened the floor to Commissioner Comments.

Chairman Perdue reminded those in attendance that the polls are open for the State Senate District 18 runoff election.

He recognized Centerville Mayor Michael Evans, who was present at the meeting, and congratulated him and the City of Centerville on the dedication of their new recycling center, scheduled for Thursday at 4:00 p.m.

Chairman Perdue acknowledged the passing of two notable individuals, David Walker and Ron Shipman, and recognized each for their lasting impact on both Houston County and the Middle Georgia region.

He also noted the upcoming retirement of Judge Edward Lukemire and expressed his appreciation for Judge Lukemire's many contributions and years of service to Houston County.

Chairman Perdue thanked Fire Chief Chris Stoner for his leadership in securing full-time staffing for all County fire stations. He thanked the Commissioners for their support and expressed appreciation to the taxpayers of Houston County for approving the increased fire millage that made the expanded fire protection capability possible.

He concluded by noting that the County will be the presenters at Thursday's Robins Regional Chamber "Eggs and Issues" event at the Carey Martin Center. Chairman Perdue expressed his appreciation to both Chief Stoner and Sheriff Moulton for the continued improvements each has made to public safety in Houston County.

Mr. Gottwals expressed his appreciation for Judge Lukemire and offered congratulations on his upcoming retirement. He shared a quote by Ralph Waldo Emerson, stating, "*The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well.*"

Ms. Robinson thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for their comments. She expressed her appreciation to Judge Lukemire for his 29 years of dedicated service to the County.

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Mr. Talton thanked those in attendance for participating in the meeting and for offering public comments, particularly for expressing concerns. He also thanked Chief Stoner for sharing the positive news regarding full-time staffing at all County fire stations. Mr. Talton expressed his gratitude to Judge Lukemire for his service to Houston County and congratulated him on his upcoming retirement.

Mr. Byrd expressed his appreciation for the comments shared regarding Mr. Walker, Mr. Shipman, and Judge Lukemire, recognizing their service and contributions to Houston County and the Middle Georgia region.

He thanked those in attendance for their participation and expressed appreciation to County staff for their work in preparing the agenda and compiling the information presented at the meeting.

Mr. Byrd recognized Board of Education Chair Helen Hughes for her service over the past three years and acknowledged incoming Board Chairman Dr. Rick Unruh, as well as Mr. Dave Crockett on his appointment as Vice-Chair. He also commended the School Board on recently receiving a clean audit.

He concluded his remarks by congratulating the Houston County Sharks on winning another state championship by securing the state handball tournament title. He noted that this marks the team's 42nd state championship over the past 19 years.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve adjourning the meeting. Meeting adjourned.

Robbie Dunbar
Director of Administration

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner