



MCDUFFIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Work Session Meeting

Monday, February 2, 2026, at 6:30 PM

Second Floor Training Room

MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Chase Beggs, Chairman

~~Sammie Wilson Sr., Vice Chairman~~

Bill Jopling, Commissioner

Fredrick Favors, Commissioner

~~Steven Hollimon, Commissioner~~

COUNTY REPRESENTATION:

Brandon Burton, County Manager

Ashtyn Goodyear, County Clerk

Robert Spurlin, IT Director

Pam Workman, Finance Director

Paul Johnson, Coroner

COMMISSIONERS' WORK SESSION

All agenda items are for discussion only. No action was taken during the meeting.

MEDIA: The McDuffie Progress

WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Beggs

Chairman Beggs called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and acknowledged a quorum.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Favors

Commissioner Favors offered the invocation followed by the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVALS

1. Agenda (Current)

Commissioner Jopling made the motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Favors and passed unanimously.

INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS

2. 2026 ACCG Capitol Connection Conference – March 4-5, 2026

STAFF REPORTS None

APPOINTMENT/REAPPOINTMENT

3. Discussion regarding Rock House Advisory Commission Appointment – Ron Hulbert

Epp Wilson has been on this committee for many years and has enjoyed his time, but he believes it is time to let someone else be involved. Mr. Hulbert has also served on the Wrightsboro Foundation. There are two seats on the Rock House Advisory excluded for Wrightsboro Foundation. The Wrightsboro Foundation is accepting of Mr. Hulbert joining this Committee. This is a 4-year term. Epp's was 2025-2028, so Mr. Hulbert would be completing Epp's term.

OLD BUSINESS None

NEW BUSINESS

4. Insurance Presentation

Andy Knox Jr. gave a presentation on the County's insurance and how we could address the cost and be proactive. The decision is to cut costs by cutting dependents insurance or keeping it. 41% of claims are on dependents. Chairman Beggs asked about the issue with Crumdale not being in network locally. Mr. Knox said the network is the same as several of the large employers around, that is the same network. Mr. Knox said he could run a report to show network coverage with Crumdale vs. BCBS. Mr. Knox mentioned that at the front desk, they see HealthEZ and think they are not in network, but once it is filed, they see that it is in network. If the provider calls the number on the back of the health insurance card, it is resolved while waiting to be checked in. County Manager Burton sent out a survey to workers to ask their opinion on our insurance. Majority of these results were that the provider needs to have a Q&A to better understand their insurance benefits and what is available. Commissioner Favors mentioned that ACCG had used BCBS and had issues with that company.

This item was for discussion only.

5. Discussion on moving March 4th meeting due to ACCG Capitol Conference

The 2026 ACCG Capitol Conference is March 4-5th 2026. Due to so many Commissioners being out of town, it is recommended to cancel this meeting if the board agrees. If we have business to handle before the nightly meeting on March 17th, we will call a meeting.

This item will be added to the Regular Session Agenda, February 4, 2026.

6. Discussion on Solid Waste RFP

County Manager Burton reminded the board that we had advertised a RFP to have competitive pricing for solid waste disposal. We received three bids, however one was late, so we have only accepted two bids. One from Waste Management and one from Republic Services of GA. Three employees ranked these bids to come up with a main score. Republic Services of GA had the better score. A reference for Republic Services of GA has been pleased with the company for years. There are no escalators. Waste Management proposed \$63.83 per ton, and Republic proposed \$57.50 per ton. Republic does not have a sur charge on minimum waste, unlike Waste Management. We typically do 20 tons a load. Commissioner Jopling asked if it would be advantageous to try and get a package deal with solid waste by combining with the city.

This item will be added to the Regular Session Agenda, February 17, 2026.

7. Discussion on Roof Replacement RFP

County Manager Burton presented to the board the RFP for roof replacements for the Public Works building and the future Elections Building behind the old gym in town. The bid tabulation sheet was presented.

This item will be added to the Regular Session Agenda, February 4, 2026.

8. Discussion on setting Public Hearing dates for Proposed Data Center

County Manager Burton wanted the Board's opinion on going ahead and setting the date for the proposed Data Center. The reason we are handling this situation this way is to give the public notice of the public hearing in plenty of time. This would give the public a month to plan to come to the public hearing. The regional commission is in the process of their 15-day comment period for other jurisdictions and government agencies. They will have everything together by our public hearing date, so the Board will have the comments from the Regional Commission to review beforehand. Along with those comments, Mr. Burton will give the board the emails obtained from Project Azaela

so they can review these comments as well.

This item will be added to the Regular Session Agenda, February 4, 2026.

9. Discussion on having a Data Center listening session

The developer has reached out, and Mr. Burton wanted to know if any of the Board wants to listen to what the developers have to say. This would not be a public hearing; this would be a presentation from the developer. Commissioner Jopling wants to hear what they have to say. Chairman Beggs said he would like to have a listening session for the community. This would need to be after the planning commission meeting and before the Board of Commissioner's meeting.

This item was for discussion only.

10. Discussion regarding Ferrous Road request from Georgia Iron Works

Last fall Chairman Beggs received a letter from GIW. Ferrous road dissects and bisects the GIW plant. There has been higher traffic going through the area over the years, putting their employees at risk and citizens that are driving through there with forklifts and equipment traveling on the road. The road is in bad shape and needs improvement. GIW would like the road to be deeded to them. Their plan is to put a gate up to stop cut-through traffic. Commissioner Jopling and Commissioner Favors said in the past the discussion was for that traffic to be rerouted, and that they possibly would need IDA funds. GIW has agreed to put in the cul-de-sac if the County is willing to close the road through their property. Commissioner Favors said the reason in wanting to re-route the traffic rather than close the road is so safety vehicles can reach the homes in that area in a good response time.

This item was for discussion only.

11. Discussion regarding SPLOST VIII Intergovernmental Agreement

We had a joint meeting last Thursday, and a draft IGA was presented. Mr. Burton wanted the board to give more input to add to this IGA before he finalized a draft. Commissioner Favors mentioned that the state may be able to eliminate some of the wish list items on the SPLOST VIII list, such as E911 funds.

This item was for discussion only.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Jopling to adjourn the work session at 7:28 pm. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Favors and passed unanimously.

MCDUFFIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Chase N. Beggs, Chairman

ATTEST: 

Ashtyn L. Goodyear, County Clerk