

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for Special Called Meeting/Work Session/Executive Session on Monday, July 27, 2026, at 4:15 p.m., at the Brooks County Administration Building, Commissioners Chambers, located at 610 South Highland Road, Quitman, GA. Commissioners present were: Mrs. Myra Exum, Chair; Mr. James Maxwell, Vice Chairman; Mr. Patrick Folsom; Mr. Willie Cody; and Mr. Lee Larko. 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. Folsom led all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance. The agenda was adjusted to move, Item #9 Jamar Subdivision Roads Option, to #1 under Topics for Motion/Discussion.

III. TOPICS FOR MOTION/DISCUSSION

1. (Originally #9) **Jamar Subdivision Roads Option – Discussion** – James Warren, Road Maintenance Contractor, presented discussion on using bituminous surface treatments (triple-layer asphalt/stone) as a cost effective, semi-temporary (8-10 years) solution for Jamar Subdivision roads. The estimated cost is about one third of the full paving cost (approximately \$200,000 vs. \$600,000 for a single loop). The benefit is that it would provide a solid base for future paving, reduces ongoing maintenance, improve resident access, widely used for low-traffic roads in Florida. The challenge is that it is not a permanent fix. The existing water line issues need to be addressed before proceeding. The County will notify water utility with a clear deadline for marking and addressing lines; County will proceed regardless of utility delays. The Board agreed to engage the County Engineer, Watkins & Associates, for cost estimates and project planning on the motion by Mr. Folsom, seconded by Mr. Larko. The funding will be allocated from LRA or TSPLOST. (FA074-2026)

2. **FLOST Referendum – Update** – Administrator Johnson informed the Board that the FLOST Referendum and IGA are finalized, submitted to Elections, and the Referendum will be on the November ballot for public decision.

3. **Data Center Ordinance – Committee Creation by Chair Exum** – Madam Chair Exum stated the committee should be formed in August. Commissioners should solicit committee member nominations; and set the deadline for August. She asked the Commissioners to submit nominations by the end of the week.

4. **Bid – Engagement Letter – CKH – CPAs & Advisor** – Finance Director submitted an Engagement Letter from CKH for the FY2025-2026 auditing services for Brooks County. The cost of services (\$38,000) is slightly less than prior year. Mr. Maxwell made the motion to approve the

engagement letter in the amount of \$38,000 for the FY2025-2026 auditing services, Mr. Larko seconded. (FA071-2026)

5. Contingency Funds Transfer to Jail Salary Line – Maintenance Director - Shared with the County

The Board approved transfer of \$25,000 from the contingency fund to the jail salary line to hire a maintenance director who will serve county needs as well as the jail, while aiming for internal cost savings, on the motion made by Mr. Cody, Mr. Larko seconded the motion. (FA072-2026)

6. Airport Authority – GTIB Grant Application – Hangars – The Board authorized Administrator to apply for GTIB Grant for new airport hangars (no local match needed). The County will serve as fiscal agent. City of Quitman is not allowed to apply; the county must apply for the grant.

7. Reallocation of Additional Recreation Funding from Boys & Girls Club to Board of Education
On the motion by Mr. Cody, seconded by Mr. Larko, the Board unanimously approved reallocating \$30,000 originally intended for Boys & Girls Club to Board of Education for recreation programming, following organizational changes. (FA073-2026)

8. Brooks County Facility Use Agreement – Ag Venue Only – Streamline Version – Kim Daniels
Human Resources Director, Kim Daniels, presented a streamline version of the County's Facility Use Agreement to include non-refundable \$100 reservation deposit, proposal for \$250-\$500 refundable damage deposit, and clarification of responsibilities. This will be placed on the August 3rd agenda for final review and approval.

9. FY2027 LMIG Application – Submit by February 1, 2027 – The Board discussed planning for the FY2027 LMIG Application due February 1, 2027. Hickory Head Road was discussed as prioritized with possible use of combined funding from LMIG, LRA, and TSPLOST. County Engineer to prepare cost analysis for Hickory Head Road and report in August. There were additional discussion and a request to review critical repairs on Tallokas Road and Bourquine Road.

10. Opioid Funding Request – Chief Weeks and Sheriff Dewey – Employee Safety Training – Chief Weeks and Sheriff Dewey are requesting funding from the Opioid funds for first responder training on opioid dangers. County Administrator requested \$22,000 be put aside to use as needed. Board will consider it at the next meeting, August 3, 2026.

11. Board of Elections – Board Appointments – Discussion – Legislative change increases Elections Board from 3 to 5 members in January 2027. Commissioners are urged to nominate qualified, unbiased candidates so they can get trained by January 2027. The new Board of Elections will oversee the Elections Office. Discussion also included a press release/article to be prepared explaining the change and application process. County Clerk will send the advertisement to the Quitman Free Press to be published.

12. Brooks County Tax Commissioner – Becky Rothrock – Discuss Digest – Tax Commissioner Rothrock presented options for FY2025-2026 millage rates to meet the budget. If the rollback rate of 13.859 is used the unincorporated percentage of increase will be 0% and the incorporated percentage of increase will be 11.97%. If it remains at the 2025 millage rate of 14.0790, the unincorporated percentage of increase will be 1.59% and incorporated percentage of increase will be 13.75%. The Board will decide the final rates at the August 3rd meeting.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT – 5 MINUTES

A. C. J. Keel – 17 Dean Road and 1315 Mitchell Circle – Request not to Ditch – Mr. Keel was not present.

V. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES & DEPARTMENTS

A. Brooks County Finance Department – Janice Jarvis, Finance Director – Reported that the Finance Department is closing out the fiscal year and preparing for the audit. Ms. Jarvis provided a copy of the expenditure and revenue report for FY2025-2026.

B. Brooks County 911/EMA – LaToya Hampton, Director – Director Hampton presented activities/projects for July 2026.

- Calls for May1 were 2145.
- June calls as of today are 2146.
- Currently have a full team; looking for PRN

Brooks County EMA

- Under severe thunderstorm warning until 18:00 today
- Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church:
 - a. Spoke to Mike Smith: advised he is in contact with an old preacher and discussing what will be done with the remains
 - b. Spoke with GEMA Historic Preservation to see if they could take it as a donation, depending on the Board's Decision. That way they could clean up and remove the debris with no expense to the county.
 - c. Lawn is Mowed
 - d. Marker is back up.
- Heat advisory for the county: Stay cool and Hydrated
- July 9, 2026: attend a EMAG meeting in Mitchell County discussing Hurricane Preparedness with: GEMA, NWS, American Red Cross and the Department of public health
- August 29, 2026: Hurricane Preparedness give away at Quitman Church of God with Morven Baptist Church, Brooks County Family Connections, Brooks County School, and Brooks County EMA. They will be giving out tarps, water, food, clothes and books. The number of donations is 100 this year, it was 200 last year.

C. Brooks County Fire Department Report – Chief Weeks – Chief Weeks provided a report for July 2026 for projects/activities.

- Received 81 calls for service from June 30, 2026, through July 27, 2026.
- No structure fires, one vehicle fire, 7 brush/outside fires, 2 fire alarms, no controlled burns; 3 powerlines down; there were 35 medical calls, 5 vehicle accidents, one fire investigation, no extrications, 10 cancellations/nothing found; and 13 trees were down.

Structure Fires - None

Training: Hosted the State of Georgia Crash Victim Extrication Class (16 hours). Brooks County, Valdosta, Moultrie, Thomas County, and Perry Fire Departments sent personnel to train with us. Incident Command Class that was developed by our training division for our people.

Update: We have completed our hose testing, hydrant testing and painting for this year.

Morven: Nothing new

Employee Update: We have hired three new part-time firefighters. We are setting up interviews to hire two full time firefighters and one Captain.

D. Brooks County Development Service Division – Zoning – JJ Lanier – Presented two zoning cases that will come before the Board on August 31, 2026. Case Number: REZ-2026-01 is a request to rezone Business Retail (BR) to Rural Residential (RR). Case Number: ZOA-2026-02 is a proposed zoning ordinance amendment for Temporary Public Events and Gatherings for Event Venues.

E. Brooks County Public Works Department Report - Kyle Christian - Project Manager – Provided the Road Department report for July 2026:

During the month of July, the Road Department received 80 work orders and completed 62 work orders. It was a busy month with the rain and heat. We had a lot of trees that came down that needed to be cleaned up.

District 1: Graded roads, added material where it was needed to fix washouts, built up roads, cleaned ditches and culverts, removed trees, and busted beaver dams. We cleaned out multiple ditches with debris.

District 2: Built up roads, graded roads, removed fallen trees, busted beaver dams, and cleaned ditches and culverts. We repaired a hole at Old Madison Road and Johnson Short Road. We used 6 bags of cold patch to repair potholes on Pine Brook Drive, Knights Ferry Road, and Higgs Lane. We removed debris from ditches and the sides of the roads.

District 3: Graded roads cleaned ditches and culverts, repaired potholes, busted beaver dams, and removed fallen trees. We repaired potholes on Dry Lake Road and Dixie Barwick Road using a total of 42 bags of cold patch.

District 4: Built up roads, graded roads, cleaned ditches and culverts, filled potholes, repaired driveways, removed trees and debris, busted beaver dams, replaced and repaired signs, and added materials where needed to fix washouts. We repaired potholes on Crosbysown Road, Knotty Pine

Drive, Brookfield Drive and Troupeville Road using 20 bags of cold patch. We installed a crossdrain pipe on Oliff Road and a driveway pipe on Jamar Trail. We removed debris from the ditches and culverts and along the sides of the road.

District 5: Graded roads cleaned ditches and culverts, repaired potholes, removed trees, and added materials to roads. We repaired potholes on Renfroe Road and Hickory Head Road using 23 bags of cold patch. We removed debris from the ditches and culverts and along the sides of the 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. **FA069-2026 – GDOT – TIA Project Agreements – Lebanon Cemetery Road & Hodges Road Paving and Drainage** – On a motion by Mr. Larko, the Board approved the agreements from GDOT for the TIA Projects Lebanon Cemetery Road & Hodges Road Paving and Drainage, Mr. Cody seconded.
2. **FA070-2026 – Change September Meeting Date – Due to Labor Day Holiday – September 8, 2026**
Due to the Labor Day Holiday, the Board approved changing the meeting date to September 8th on a motion by Mr. Cody and seconded by Mr. Maxwell.
3. **FA071-2026 – Engagement Letter CKH CPAs & Advisor - Mr. Maxwell** made the motion to approve the engagement letter in the amount of \$38,000 for the FY2025-2026 auditing services, Mr. Larko seconded.
4. **FA072-2026 – Contingency Fund Transfer to Jail Salary Line – Maintenance Director – Shared with the County - The Board** approved transfer of \$25,000 from the contingency fund to the jail salary line to hire a maintenance director who will serve county needs as well as the jail, while aiming for internal cost savings, on the motion made by Mr. Cody, Mr. Larko seconded the motion.
5. **FA073-2026 - Reallocation of Additional Recreation Funding from Boys & Girls Club to Board of Education - On the motion by Mr. Cody, seconded by Mr. Larko, the Board** unanimously approved reallocating \$30,000 originally intended for Boys & Girls Club to Board of Education for recreation programming, following organizational changes.
6. **FA074-2026 - The Board** agreed to engage the County Engineer, Watkins & Associates, for cost estimates and project planning on the motion by Mr. Folsom, seconded by Mr. Larko. The funding will be allocated from LRA or TSPLOST.

VII. WORK SESSION & NEW BUSINESS

- Regular Meeting Agenda Review – August 3, 2026 – The Board reviewed/discussed the agenda for the upcoming meeting. Formal actions to be added to the agenda:

- Data Center Ordinance
- Facility Use Agreement – Streamline Ag Venue
- Opioid Funding Request – Chief Weeks & Sheriff Dewey – Employee Training
- Tax Digest - Millage Rate

Administrator Johnson - Updates (Community and Commissioners)

- Farmers Market Update – Administrator Johnson updated the Board on the Farmers Market; informing the Board he had met with Ms. Brown regarding the Pop-up Market and is going to start on the first Saturday of the month beginning in September.

□ **Commissioners Matters**

- District 1
- District 2
- District 3
- District 4
- District 5

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Real Estate – Closed meeting to go into executive session on motion by Mr. Folsom, Mr. Cody seconded. No action was taken.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned the meeting on the motion by Mr. Maxwell, seconded by Mr. Folsom at 6:17pm.

Mrs. Myra Exum, Chair

Mr. James (Buddy) Johnson, County Administrator

Ms. Patricia A. Williams, County Clerk