

September 2, 2025

The Walton County Board of Commissioners held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 2, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at the Historic Walton County Courthouse. Those participating in the meeting included Chairman David Thompson, Commissioners Pete Myers, Timmy Shelnett, Lee Bradford, Jeremy Adams and Kirklyn Dixon, County Clerk Rhonda Hawk, County Manager John Ward, Planning Director Charna Parker, Finance Director Jennifer Wall, EMA Director Carl Morrow and County Attorney Chip Ferguson. A list of employees and citizens in attendance at the meeting is on file in the auxiliary file under this meeting date.

PRESENTATIONS

Walton County 4-H S.A.F.E Shooting Sport Teams were recognized. Hank Shirley presented the 4-H 22 and Air Rifle Team, Jessie Weaver presented the 4-H Shotgun Team, Adam Harper presented the 4H BB Team, Galed Davis presented the 4-H Archery Team. Cason Howard, Walton Extension Agent S.A.F.E Sports Coordinator spoke of their accomplishments.

County Manager John Ward recognized Christopher Pounds (EMS) on his retirement.

MEETING OPENING

Chairman Thompson called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Shelnett gave the invocation. A moment of silence was instituted for the passing of District 1 Commissioner, Bo Warren.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

***Motion:** Chairman Thompson asked that the agenda be amended to add the replacement of District 1 Commissioner Bo Warren as item 5.3 under Discussion. Commissioner Shelnett made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition, seconded by Commissioner Adams. All voted in favor.*

PROCLAMATIONS

Chairman Thompson proclaimed September as National Recovery Month and Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month.

DISCUSSION

County Manager's Report/Update

County Manager John Ward gave an update and report on county matters to the Board.

Policy - Unfunded Liability of Defined Benefit Plan

The Chairman discussed developing a policy for the unfunded liability of the Defined Benefit Plan which is now closed to new employees. Commissioners Shelnutt and Adams agreed to meet with the Chairman to discuss a proposed policy for funding.

Replacement of District 1 Commissioner Bo Warren

Motion: *Chairman Thompson made a motion to honor the wishes of Bo Warren and appoint Amarie Warren to fill the unexpired term of District 1 Commissioner. Commissioner Shelnutt seconded the motion; voted and carried unanimously.*

OLD BUSINESS

LU25-0199 & Z25-0198 - Land Use Change from Suburban to Employment Center and Rezone 2.64 acres from A1 to B3 for outdoor storage and car repair-Applicant/Owner: Melody C. Jackson Moon - Property located at 1350 Mountain Creek Church Road/Parcel C1210079A00 - District 6 - (Tabled on 8/5/25)

Planning Director Charna Parker stated that the applicant would like to withdraw the application for Land Use Change and Rezone.

Motion: Commissioner Dixon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Adams to allow withdrawal of the application. All voted in favor.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Planning Director Charna Parker presented the Planning Commission recommendations.

LU25-0063/Z25-0062 - Land Use Change from Suburban to Highway Corridor and Rezone 7.0 acres from R1 to B2 for mini warehouse storage facility and Variance to allow cross district access - Applicant: Angel Zurita - Owners: Pablo & Maria Zurita - Property located at 257 Highway 81 - Map/Parcel C0540258 - District 3

County Attorney Chip Ferguson opened the public hearing on the matter. Applicant Angel Zurita spoke in favor stating that the variance was needed to allow access to a shared driveway which is the only access. Pam Kirkland spoke in opposition. She voiced her concerns siting traffic and noise pollution and would like the area to remain residential. Attorney Ferguson closed the public hearing on the matter.

Planning Commission recommended approval with the following conditions: 1) all downward lighting; 2) no outside storage.

Motion: *Commissioner Shelnutt made a motion to approve with recommendations of the Planning Commission and with an additional 50ft. transitional buffer. Chairman Thompson seconded the motion. Chairman Thompson, Commissioners Myers, Shelnutt, Bradford and Dixon voted in favor with Commissioner Adams opposing the motion. The motion carried 5-1.*

Z25-0249 - Rezone 2.45 acres from A1 to A to grow and sell cut flowers for retail and wholesale

purchase - Applicant: CJ Hipps-Barros - Owners: CJ & Nicholas Hipp-Barros - Property located at 3685 McCullers Road - Map/Parcel C0100015F00 - District 2

Planning Commission recommended approval as submitted.

County Attorney Chip Ferguson opened the public hearing on the matter. Applicant CJ Hipps spoke in favor. There was no opposition present. County Attorney Ferguson closed the public hearing on the matter.

Motion: Commissioner Myers made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Adams to approve as submitted. All voted in favor.

Z25-0250 - Rezone 7.27 acres from A1 to A to grow vegetables and livestock for a non-profit organization and educational tours - Applicant: Henry G Reid, Jr. - Owners: Chance & Eva Reid - Property located at 611 Youth Jersey Road - Map/Parcel C0640094 - District 3

Planning Commission recommended approval with the following conditions: 1) livestock for tours only; 2) follow county guidelines on animals; 3) no commercial sales, only use for non-profit.

County Attorney Chip Ferguson opened the public hearing on the matter. Applicant Henry Reid Jr. and Chase Reid spoke in favor. There was no opposition present. County Attorney Ferguson closed the public hearing on the matter.

Motion: *Commissioner Shelnutt made a motion to approve per the Planning Commission recommendations. Commissioner Adams seconded the motion; voted and carried unanimously.*

Z25-0253 - Rezone 84.16 acres from A1 and A2 to R1OSC for a residential subdivision - Applicant: Reliant Homes GA, LLC - Owner of Map/Parcel C0660035 is Alcovy Builders Inc. - Owner of Map/Parcel C0650056 and a part of Map/Parcel C0650057 is MFT Land Investments, LLC - Property located on Youth Jersey Road and Monroe Jersey Road - District 3

Planning Commission recommended approval as submitted.

County Attorney Chip Ferguson opened the public hearing on the matter. Ned Butler of Reliant Homes spoke in favor. Speaking in opposition, Tim Keel voiced his concerns regarding the additional number of cars and traffic on H. D. Atha Road. In rebuttal, Ned Butler stated that the development would follow the Land Use Plan. Attorney Ferguson closed the public hearing on the matter.

Motion: *Commissioner Shelnutt made a motion to approve per the Planning Commission recommendation. Chairman Thompson seconded the motion. Chairman Thompson, Commissioners Myers, Shelnutt, Adams and Dixon voted in favor with Commissioner Bradford opposing the motion. The motion carried 5-1.*

LU25-0256 and Rezone Z25-0257 - Land Use Change from Employment Center to Suburban and Rezone 121.43 acres from A1 to A1 2400 Overlay for a residential subdivision - Applicant: JW Residential Group, LLC - Owner: 3SD, LLC - Property located on Rowe Road and Highway

78 - Map/Parcel C0750154 - District 3 and District 5

Planning Commission recommended approval as submitted with the following condition: commercial corridor disclosure to be in the sales agreement and frontage of the property to remain undisturbed except for the entrance, this area to be re-planted with trees and shrubs preferably behind the landscaping to the point of the undisturbed area.

County Attorney Chip Ferguson opened the public hearing on the matter. Attorney Joshua Scoggins spoke on behalf of the applicant. He stated the development would have 54 lots on 24 acres leaving forty acres of open space and keeping lots outside the stream buffer. Tony Smith spoke in opposition citing traffic concerns. In rebuttal, Attorney Scoggins stated that the development would be the least intensive use for the property. Attorney Ferguson closed the public hearing on the matter.

Motion: *Commissioner Adams made a motion to approve per the Planning Commission recommendations. Chairman Thompson seconded the motion. Chairman Thompson, Commissioners Myers, Shelnett, Adams and Dixon voted in favor with Commissioner Bradford opposing the motion. The motion carried 5-1.*

Impact Fee Schedule

There has been no change since adoption in 2005. County Manager John Ward encouraged the Board to revisit the Impact Fee Schedule and gave options for updating the fee schedule.

Motion: *Commissioner Bradford made a motion to adopt a new fee schedule, increasing fees to 100% of the maximum to \$3,635.56 per single family residential structure effective October 1, 2025. Commissioner Adams seconded the motion and all voted in favor.*

ORDINANCE

The Board discussed amendments to the Walton County Animal Control Ordinance.

Amending Animal Control Ordinance - Obstruction of an Animal Control Officer

Amending Animal Control Ordinance - Licensable Activity

Amending Animal Control Ordinance - Microchipping

Amending Animal Control Ordinance - Backyard Breeding

Amending Animal Control Ordinance - Removal of Animals Locked in Vehicles

Amending Animal Control Ordinance – Definitions

Motion: *Commissioner Adams made a motion to adopt all amendments to the Animal Control Ordinance. Commissioner Dixon seconded the motion and all voted in favor.*

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of August 5, 2025 Meeting Minutes
2. Contracts & Budgeted Purchases of \$25000 or Greater
3. Ratification of Actions taken by WCWSA on August 22, 2025
4. Acceptance of Grant in the amount of \$70,968.00 - Walton County Health Care Foundation - Walnut Grove Park Community Center
5. IGA Renewal - City of Monroe - Cardboard Recycling
6. IGA - City of Loganville - New Azalea Regional Library
7. 2026 Holiday Schedule
8. MOU - Partnership for Families, Children and Youth

Motion: Commissioner Adams made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Dixon, to approve the Administrative Consent Agenda. All voted in favor.

FINANCE

Resolution - FY26 Budget Amendments

Motion: Commissioner Adams made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shelnutt to approve the FY26 Budget Amendments. All voted in favor.

Resolution - Project Length Budget for Deep Patching/Resurfacing and FY26 Budget Amendment

Motion: Commissioner Adams made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Myers to approve the Project Length Budget for Deep Patching/Resurfacing and the accompanying FY26 Budget Amendment. All voted in favor.

CONTRACTS

Axon Enterprise, Inc. - Interview Rooms - WCSO (subject to final review by Co. Attorney)

Motion: Commissioner Shelnutt made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Adams, to approve the contract with Axon Enterprise, Inc. subject to County Attorney review. All voted in favor.

My Justice Portal - WCSO (subject to final review by Co. Attorney)

Motion: Commissioner Adams made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shelnutt, to approve the contract with My Justice Portal subject to County Attorney review. All voted in favor.

MedTrust, LLC (MedHealth) - Inmate Medical (subject to final review by Co. Attorney)

Motion: Commissioner Shelnutt made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Myers, to approve the contract with MedTrust, LLC (MedHealth) subject to County Attorney review. All voted in favor.

Summit Food Service, LLC - Jail (subject to final review by Co. Attorney)

Motion: Commissioner Adams made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shelnutt, to approve the contract with Summit Food Service, LLC subject to County Attorney review. All voted in favor.

PayTel Communications, Inc. - Jail (subject to final review by Co. Attorney)

Motion: Commissioner Shelnutt made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Adams, to approve the contract with PayTel Communications subject to County Attorney review. All voted in favor.

ACCEPTANCE OF BIDS/PROPOSALS

EMA Director Carl Morrow presented proposals for Debris Removal and Monitoring should they be needed for declared emergencies.

Acceptance of Proposal - Debris Removal - Walton Co. EMA

Motion: Commissioner Bradford made a motion to accept the proposal for Debris Removal from Southern Disaster Recovery, LLC. Commissioner Shelnutt seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Acceptance of Proposal - Debris Monitoring - Walton Co. EMA

Motion: Commissioner Myers made a motion to accept the proposal for Debris Monitoring from Thompson Consulting Services. Commissioner Adams seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gareth Fenley, Cherry Brooks, Natalie Diaz, Ron Sack, Lora Morris and Morgan VanLuven spoke during public comment opposing the 2025 millage rate.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Commissioner Shelnutt made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bradford, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

All documents of record for this meeting are on file in either the addendum book or auxiliary file under this meeting date.

DAVID G. THOMPSON, CHAIRMAN

RHONDA HAWK, COUNTY CLERK