

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for its Regular Business Meeting on Monday, September 8, 2025, at 5:00 p.m., in the Commissioners Meeting Room, located at the Brooks County Administration Building, located at 610 South Highland Road, Quitman, GA. Commissioners present were Mr. Patrick Folsom, Chairman; Mr. James Maxwell, Vice Chairman; Mrs. Myra Exum; and Mr. Lee Larko. Mr. Willie Cody was not present. Others present were Mr. Buddy Johnson, County Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; Ms. Kim Daniels, Human Resources; Ms. Janice Jarvis, Finance Director; Mr. Jason Kemp, County Attorney, and various residents.

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Prayer & Pledge – Chairman made a change to the agenda stating he wanted to open with the prayer before the public hearing; and asked Mr. Sonny Batts to lead all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

II. PUBLIC HEARING – Sign-In

A. Variance Request – Allow Dwelling Unit Less Than Minimum Requirement of 1,000 feet – Zach Edmondson – Zach Edmondson filed a variance request to allow the placement of a 576 square foot park model home on a property located within the A-G (Agricultural Use) zoning district. Per the development regulations under Section 6-1, the minimum dwelling size of 1,000 square feet is required in this district. The proposed park model home is 424 square feet below the required minimum. The parcel is officially known as Map 093, Parcel 0012; the site address is 103 Fodie Road. Staff reviewed the petition and determined that it is not in compliance with the Standards for Exercise of Zoning Powers and the Standards for a Variance Review of Sections 14-2.8E of the Brooks County Zoning Ordinance. Approving this structure, that is not a permitted residential structure and nearly half the required size, would undermine the goals and potentially set an unfavorable precedent for future variance requests. Therefore, Staff recommended denial of the variance petition by Zach Edmondson located at 103 Fodie Road in unincorporated Brooks County. The Planning Commission approved the variance request without conditions on a 3-0 vote.

A Sign-in sheet was provided for those wishing to speak for or against the variance request. Ms. Julie Swann spoke on behalf of the newly wed couple as well as Mr. Sonny Batts stating that Mr. Edmondson and his wife are good people. Mr. Squires stated he has no issues with the request it will provide more security for the area.

Mr. Edmondson spoke and stated that the park model home is not permanent but a temporary resident until he builds a house. He was asked about the time frame of building a house, he stated it will be a two-year time frame. He apologized to the Board for placing the park model on the property without checking for compliance, he did not do it intentionally but was not aware of the regulations.

Mrs. Exum stated that it is possible to grant the request; but we cannot overrule the ordinance. She inquired if Mr. Edmondson would be willing to provide a certified inspection and sign an Affidavit; he responded yes.

Chairman closed the public hearing at 5:14 pm to go into the regular business meeting.

III. COMMISSIONER BUSINESS PRESENTATION – (5 MINUTES)

A. Andrew Brady – Heritage & Candleglow Road – Workmanship, Quality Issues, Drainage Failures, etc. – Mr. Brady was not present.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA – One Motion for Approval on all Items – (Johnson)

A. Approval of prior meeting minutes

On the motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Larko, the Board unanimously approved the following minutes for August 2025:

- 1) CA029-2025** – Regular Business Meeting – August 4, 2025
- 2) CA030-2025** - Special Called/Executive Session – August 15, 2025
- 3) CA031-2025** - Special Called/Work Session – August 25, 2025
- 4) CA032-2025** - Special Called Meeting – August 28, 2025

V. FORMAL ACTION REQUESTS–Commissioners Discussion with Action (Johnson)

A. Approve/Disapprove/Other Official Actions

1) FA055-2025 – Variance Request – Zach Edmondson – Mrs. Exum made the motion to approve the square footage granting temporary use upon conditions being met due to this being a direct violation of the Zoning Ordinance; homeowner provide a certified inspection due to the building code and sign an affidavit with a two-year deadline between the homeowner and Colquitt EMC. After discussion, Mrs. Exum amended her motion, homeowner provide certified inspection, sign an affidavit. After two years of granting occupancy, the power is turned off, and the park model ceased as being used

for a residential dwelling, but can be used for conforming use, not a residential dwelling, Mr. Maxwell seconded the motion.

2) FA056-2025 – Audit Engagement Letter from the CKH Group – FYE June 30, 2025

The CKH Group will prepare the FY2024-2025 audit for Brooks County at the cost of \$38,500.00. The Audit Engagement Letter was presented for approval. Mr. Larko made the motion to approve the Audit Engagement Letter for the CKH Group to prepare Brooks County's audit for FYE June 30, 2025, Mrs. Exum seconded.

3) FA057-2025 – 4-H AmeriCorps Service Site Agreement – UGA Cooperative Extension –

The AmeriCorps Service Site Agreement was approved on the motion by Mrs. Exum, seconded by Mr. Maxwell, contingent upon grant funding.

4) FA058-2025 – Resolution – Authorizing Filing Application for Public Transit - SGRC –

The SGRC is working to prepare an FY2027 5311 Rural Public Transit grant application to GDOT for the SGRC to continue to provide regional public transit services on behalf of counties. They need the Board to pass an Authorizing Resolution to support SGRC Regional Public Transit. The Authorizing Resolution was approved unanimously on the motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Larko.

5) FA059-2025 – Memorandum of Understanding – National Opioid Settlement –

The County has received an MOU for the National Opioid Settlement to be signed. By signing the MOU, the County is agreeing to allow the State to enter into an agreement. Mrs. Exum motioned to approve signing the MOU for the Opioid Settlement; Mr. Larko seconded.

6) FA060-2025 – Memorandum of Understanding – UGA & Brooks County – Extension

Office – The Board approved the MOU between Brooks County and UGA to enter into agreement providing for services for the provision of Cooperative Extension Services and Personnel in Brooks County on the motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mrs. Exum.

7) FA061-2025 – Approval for Southern Link Subscription – Sheriff's Department –

Sheriff Dewey requested approval for a subscription with Southern Link to purchase 40 phones with Commissary funds to replace current phones at \$50.00 per phone for better service with a state radio system supported by T-Mobile, Verizon, and AT&T. The department is

currently paying \$3,000 per month with Verizon; this will save money and eliminate the need for a repeater. Mr. Maxwell made the motion, Mr. Larko seconded, approving the request by Sheriff Dewey for a subscription with Southern Link. The vote was unanimous.

VI. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES & DEPARTMENTS – (5 MINUTES)

A. Solar Committee Update – Recommendations – County Attorney Kemp presented the Solar Ordinance Committee Recommendations to the Board. The County Attorney will augment the Solar Ordinance to include the recommendations. The recommendations include Tax Abatements, Setbacks, Visual Buffers, Noise Barriers, Inverter/Transformer Placement, Battery Energy Storage Systems, Decommissioning, Lease Option Filed, Fees, Noise Study, Land Disturbance, Locations/Zoning Permitted, Water/Soil Samples, Maintenance Logs, Escrow Account, and Noise. The Solar Ordinance Committee consists of two Commissioners, Chairman Folsom and Mr. Larko, Kyle Swann, Linda Troutman, Mr. Cunningham.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. FA062-2025 - Development Authority Appointments – The Board approved/appointed Mr. Clifford Burton and Mr. Michael Stiller to the Development Authority Board on a motion by Mrs. Exum and seconded by Mr. Larko.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS – (JOHNSON)

- 1) NB008-2025 – Letter from City of Thomasville Solid Waste Department** – Administration received a letter from City of Thomasville Solid Waste Department informing that they sincerely regret that they will not be able to renew their residential waste collection contract in September 2026. The decision is in no way a reflection on Brooks County but rather the result of ongoing hardship they are experiencing. The final date of service will be Friday, September 4, 2026.
- 2) FA063-2025 – Resolution – Authorize Temporary Timber Tax Relief from Hurricane Helene – HB 223** – HB 223 was passed by the Georgia General Assembly and signed by the Governor authorizing tax relief for last quarter 2024 and quarter of 2025, due to the timber industry being impacted by Hurricane Helene. Brooks County contains eligible timber property as defined in HB 223 which make owners eligible to apply for timber tax relief. Property owners seeking tax relief under HB 223 for last quarter of 2024 and each quarter of 2025 for eligible timber property shall submit

the certification to the eligible governing authority as defined in HB 223 by and through the Brooks County Tax Assessors' Office. Three years of average timber tax will be calculated plus 25%. Checks will not be issued until a check is in hand from the State to give refunds. The Resolution was approved on the motion by Mrs. Exum for an average of three years to be calculated plus 25% to be refunded to property owners seeking tax relief under HB 223 upon receiving funds from the State, Mr. Larko seconded.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS – (2 MINUTES) – (Requests must be prior to the work session)

A. Donald Turner – Jamar Loop Paving Status – Mr. Turner appeared to inquire about the paving status in Jamar Loop Subdivision. Administrator Johnson called the County Engineer, Stacy Watkins, to see when he can go out to look and evaluate to get an estimated cost for paving; and he responded he would get go out to evaluate the next day. Administrator Johnson advised Mr. Turner that he is sure the paving would not be completed by the end of this year; but early in 2026.

B. Judie James – Road Repair Issues – Ms. James was not present.

X. ADMINISTRATION/ELECTED OFFICIALS UPDATES

A. Administration Updates - None

B. Commissioners Notes/Comments

- **Lee Larko (District 1)** – No comment.
- **Patrick Folsom, Chairman (District 2)** – No comment.
- **Willie Cody (District 3)** – No comment.

- **Myra Exum (District 4)** – Reminded everyone that it is harvest season, pray for good crop yield and prosperity.
- **James Maxwell, Vice (District 5)** – No comment.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION - NONE

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned the regular meeting at 6:25 pm on a motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Larko.

Mr. Patrick Folsom, Chairman

Mr. James (Buddy) Johnson, County Administrator

Ms. Patricia A. Williams, County Clerk