



MCDUFFIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Work Session Meeting

Monday, March 30, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Government Complex Commissioner 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
Chief Sewell, FIRE/EMS Director
Catherine Kirby, Animal Shelter Director

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

INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS

2. 2026 ACCG Annual Conference in Savannah is April 23-25, 2026

STAFF REPORTS

3. County Manager Report

County Manager Burton will be meeting with Archway in Athens tomorrow to listen to the results of the Community Listening Session hosted a few months ago. He and Archway will also be discussing the interns we were awarded with from the Archway program. These interns show interest in HR/Administration and Planning & Zoning. These interns are from McDuffie or adjacent to us. Thursday morning there will be a workshop for CDBG Disaster Relief funds, attending the meeting is mandatory so we are eligible to receive funds. Wellstar is interested in bringing a mobile mammogram bus and clinic to the County/City. There were pre-bids collected today for several different contracts. Our roofing project will begin 4/13/26. A Notice to Proceed has been sent out for the Raysville Fire Station as well. The Army Corps came to Big Hart last week for their annual inspection and it went well with minor items needing to be reviewed. A well inspection was also done, and corrections have been made. We are testing the water from the well and throughout the campground to ensure water quality is up to par.

NEW BUSINESS

4. Discussion on MOU between McDuffie County and UGA Extension Service

This is the annual agreement between McDuffie County and the UGA Extension Service. No changes have been made.

This item will be added to the Regular Session Agenda, April 1, 2026.

5. Discussion on Government Center/Old Court House Landscaping

A statement of work was given that we received in the past. The intent is to find a contractor who can give a scope of work that is not as robust as the ones received before. The proposals received will be presented to the Board once received. This will also include a contract to maintain the landscaping. Once the Blind Willie Park Amphitheater is completed, it potentially will be added to this.

This item will be on a future Agenda once the RFP has been out.

6. Discussion on 2026 LMIG and LRA Road List

The state awarded additional LRA funding of approximately \$681k. County Manager Burton is working on getting road information together to see what roads can benefit from this money the best. Commissioner Jopling asked if we have considered surface treatment rather than a thin layer of surfacing to save money. County Manager Burton said that it is up to the Board to decide but would save money. He asked the board to send road recommendations before June. The LRA list is due June 20th. The original amount of funds in LMIG was approximately \$631k. Vice Chair Wilson said he will be sending his list that District 1 has not had roads paved in a long time.

This item was an update.

7. Discussion on Intergovernmental Agreement for Economic Development Director

A draft of the IGA was attached in the agenda packet with red line corrections. The IGA incorporated Downtown Development, IDA, Forward McDuffie, the Chamber of Commerce, and the CVB. The new IGA will include the DDA and IDA only. Forward McDuffie will still exist as a 501C for grants. We are looking at creating a MOU with the CVB and Chamber, where they are still a part of it, but the Economic Development director is not coordinating or interfering with their work. The director will remain answering to the County with input from the city. Everyone wants to remain working together as a team, but the agreement had contradictions included that need to be corrected. The interim director has been James Upchurch, but the IDA has offered Don Powers the interim position. Mr. Powers is only interested in doing this for a couple of months while we advertise this job opening.

This item will be added to a future Work Session.

8. Discussion on Library Agreement

This agreement came to light when the library had a mold/mildew issue and tried to decide who was responsible for what. There are two different agreements that were found during this period. One agreement states the Board of Education and one does not, which the intent was for them to be involved and they are involved. This agreement is from the 90's and needs to be updated. The agreement does not clearly state who is responsible for what. The intent of rewriting this is to identify the roles of each entity and the responsibilities. This is an opportunity to also identify percentages of each entity. The library is working with the state to receive funds to receive

maintenance for the building and parking lot. This is an additional grant for capital improvements.

This item will be added to a future Work Session.

9. Discussion on Probate Vital Records Reimbursement Resolution

The probate judges in the jurisdictions are entitled to receiving an amount for vital records that can go to themselves or for office supplies, etc. There is a state statute of up to a certain amount that would go to the probate judge for compensation. Chairman Beggs mentioned he called other counties and they do participate in this. The state statute allows up to \$15k a year.

This item will be added to the Regular Session Agenda, April 1, 2026.

10. Discussion on Resolution 2026-009 Opioid Settlement – National Remnant Settlement

The County filed suit in 2018 against several defendants in connection with the Opioids crisis and were joined in one lawsuit with other Cities, Counties and states, among others. We have a new national settlement that our lead counsel has advised the County to participate in. This settlement is referred to as the Remnant Defendants Settlement and is with six regional distributors/dispenser defendants: Associated Pharmacies, Inc.; J M Smith Corporation; Louisiana Wholesale Drug Company, Inc.; Morris and Dickson Co.; North Carolina Mutual Wholesale Drug Company, Inc.; and United Natural Foods, Inc. This is one settlement agreement covering the combined settlement with the six defendants. The proposed settlement is \$97,625,000.00 in cash for purposes of abating the opioid epidemic. If effectuated, the settlement will result in a one-time payment distributed per the allocation distribution percentages in existence between all participating entities. To be effective, certain percentages of the litigating entities must participate, and if the required participation is met, it is anticipated we will receive payment from the settlement in the next year.

This item will be added to the Regular Session Agenda, April 1, 2026.

11. Discussion on Animal Services Ordinances

We have a current ordinance in place that reflects dangerous dogs, however, with updating this ordinance we can better identify what a “stray” dog is. By updating this ordinance, we can strengthen our animal services. The current ordinance does not give much authority to work with stray dogs. The city is also working on their end so animal services will have authority in the city and county to do what they need with stray and dangerous animals. The animal shelter director has drafted the new ordinance that is being proposed. She stated that she hopes the Town of Dearing, City of Thomson, and McDuffie County can all agree on the ordinance, so she is able to do what she needs.

This item will be added to a future Work Session.

12. Discussion on Amendment of Zoning Ordinances for Data Centers

We currently do not have an ordinance that addresses Data Center, which is the reason the previous application had so many certain conditions in place. The drafted ordinance presented is for review. Commissioner Favors made a motion to place a moratorium on data centers until an ordinance is put in place. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hollimon and passed unanimously.

This item will be added to the Regular Session Agenda, April 1, 2026.

13. Discussion on Public Private Partnership – Dearing Ball Field

This partnership is with Top Dawg Travel Ball; they have reached out to provide labor and materials to fix the Dearing ball field. This work would include filling in some of the divots and bumps in the outfield, a temporary fence, haul in some in-field material, and possibly some covers for the dugouts and other repairs. They are getting an exact list and estimate sent to County Manager Burton. Commissioner Hollimon mentioned that the electrical also needs to be checked, that the lights have some age on them. Top Dawg is thinking of using the field on Tuesdays and Thursdays for a while. Commissioner Hollimon said he would like to look into using SPLOST dollars to put up a permanent fence.

This item will be added to an Agenda in the future once more information is obtained.

14. Discussion on DFACS Advisory Board Appointment

Angie Rogers has resigned from the DFACS Board since changing job positions. It is the Board of Commissioners' duty to appoint someone in her place. It is recommended to go with the school system's recommendation of Mrs. Chele DuTeau, the Director of Student Services.

This item will be added to the Regular Session Agenda, April 1, 2026.

15. Discussion on Beer and Wine License – TA Express

This was placed on the agenda to show the Board the businesses has changed ownership.

This item will be added to the Regular Session Agenda, April 21, 2026.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – PERSONNEL

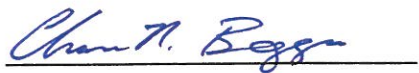
Enter: Vice Chair Wilson made a motion to enter executive session at 7:10 pm. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jopling and passed unanimously.

Exit: Commissioner Jopling made a motion to exit executive session at 7:28 pm. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hollimon and passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Vice Chair Wilson to adjourn the work session at 7:29 pm. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jopling and passed unanimously.

MCDUFFIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Chase N. Beggs, Chairman

ATTEST: 

Ashtyn L. Goodyear, County Clerk