

**Houston County Commissioners Meeting
September 16, 2025
Warner Robins, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, 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 Operations Brian Jones, and Director of Administration Robbie Dunbar were also present.

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

Chairman Perdue gave the invocation.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the meeting minutes of the September 2, 2025 meeting.

Director of Administration Robbie Dunbar gave the second reading of a request for an alcohol license to include the retail sale of Beer, Wine, and Liquor for use off premises at 295 Old Hwy 96 Bonaire, Georgia. The first reading was held at the September 2, 2025 meeting.

Chairman Perdue closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened a Public Hearing on the applications.

Larry Baxter spoke of his concerns on the number of liquor stores opening in Houston County.

Chairman Perdue thanked Mr. Baxter for his concerns.

With no further comments, Chairman Perdue closed the Public Hearing and reopened the regular portion of the meeting.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all to approve the alcohol license for the retail sale of beer, wine and liquor for use off premises at 295 Old Hwy 96 Bonaire, Georgia.

Chairman Perdue clarified Mr. Dunbar's statement, saying that the prior approval from the Commissioner's Office was for meeting the requirements for the alcohol license application in terms of background checks, zoning, and other regulatory requirements, that the Commissioner's Office approval was not Board approval.

Ms. Robinson presented a request to accept property ownership from Sam Nunn Farms, LLLP to be utilized as a utility easement exclusively for Houston County water systems and continue as an emergency ingress-egress easement for adjacent subdivisions. Sam Nunn Farms, LLLP will continue to be permitted to utilize the property as an easement to transport cut timber from their currently landlocked property.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve the Chairman signing any and all documents to accept ownership of the below described property from Sam Nunn Farms, LLLP to be utilized as a utility easement exclusively for Houston County water systems and continue to be used as an emergency ingress-egress easement and a timber harvesting easement:

All that tract or parcel of land lying and being in Land Lots 178 and 207 of the Tenth Land District of Houston County, Georgia, comprising 7.3 acres, having such shapes, metes, bounds, courses and distances as are shown on a plat of survey made by Milton Beckham, Surveyor, on March 6, 1964, a copy of said plat being of record in Map Book 9, Page 245, Clerk's Office, Houston Superior Court. Said plat and the recorded copy thereof are hereby made a part of this description by reference thereto.

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LESS AND EXCEPT that portion conveyed to Houston County by Right-of-Way Deed recorded in Deed Book 422, Page 540, said Clerk's Office.

Deed Reference: Deed Book 7090, Pages 204-205, said Clerk's Office
Houston County Tax Map Parcel No. 000830 005000

Chairman Perdue explained that the property in question is a narrow strip of land currently used as a utility easement and for public safety vehicle access to a nearby subdivision. He further stated that the property, which the easement is located on, will be donated to the County by the owner, Sam Nunn Farms, LLLP. The land will continue to be used for its existing purposes and will also provide timber access to the adjacent landlocked timber farm property.

Ms. Robinson presented a request to purchase 6.27 acres of property that sits adjacent to county landfill property and borders the Big Indian Creek for \$10,000.00 plus all closing costs. The purchase of this property will serve as a buffer between the existing landfill property and neighboring property.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Gottwals and carried unanimously by all to approve the Chairman to sign any and all documents to purchase the following property for the amount of \$10,000.00 plus closing cost of \$1,159.06 to be paid from landfill capital funds:

All that tract or parcel of land lying and being in Land Lots 89 of the Twelfth Land District of Houston County, Georgia, and being known and designated as Tract "B" containing 6.27 acres, as shown on a plat of survey made by Marty A. McLeod, Surveyor, on January 1, 2019, a copy of said plat being of record in Map Book 80, Page 232, Clerk's Office, Houston Superior Court. Said plat and the recorded copy thereof are hereby made a part of this description by reference thereto.

Chairman Perdue explained that there are no plans to expand the landfill onto this property but that it will be used as a buffer between the landfill and neighboring properties.

Ms. Robinson presented a request to sign an engagement letter for professional services to identify pertinent information and processes that will assist the County in ensuring compliance with the 1982 Tax Cap.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all to approve the signing of an engagement letter with Mr. Charles Hall of Macon, Georgia, to provide professional services in researching information and processes concerning the 1982 Tax Cap. The engagement letter covers the period from September 17, 2025, through April 30, 2026, at a rate of \$250 per hour. Funding for this engagement will come from Accounting Professional Services, and the Director of Administration is authorized to make any necessary budget adjustments to fund the project.

Chairman Perdue commented that this action is being taken by the Board to accurately determine the State of Georgia unfunded mandate levy amount. He stated that this action will help in making sure we are following the 1982 Tax Cap.

Mr. Byrd thanked Chairman Perdue for his proactive efforts.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request for 9 new positions in the Fire Department.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the addition of the following to the Houston County Position Control List; nine (9) firefighter positions at a total annual cost of \$794,477.07, effective September 17, 2025. Also, for the Accounting Department to make any necessary budgetary adjustments.

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Chairman Perdue thanked both the Commissioners and the community for their support in getting these additional firefighters.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request for the addition of one Office Assistant position in the Solicitor General's Office.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the addition to the Houston County Position Control List; one (1) Office Assistant position (Grade 8) at a total annual cost of \$54,311.79, effective September 17, 2025. Also, for the Accounting Department to make any necessary budgetary adjustments.

Chairman Perdue thanked the Board for the approval to add this position which will increase customer service and to allow for staff to focus on assisting their clients.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request for the addition of six positions in the Sheriff's Office.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve the addition to the Houston County Position Control List the following positions:

Two (2) Deputy Sheriff positions – Traffic Division
 One (1) Court Services Deputy – Juvenile Court
 Two (2) Corporal positions – Warrants/Civil Division
 One (1) Major – Administration Division

To partially offset the cost of the Major position, the Sheriff has agreed not to fund one (1) additional Jail position. With this adjustment, the total estimated annual cost of the requested positions is \$525,189.28, effective September 17, 2025. Also, for the Accounting Department to make any necessary budgetary adjustments.

Chairman Perdue expressed his thanks to Sheriff Moulton for his efforts to keep the residents of Houston County safe.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request to enter into an agreement with the Georgia Agricultural Exposition Authority.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all to approve the signing of an Interim Event License Agreement between the Houston County Board of Commissioners and the Georgia Agricultural Exposition Authority of Perry, Georgia, for the use of Murphy Hall on December 9, 2025.

Mr. Talton presented a request from the Sheriff's Office to donate a surplus vehicle to the Marion County School Board Police Department.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Gottwals, and carried unanimously by all to approve the donation of a 2013 Ford F-150 marked as surplus to the Marion County School Board Police Department.

Mr. Talton thanked Sheriff Moulton for assisting other public safety agencies when the request is made and we have the resources available.

Chairman Perdue expressed his thanks to Sheriff Moulton for assisting the Marion County School Board Police Department.

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Mr. Talton presented a request for approval of a bid on two new 2025 Toyota 4Runners for the Investigations Department in the Sheriff's Office.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the bid from Lowe Toyota of Warner Robins for two new 2025 Toyota 4Runners in the amount of \$42,426.57 each, or total cost of \$84,853.14, This purchase will be funded by 2018 SPLOST.

Chairman Perdue explained that the Investigations Department likes to use less conspicuous vehicles, and that these vehicles met both the budget requirements and the needs of the department.

Mr. Talton presented a request to declare items surplus and to hold a surplus auction.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all to approve declaring the items listed on the document titled FY26 Surplus Memo Items surplus and scheduling a Public Auction to sell the items. The auction will be held on Thursday, October 2, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at the Houston County Warehouse, with a rain date of Thursday, October 9, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Mr. Talton thanked Purchasing Director Vanessa Zimmerman for helping the County recover some of the original purchasing costs of this equipment through the auction.

Mr. Byrd presented a request to enter into a Supplemental Agreement for engineering services.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Gottwals, and carried unanimously by all to approve entering into a Supplemental Agreement with Saunders Engineering Consultants, Inc., of Centerville, Georgia, in the amount of \$21,000 bringing the total contract price, for the Pleasant Hill Road Project, to \$97,000. This agreement will provide for subsurface utility engineering to more accurately locate existing utilities and incorporate them into the construction drawings. Work will be completed at the signing of the agreement.

Chairman Perdue commented that this approved agreement is for the cost of engineering services only and not the full cost of the project.

Mr. Byrd presented a request from Public Works for approval of a bid.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the bid in the amount of \$2,641,193.07 from C.W. Matthews Contracting Company, of Juliette, Georgia, to perform the construction on the Pleasant Hill Road Resurfacing and Sidewalks Project. The water mains and sanitary sewer belong to the City of Warner Robins, who will pay the contractor directly for the work. The amount for the water main relocations of water and sanitary sewer adjustments is \$188,866.87. This project is being funded by the 2018 SPLOST and has a completion date of 210 days.

Chairman Perdue commented on the year-long delay in the completion of Elberta Road by C.W. Matthews, attributing the delay to utility discoveries and relocation efforts. He stated that a recent meeting was held with senior staff from the County, the City of Warner Robins, and C.W. Matthews to discuss the ongoing work on Elberta Road as well as potential work on Pleasant Hill Road. He noted that the contractor is fully aware of the need to perform better and complete work more efficiently on Pleasant Hill Road. Chairman Perdue also expressed his approval that paving work has begun on Elberta Road. Additionally, he remarked that one of the reasons the County selected C.W. Matthews for the project was the \$700,000 difference in bid amounts between the lowest bidder and the second-lowest bidder.

Mr. Byrd advised that he fully supported everything that Chairman Perdue stated and also spoke of the long history of successful work for the County that C.W. Matthews had done in the past.

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Chairman Perdue recognized Warner Robins City Administrator James Drinkard who was present, and Mr. Drinkard spoke about his appreciation for the cooperation between the County and Warner Robins on this project, that the City has learned a lot from the Elberta Road construction process and that any issues that arise will be addressed quickly.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$2,559,165.52.

Chairman Perdue opened the floor for Public Comments.

Sheriff Matt Moulton spoke about the Sheriff's Office donation of the truck to the Marion County School Board Police Department. He said it was a vehicle that had outlived its service capability for his Deputies, but that for patrolling a school campus it would work well and will assist that department in keeping their students safe. He also thanked the Board for making it possible to hire these 6 new positions within his department and stated that these additional personnel will help keep the residents of Houston County safer.

Fire/HEMA Chief Chris Stoner thanked the Board for the approval to hire the 9 new firefighters. He stated that this will allow all fire stations in Houston County to have 24-hour coverage and that there are now 45 full-time firefighters with the Houston County Fire Department. He also spoke about September being national preparedness month and suggested everyone visit *ready.gov* for information about being prepared for natural disasters such as a hurricane as it is that time of the year and for Houston County residents to sign up for mass notification system to be warned of approaching dangerous weather.

Ms. Jackie Rozier spoke on her views about district versus at large voting for seats on the Board of Commissioners.

Tim Bergle spoke on his views about transportation and taxes.

Mr. B.C. Smith and Carol Matthews spoke about an upcoming Bible reading marathon planned for November 14 to November 20th on the steps of the County Annex building and gave details about the times, the opening and closing ceremonies and how residents can get involved.

Ms. Linda Nelson questioned the Board's decision to approve C.W. Matthews' bid for widening and improving Pleasant Hill Road, knowing their track record of work on Elberta Road.

Chairman Perdue commented about the large amount of savings realized from their bid. He also mentioned the meeting that was held recently with senior staff from C.W. Matthews and the agreements that were discussed to ensure that work on Pleasant Hill Road would go much smoother than what has occurred on Elberta Road. He concluded by mentioning the long history of work done by C.W. Matthews for the County.

With no more comments, Chairman Perdue opened the floor for Commissioner's Comments.

Ms. Robinson thanked all attendees for their presence and input. She noted that a significant amount of County business had been conducted during the meeting and expressed her appreciation for everyone's participation.

Mr. Byrd acknowledged the collaborative efforts between the County and the City of Warner Robins on the Pleasant Hill Road Project. He expressed his appreciation to Warner Robins City Administrator James Drinkard for attending the meeting and for his active involvement in discussions with C. W. Matthews regarding the project. Mr. Byrd also highlighted the significant investment in public safety made during the meeting in support of the Sheriff's Office and Fire Department. He concluded his remarks by reflecting on the events of September 11, 2001, as well as recent events that occurred last week, emphasizing the continued importance of unity in our nation.

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Mr. Talton thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for the public comments provided. He congratulated Sheriff Moulton and Chief Stoner on the addition of new positions within their respective departments. He concluded by expressing his appreciation to City Administrator James Drinkard for attending the Commissioners meeting and for his continued partnership in mutual projects.

Mr. Gottwals reminded everyone of the town hall meeting taking place immediately following the Commissioners’ meeting regarding the proposed Echeconnee Creek Park. He shared his excitement about the potential development of the park in north Houston County. He also noted that, although it had only been two weeks since the last Commissioners’ meeting, a great deal had occurred nationally during that time and shared his sense that a shift is taking place. He concluded his remarks by quoting author Randy Pausch, stating, “No matter how bad things are, you can always make them worse by your actions.”

Chairman Perdue recognized September as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month and emphasized the importance of supporting organizations dedicated to finding a cure for childhood cancer. He also noted that September is Suicide Prevention Month and reminded everyone that help is available through the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Chairman Perdue mentioned the events of the past week, including the reported assassination of Charlie Kirk, and stressed the importance of maintaining civility and the ability to disagree peacefully. He closed by thanking those who addressed the Board with their concerns during the meeting.

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