

**Houston County Commissioners Meeting
October 7, 2025
Perry, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, October 7, 2025, at the Houston County Courthouse in Perry, Georgia. Chairman Perdue presided, and Commissioners Byrd, Gottwals, Robinson, and Talton were present. County Attorney Tom Hall and Director of Operations Brian Jones were also present.

Commissioner Byrd gave the invocation.

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

Chairman Perdue read a Proclamation naming the week of October 5-11, 2025 to be 4-H Week in Houston County.

Houston County 4-H Youth Extension Agent Samantha Price provided an update on the 4-H program in Houston County. She reported that over 3,500 youth are currently involved in the program, with participation occurring both through school-based activities and monthly meetings. Ms. Price highlighted recent events including Fair Week and 4-H Week and recognized the accomplishments of youth who achieved a Masters in 4-H this year. She concluded by commending the dedication of 4-H volunteers, who collectively contributed over 1,800 service hours during the year.

Chairman Perdue thanked Ms. Price for all her work and for the update.

Utilities Director Terry Dietsch recognized Mr. Otha "Smiley" Sutton for receiving the SWANA Solid Waste Worker of the Year award for Landfill Operations. Mr. Dietsch stated that while the Houston County landfill has received several awards for the facility, this is the first individual award that Houston County has ever received.

Chairman Perdue commented that Mr. Sutton has been with the county for over 47 years, and that he appreciates his dedication and service to the county.

Mr. Sutton said thank you and that he has stayed so long because he loves what he does.

Perry/Houston County Airport Manager James Marquardt provided an update on the airport's budget and ongoing operations. He reported an increase in annual income and discussed recently completed, ongoing, and upcoming projects. Mr. Marquardt concluded by noting a rise in the number of aircraft at the airport, stating that they anticipate the addition of two turbo-prop aircraft and one jet by the end of the year.

Chairman Perdue thanked him for the informative update.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve the meeting minutes of the September 16, 2025 meeting.

Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews presented Special Exception Applications #2873 through #2876, and #2878 through #2883.

County Attorney Tom Hall made a blanket statement for the benefit of all applicants for Special Exceptions for home occupations: even if the Board of Commissioners approves an application, neighborhood covenants may still impose certain restrictions upon or against home businesses. These restrictive covenants are not superseded by any action the Board of Commissioners takes. The actions taken by the Board will not change any provision within the covenant that prohibits any commercial or business activity.

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

Houston County Commissioners Meeting Continued from Page 572

Applicant #2873 was not present; there was no opposition.
Applicant #2874 was present; there was no opposition.
Applicant #2875 was present; there was no opposition.
Applicant #2876 was present; there was no opposition.
Applicant #2878 was present; there was no opposition.
Applicant #2879 was present; there was no opposition.
Applicant #2880 was present; there was no opposition.
Applicant #2881 was present; there was no opposition.
Applicant #2882 was present; there was no opposition.

There being no 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 following Special Exception Applications to include any and all stipulations as noted on the Zoning & Appeals recommendation and Section 95 Requirements staff report:

#2874	Roger & Lucinda Hines	Virtual Consulting
#2875	John & Christine Thompson	Bookkeeping
#2876	Joseph Lancaster	Electrical Contractor
#2878	Randy & Robins Matthews	Gifts & Accessories
#2879	ReAnna Hartley	Crafts & Accessories
#2880	Christopher & Kathleen Hoffman	Farms Services & Sale of Commodities raised on premises
#2881	Christopher Guest	Pool Services
#2882	Nelia Banks	Handyman

and also, to Table the following Special Exception Applications:

#2873	Joseph Blake III	Pet Boarding
-------	------------------	--------------

Mr. Andrews informed the approved applicants that the next step in obtaining their business license was to apply at the Commissioner’s Office.

Ms. Robinson presented a request for approval of a quote for the replacement of 2 PIU boxes for the HVAC system at the Courthouse.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve the quote from Hamlin Air Conditioning and Sheet Metal, Inc., of Macon, Georgia in the amount of \$29,950 for the replacement of 2 PIU boxes for the HVAC system in the Superior Court at the Houston County Courthouse. This project will be funded from the 2018 SPLOST and has an estimated completion of twelve weeks.

Mr. Byrd presented a request from Public Works for approval to update the speed ordinance assigned to the State Routes and County Roads within the County’s jurisdiction. This is required as part of the permit process to allow the Houston County Sheriff’s Office to utilize radar detection equipment for speed control.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Gottwals, and carried unanimously by all to approve the updates to the Houston County Speed Zone Ordinance.

Chairman Perdue commented that the speed ordinance addresses the school zone speed cameras. He noted that the State is reviewing how communities are utilizing these cameras to ensure proper use. Chairman Perdue concluded by stating that revenue from the cameras has been decreasing, indicating they are effectively serving their purpose.

Mr. Byrd commented that the Speed Ordinance was very thorough in its information, that each speed limit was researched and adjusted as needed for conditions and roadways.

Mr. Byrd presented a request for approval of Change Order #1 on the Davidson Road Paving Project.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve Change Order #1 on the Davidson Road Paving Project, from Reeves Construction Company of Macon, Georgia, in the amount of \$34,696.58, bringing the total contract amount to \$1,127,941.89. This change order, which provides for suitable subgrade preparation for paving, will increase the contract time by 30 days, resulting in a revised total contract duration of 273 days.

Chairman Perdue asked Director of Operations Brian Jones if this was the final Change Order.

Mr. Jones replied that it was.

Chairman Perdue asked if the project was close to completion.

Mr. Jones replied that it was and that the majority of what still needed to be completed was grassing in the right-of-way.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request to fill the vacant Deputy Clerk position in the Magistrate Court.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve hiring Kacie Piper to fill the vacant Deputy Clerk position at the Magistrate Court at a Grade 14 Step C effective October 13, 2025. Personnel staff have reviewed Ms. Piper’s qualifications, and she meets the requirements for the C step.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request to hire poll workers, and purchase equipment for the November 4, 2025 Special Election.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve hiring the following poll workers, and purchasing equipment, for the November 4, 2025 Public Service Commissioner (PSC) Special Election/ESPLOST/Municipalities (Centerville, Perry, Warner Robins):

		AMOUNT	TOTAL
17	Managers (Precinct)	175.00	2,975.00
34	Assistant Managers (Precinct)	125.00	4,250.00
38	Clerks	115.00	4,370.00
89	Training	25.00	2,225.00
5	Training (Backup Workers)	25.00	125.00
5	Janitors -Schools	15.50	77.50
2	Janitors	25.00	50.00
77	BMD (Ballot Marking Device)	2.00	154.00
0	Election Supply Load Out Help	75.00	0.00
2	Election Night Equipment Return Help	75.00	150.00
3	Election Night Check-In Clerks	75.00	225.00
17	Supply pick-up / return supplies (Managers)	10.00	170.00
17	Cell Phones	10.00	170.00
0	Ballot Scan Clerk	0	0
	TOTAL		14,941.50

Houston County Commissioners Meeting Continued from Page 574

Chairman Perdue expressed his thanks to the Cities for their continued cooperation with elections making things run smoothly for the citizens of Houston County. He mentioned Houston County's Elections Director, Ms. Debra Presswood, saying she is admired by her peers for her work and well-run elections. He concluded by recognizing the work done by the members of the Houston County Board of Elections.

Mr. Talton presented a request for approval of a bid to replace benches in the Superior Courtroom number one.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Gottwals and carried unanimously by all to approve the bid from GCI Manufacturing of Decatur, Georgia, in the amount of \$36,677, to replace all the benches in Superior Courtroom Number 1. This purchase will be funded by Public Buildings and has an estimated delivery date of twelve weeks.

Chairman Perdue commented that the benches had to be custom made, so the decision was made to replace all of the benches in that courtroom to ensure uniformity. The benches removed from that courtroom, that were still in good condition, would be stored and used as replacements in other courtrooms as needed.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$4,475,857.12.

Chairman Perdue opened the floor for Public Comments.

Mr. John Schwendler spoke on his views about the new solid waste disposal fees, a pothole repair job on HWY 247, and his concerns about the amount of new development in Houston County.

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

Mr. Byrd commented on the many successes recognized during the meeting, including 4-H Week, the Master Awards earned by local youth, the ongoing work at the Extension Office, and the SWANA award received by Mr. Otha Sutton. He also acknowledged the updates underway at the airport. Mr. Byrd highlighted the recent news of the new Heart & Vascular Transplant Clinic by Emory Hospital in Houston County. Additionally, he recognized Ms. Sara Murph of Parish Construction for being named one of the "40 Under 40." He concluded by addressing Mr. Schwendler's earlier comments regarding sanitation fees.

Mr. Talton commented on the various achievements celebrated during the meeting, including those related to 4-H, the SWANA award, and ongoing developments at the airport. He noted that the number of new business licenses reflected continued growth in Houston County. Mr. Talton also reminded everyone that the Georgia National Fair was currently underway and encouraged attendance. He concluded by mentioning the recent Sheriff Talton Memorial Golf Tournament, which was held to raise funds for the Sheriff's Youth Group Homes.

Ms. Robinson thanked everyone for attending the meeting, and for sharing their concerns. She acknowledged the achievements made by the youth in 4-H and the volunteer hours given to make it possible. She congratulated Mr. Otha Sutton on his SWANA award and his years of service. She concluded by saying she was proud to serve Houston County.

Mr. Gottwals shared that he had recently taken his family to the Georgia National Fair and that they had an enjoyable experience, particularly his children. He noted that the fair offers many benefits beyond just entertainment for attendees — it also provides valuable support to local businesses and 4-H and FFA youth. He encouraged everyone to attend and take advantage of all the fair has to offer.

Houston County Commissioners Meeting Continued from Page 575

Chairman Perdue echoed the Commissioners’ comments regarding the successes celebrated during the meeting, including Mr. Sutton’s SWANA award, 4-H Week, and the progress at the airport. He noted that FLINT EMC had opened a new operations center and commended the organization for consistently providing excellent service to Houston County. Chairman Perdue also addressed Mr. Schwendler’s comments, stating that it was good to hear his concerns. He discussed the County’s decision to offer residents a choice of services for waste pickup, emphasizing that under the new system, individuals only pay for what they use. Regarding the pothole on Highway 247, he acknowledged that he also travels that road daily and clarified that it is a State-maintained road, meaning the County cannot make repairs. He provided a contact number for residents to request repairs from the State. He concluded by stating that it had been a productive meeting.

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

Robbie Dunbar
Director of Administration

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner