

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for a Special Called Meeting/Work Session on Monday, March 30, 2026, at 4:15 p.m., at the Brooks County Administrative Building, in the Commissioners Meeting Room, located at 610 South Highland Road, Quitman, GA. Commissioners present were: Mrs. Myra Exum, Chairman; Mr. James Maxwell, Vice Chairman; Mr. Willie Cody; and Mr. Lee Larko. Mr. Patrick Folsom 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; and Mr. Jason Kemp, County Attorney; and various residents.

I. PUBLIC HEARING - NONE

II. CALL TO ORDER

A. Prayer/Pledge – Mr. Cody led all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

III. TOPICS FOR MOTION/DISCUSSION

1. John Deere – Motor Grader PM Agreement & Warranty – 670G Motor Graders – Brian Kelley, Sales Representative for John Deere, Dobbs Equipment, provided Administration with a quote for two 670G Motor Graders for warranty and preventative maintenance (PM) agreements. Administrator Johnson is recommending the 2-year/2,000-hour extended warranty and PM contract for both motor graders at a total cost of \$57,591.66 to be funded from TSPLOST funds. This item will be placed on the April 6th agenda as a formal action; Administrator wants to verify his recommendation.

2. Discussion – TIA Meeting Summary - Administrator Johnson met with GDOT for a TIA Projects update. All roads that were selected during previous administration remain on schedule for improvements over the next 10 years, starting in 2027. Watkins & Associates will prepare the RFP for bidding process. GDOT will manage the projects after the bidding process. The Board will discuss advancing timelines in upcoming workshops or retreat.

3. Discussion – Budget Retreat – A budget retreat was discussed. Administrator Johnson stated that he anticipates a serious budget year, especially for public safety needs. He is proposing a three-day retreat (April 27-29), from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, potentially at Riverbend Plantation. Commissioners will confirm calendar availability/conflicts; and Administrator will inform the Board upon confirmation of the retreat location.

4. Engagement Letter – Jerry McLeod v. Brooks County Board of Commissioners, et al. – Administration received an Engagement of Legal Counsel letter from the Firm designated by the insurance company to represent Brooks County. The Firm requires an advance fee deposit in the amount of \$5,000.00, which will be placed in the Firm’s trust account. Authorization is needed to sign and allocate funds for the retainer.

5. Car Show on County Property – Mr. Cody – Commissioner Cody presented this event request to the Board on behalf of Mr. Reynolds. Mr. Reynolds is requesting use of the Washington Street Gym property for a car show and kids’ event; he has arranged for security

and provided insurance. The event will be held on Sunday, April 5, 2026, beginning at 2:00 pm for the kids' event and the car show will begin at 4:00 pm. The Board discussed use of the property and the property not being part of the facility use agreement. The Board authorized editing the facility agreement to include the Washington Street Gym property. The request to permit the event and use the property was approved by the Board contingent upon the addition/inclusion of the property in the County's facility use agreement to clarify the policy for future similar requests, Mr. Cody made the motion and Mr. Maxwell seconded. Vote carried unanimously.

6. GDOT – Amended Fiscal Year 2026 Budget – LRA Funds Application – Due June 15, 2026 – Administration received notification from GDOT of LRA funds being administered and distributed and requires no local match. Brooks County's portion to be received is \$992,138.16. Eligible projects for LRA funds will be the same as the LMIG program. The funds will be likely applied to the Barwick Road project due to being short on the total funding. All electronic applications must be received no later than June 15, 2026.

7. GDOT – FY 2026 LMIG SAP (Safety Action Plan) Funds Application – Due May 15, 2026 – Administration received notification from GDOT of funds from the FY 2026 supplemental budget for safety improvements. The program focuses on low-cost safety improvements that can be implemented on Off-System routes that are likely to reduce the frequency and severity of crashes and road departures. The SAP program will follow the normal LMIG process with a 10% or 30% local match required. Project selection must be made from the Crash Report project list included in the notification. An LMIG application and project list will be submitted to GDOT by May 15, 2026. The total grant cost of the projects selected shall not exceed \$256,030.00.

8. VFW – Flags Around the Courthouse – The Board discussed flags around the Courthouse that are placed every year by the local VFW. The Board wants to put something in place so the VFW will not need to contact the County each year to put the flags around the courthouse from May to July.

9. Outstanding Debts to Brooks County – Mr. Maxwell – Commissioner Maxwell requested this topic on the agenda for discussion. City of Quitman owes the County for landfill reimbursements (approximately \$450,000.00). Mr. Maxwell discussed the Board consideration of forgiving the debt. Discussion began regarding forgiveness vs. deferral; and the consensus was to defer collection, not forgiveness, and send a goodwill letter. The payment will be deferred until December. The County wants to help; but this is a major expense that the County has already paid.

10. Recreation Department – Boys & Girls Club – Madam Chair informed the Board that the Boys & Girls Club may exit recreation management and focus on after-school programs. The Board of Education has proposed entering an MOU with the County for the school system to manage recreation with county assisting with the funding by contributing the funds we are currently allocating to the Boys & Girls Club. The county provides in-kind contributions, e.g., dirt

for ball fields. Madam Chair will contact the school system to proceed with drafting an MOU with target implementation by July 1.

IV. PRESENTATIONS

A. Mike Fletcher, PE – Transportation Engineering Manager – Possible Land Use – TIA
– Mike Fletcher, PE, Axis Engineering Consultants, LLC, appeared to offer services for road, bridge, and recreational projects. He has strong local experience and is GDOT pre-qualification. Provides a full spectrum of civil engineering and consulting services, including Land Planning, Civil Site Development, Utility Infrastructure, Water Resources, Transportation, Erosion Control, Design Build Teaming, Permitting & Consulting, and Construction Phase Services.

V. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES & DEPARTMENTS

A. Brooks County Finance Department – Janice Jarvis, Finance Director – Provided Finance Director report for March 30, 2026. Normal percentage for this period of the fiscal year is 75%.

Met with Jennifer Reese, SVP, Ameris Bank, to discuss distribution of commercial purchasing cards to department heads. Ameris will conduct a Visa Vendor Enrollment Campaign on the County's behalf once the purchasing cards are distributed. Those vendors not accepting either card or ACH will continue to be paid by check. Purchasing card policy reviewed; Board will approve updated agreement. The Agreement and Policy will be on the agenda for approval on April 6th.

The final Project and Expenditure Closeout Report with the US Department of the Treasury for the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF). Received letter of notification of compliance with award closeout process from the Department of Treasury.

Budget worksheets and documentation are due back from Constitutional Officers and Department Heads no later than Friday, April 3rd. The budget calendar is pending retreat dates.

B. Brooks County 911/EMA – LaToya Hampton, Director – Director Hampton provided a report on projects and activities for 911/EMA for March 2026.

Brooks County 911

- March calls 2064
- One full-time new hire; two full-time positions and one PRN
- APCO: Association of Professional Communications Officers (National Program) Awarded Southwest Ambassador for our region. Employed 25 years at Brooks County 911/EMA

Brooks County EMA

- There is severe drought in our area. Citizens updated through EMA page and Code Red about burn restrictions. Advised contacting Georgia Forestry about permits.
- Dixie home flooded did not need Red Cross.

- Valdosta Highway home roof off, not storm related, did not need Red Cross.
- March 12 and March 16, 2026 two severe storm days. Tornado damages to homes; only trees down in south and west Brooks County.
- 28 blankets donated by citizens of the County to EMA.
- March 31-April 3, 2026, at EMAG conference in Jekyll Island.

C. Brooks County Fire Department Report – Chief Weeks – Chief Weeks provided a report of activities for the Fire Department for March 2026.

- Received 122 calls for service from February 23, 2026, through March 30, 2026.
- One structure fire, 35 medical calls, three vehicle fires, one vehicle accident, 32 brush fires/outside fires, one extrication, one fire alarm, 35 canceled/nothing found, three power lines down, six trees down, and for other calls there were four.

Structure Fires

- 3860 Burton Road – This was a house fire that started under the carport and spread to the main part of the structure. We stopped the fire at the living room and many of the family’s belongings.
- **Training:** Hose management and leadership classes.
- **Public Activities:** None
- **Updates:** Station 10 renovations are complete, and we have received most of the turn-out gear that was ordered. We are still waiting on helmets and boots.
- **Employee Update:** Fully staffed.

D. Brooks County Public Works Department Report - Kyle Christian - Project Manager

– Provided the Road Department report for March 2026:

- During the month of March, the Road Department received 45 work orders and completed 37 work orders. We spent most of the month cleaning ditches and building up roads.
- **District 1:** Graded roads, added material where it was needed to fix washouts, built up roads, cleaned ditches and culverts, and installed new road signs. Did a driveway install in Nesbitt Road. We also repaired a shoulder on Lone Church Road and repaired potholes. On Fodie Road, we repaired a headwall and driveway.
- **District 2:** Built up roads, graded roads, removed fallen trees, installed new road signs, cleaned ditches and culverts. We removed trash and debris from DeVane Road. We filled potholes on Empress Road.
- **District 3:** Graded roads, cleaned ditches and culverts, installed new road signs, removed fallen trees and limbs, busted beaver dams, and repaired potholes. We built up Price Road with eight loads of clay and one load of sand. We built up Dewberry Road with seven loads of clay and one load of sand. We repaired potholes on Dixie Barwick Road, Dry Lake Road, Baker Road, Perdue Road, and Cross Road using a total of 98 bags of cold patch.
- **District 4:** Built up roads, graded roads, clean ditches and culverts, filled potholes, repaired driveways, installed new road signs, and added materials where needed to fix washouts. We cleaned up Troupeville Road by removing grass off the shoulder of the road. We harvested six loads of sand off Spain Road. Installed new driveway pipes on Duncan Road and Old Coffee Road; installed two extensions to driveways on Jamar

Trail and Jones Creek Road. We built up Jones Creek Road with seven loads of sand and two loads of clay.

- **District 5:** Graded roads, busted beaver dams, cleaned ditches and culverts, repaired potholes, and added materials to roads. We harvested 13 loads of sand from Livingston Road and 13 loads of sand from Stanley Road. We did a driveway install and cross drain replacement on Beasley Road.
- We are continuing to clean out ditches and existing pipes as well as installing new pipes where needed and helping water to flow when it rains. We are also harvesting sand and reusing it in areas that need it. We will continue to keep Brooks County beautiful one road at a time.

VI. FORMAL ACTION REQUESTS – Commissioners Discussion with Action

1. FA024-2026 – Notice of New Opioid Settlement and Upcoming Action – Deadline May 4, 2026 Administration received notification of a new national opioid settlement and upcoming action needed to participate. A new national opioid settlement has been reached with six regional distributors/dispenser defendants (Remnant Defendants). Mr. Maxwell made the motion to proceed with participation in the new national opioid settlement, Mr. Larko seconded.

2. FA025-2026 – Engagement Letter – Jerry McLeod v. Brooks County Board of Commissioners –

The Board unanimously approved/authorized the \$5,000.00 for litigation engagement letter for the advance fee deposit in the Jerry McLeod case on the motion by Mr. Cody and seconded by Mr. Larko.

3. FA026-2026 – Pavo Fire/Polling Precinct Lease – County Attorney presented lease for the Pavo Fire/Polling Precinct from Mr. Bryan’s Attorney for Board review. Attorney Kemp advised the Board that Mr. Bryan wants one year paid in advance of \$12,000.00. The Board must still decide whether they want to move the building or sell the building, but for now they will lease for 12 months. Mr. Larko motioned to accept the lease for one year at \$12,000.00, funds will come from the Elections Department budget line item; Mr. Cody seconded.

4. FA027-2026 – FLOCK Camera Systems (Tabled March 2, 2026) – This item was tabled to determine where funding will come from. At contract signing the amount is \$37,150.00, recurring annually after one year of \$30,500.00. The Board approved the one-year contract for the FLOCK Camera System at \$37,150.00 for the Sheriff’s Department; and the funds will come from the Drug Education fund, on the motion made by Cody, seconded by Mr. Maxwell.

5. FA028-2026 – VFW – Flags Around the Courthouse – The Board unanimously approved the ongoing policy for the VFW to place flags around the Courthouse annually from May to July on motion by Mr. Cody, seconded by Mr. Maxwell.

VII. WORK SESSION & NEW BUSINESS

- Regular Meeting Agenda Review – April 6, 2026 – The Board reviewed/discussed the agenda for the upcoming meeting.
- Special Except Zoning Public Hearing
 - Suggestion to invite 4-H youth to lead the Pledge at meetings.

Administrator Johnson - Updates (Community and Commissioners)

Administrator Johnson provided the following updates:

- o HB1567 Update (City of Quitman) – if consolidation or loss of city charter occurs, the county is prepared to assume responsibilities. The county prefers the city remain independent but is preparing for all outcomes.
- o Elections Bill Update – passed, county will implement changes as required.
- o Magistrate Court Tech Fee Update - passed, county will implement changes as required.

Commissioners Matters

- o District 1
- o District 2
- o District 3
- o District 4 – Madam Chair reminded everyone about the easter egg hunt on April 4th at the Courthouse grounds for ages 0-12; will be coordinated with local museum.
- o District 5

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Litigation – Opioid – No executive session needed.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned the meeting on the motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Larko.

Mrs. Myra Exum, Chair

Mr. James (Buddy) Johnson, County Administrator

Ms. Patricia A. Williams, County Clerk