



FLOYD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS July 22, 2025

County Administration Building

Caucus - Suite 204	3:30 pm
Regular Meeting - Suite 206	6:00 pm

CAUCUS

Commissioners: Allison Watters, Rhonda Wallace, David Thornton, Mike Burnes, and Scotty Hancock; County Manager Jamie McCord, County Clerk Lauren Chumbler, County Attorney Chris Jackson, Greg Dobbins, Brian Huskey, Susie Gass, Jennie Leonard, Darryl Bowie, Ron Swinford, Amanda Tierce, Brandi Baggett, Adam Carey, Mike Bell, John Blalock, Rachel McGirr, Bruce Ivey, Dianne Graham, Angela Rubino, and John Bailey.

Chair Watters called the Caucus session to order at 3:37 pm.

Update on Ag Center

Moved to Regular Meeting

Vehicle fleet presentation by Enterprise

Rachel McGirr with Enterprise presented options for Floyd County's vehicle fleet.

Chair Watters and Mr. McCord began review of the agenda. Mr. Jackson asked that New Business #1 be approved pending final legal review.

At 5:15 pm, Rhonda Wallace made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss litigation, seconded by Mike Burnes. The motion carried 4-0 as David Thornton had stepped out.

Executive session to discuss property acquisition, litigation, and personnel.

I) CALL TO ORDER

Chair Watters called the public hearing to order at 6:00pm.

II) PUBLIC HEARING

II.1) FY25 Millage Rate for County M&O, Fire, and Solid Waste.

Chair Watters opened the public hearing asking if there was anyone to speak in support. Seeing none, Chair Watters asked if there was a motion to increase the public hearing time to twenty minutes.

Rhonda Wallace made a motion to approve to increase the public hearing time for those in opposition to twenty minutes, seconded by Scotty Hancock. The motion carried 5-0.

Ron Gibson, 118 Pinson Road; "I'm Ron Gibson. I reside at 118 Pinson Road. I think the only people here that are for this increase are yall. Everybody else.. I don't think there's anybody in Floyd County that wants this except yall. We have seen our property tax increase in the last five years 261%. We've gone from \$905 to \$2,370 and this is just going to compound on more. It's time that it stops. You need to start looking at cutbacks. I went to the probate office twice for licensing. Both times I was required to have an appointment and both times that I went, there were four and five, respectfully, people sitting behind desks playing on their phones. Nobody else in the office. Those people can either be allocated to other places to backfill positions or worst case, get rid of them. If they don't have enough work to do than to sit there at 10:00 am and 2:00 pm to play on their phones and I'm sure the answer's going to be it's probably a county phone. If they're sitting at a desk, they don't need to be on their cell phones. There's phones, there's computers. We shouldn't be providing them all cell phones, if that's what it is, but it's got to stop. I had a traffic study done on Pinson Road. Asked for 25 mile per hour speed tables. We have... it's a 35 mile an hour road. I got 95% of the property owners signed up for it. There was a speed study done. We see speeds in excess of 80 miles an hour. The only answer I got out of engineering is 'we don't know how to reclassify it to a 25 mile an hour road. We're allowed to write tickets on it, we would have to stop writing tickets on it.' Well they're not writing tickets on it. We're not getting the services out of the county for the money that we're spending. It's ridiculous. We're dealing with a residential area. 35 mile an hour zone with cars running 80 plus miles an hour. Multiples. And nobody's doing anything about it. When do we start getting services for the money we're spending? And I'll let it be."

Byron Foust, 24 Battle Farm Road, Rome; "My name is Byron Foust. 24 Battle Farm Road and I'd like to know just what other options did you even look at? There has to be other options on the board instead of just going straight..."

Commissioner Wallace - "I'm sorry I can't hear you."

Chair Watters - "Speak really close to the microphone."

Mr. Foust - "I was just wondering what options have you considered other than just millage rates and I believe Floyd County, speaking for the seniors, the school tax is outrageous. Some counties have no school tax for seniors. Some have much, much less tax. What you give us, you might as well not even waste your time doing it. As far as the property tax on homes, a year ago I contested our raise and got it lowered, but they based ours calculated out to \$262 dollars a square foot and I looked at Stone Bridge area and the Battle Farm area and the homes that sold in the last two years average \$200. I have no idea where your basis is for your calculations. I mean it's just like your pulling numbers out of the air and if there was some way you could explain the formula other than just saying millage rate. Thank you."

Mr. Jackson - "Madam Chair, I just wanted to explain a point of procedure because I have heard the gentleman ask some questions, Mr. Foust did, and I know the County would like, I think, at the end of all this to have a chance to respond, but that responses don't come because right now we want to hear from the community, right? And so after the ten.. twenty minutes is over, then the county may want to respond. Any you commissioners want to say anything or Mr. McCord or anybody else wants to present. We'll do that at the end of the twenty minutes."

Joy Kirby, 65 Old School Road NE, Rome; "Hi, my name is Joy Kirby. I live at 65 Old School Road NE. I had appealed my taxes two years ago and got it froze, but it's still almost \$2,000. My mortgage has gone up \$200. My taxes.. as soon as my taxes go up and the insurance goes up, my mortgage goes up. Our road has got the RaceTrac at the end of it and now yall are building another convenience store right up the road. You could throw a rock from one to the other and the speed on our road is only supposed to be 25 miles an hour. We have screamed at people flying cause we have kids playing on this road."

Chair Watters - "This is Old School Road? Just want to clarify."

Ms. Kirby - "Old School Road. They fly down it. Going from.. you know, you can hear them hitting their brakes from either end. I can't count the times our neighbor's mailboxes have been destroyed. We actually lost three so we put one up so that if somebody hits it their car's going to be damaged more than our mailbox is gonna be damaged. But it's ridiculous. We have pets. You cannot even walk on the road anymore. Between the tennis courts and the convenience store, which obviously, I guess the RaceTrac is the happening place to be because they race every morning. Me trying to get out of my driveway in the morning to go to work is give or take. It's awful. And the ball stadium.. the money yall want to.. I mean are they not making money? That's what I want to know. Are they not making money? Because from what I understood, you know, yall aren't going to have to pay for this. It's going to pay for itself. It's SPLOST. That's not happened apparently. I appreciate yall's time."

Ken Wright, P.O. Box 24; "Okay Ken Wright, P.O. Box 24, Silver Creek, Georgia. I know we don't have a lot of time so really nobody really needs to say anything as I've said before as commissioners your goal is to represent the voices of the community. You're servant leaders and you're supposed to be a representative voice for people in the community. This is a clear voice. Everyone is opposed to increasing the millage rate, that right there should be enough. But if that's not enough let's go to something else. Looking at my property tax over the past few years. I just pulled up the last six years. I've pulled up six years, well not the last 2018-2023, so six years and I looked at the inflation rate. 2.9, 2.1, 2.7, cumulative total is 13.59 percent inflation rate. Okay, if my property taxes increased 13.59 percent I would probably be ok. However, I've got seven properties. The least increase was 170 percent and the greatest was 740 percent. So 320, 380, 740, 290, 280, 170 so this is ridiculous. The other part of this is while I do understand your dilemma y'all have to pay everything in this county, you have to run every service on less than half of what we give to the schools. I love schools, I love kids, I love education but it's ridiculous. Schools are getting way too much. School has way too much. They've got a surplus I know it, I've already talked to Tony Daniel. We'll probably disagree on this because he's school board and that's OK. But you've got a neighboring community where your split is 50 percent is M&O and 50 percent is school tax. Why is it that 65 percent goes to the schools and 35 percent goes to M&O. I don't know how we can run everything in this county on less than half of what the schools are getting to just run the schools. So to me, and I've asked this before, can y'all please come together? I know y'all are separate entities, you're both constitutional authorities. But come together with the schools and come up with an option. And I've got an option. It would actually increase your M&O but it would lower the school's. Together it would be a net lowering for the citizens and over the last four years they would have paid, every citizens would have paid \$850 less school and property taxes but y'all would get more M&O, yes the school would get less, but they're sitting on a \$58,000 surplus. That's all."

Julia Smith, 1517 Cave Spring Road; "Hello my name is Julia Smith. I live at 1517 Cave Spring Road and I wanted to come to you and bring you some numbers I've crunched over the last few days and see where we can come along with this. I've come up with some numbers for Floyd County residents that own their home as of 2024. And the homes are 22,785 and I gave that a very reasonable number of 3,000 per home of tax being paid and that's across the board. That's from a \$1,000,000 homes, \$500,000 homes all the way down to smaller homes. That number comes up to \$68,355,000. Ok? Now we're going to go to the businesses in Rome. They are 2,073 businesses in Rome, Georgia. And again, I gave them a very low tax rate. Just saying they have to pay 3,500, I gave them 3,000 excuse me. That's \$6,000,2019 dollars they pay a year. OK? Also I'm aware the prison does give y'all free to very minimal pay for doing the roads, the beautification of Rome and some of the (inaudible) they provide Rome. We know that they do that. We also

know that Rome has had the privilege of getting some grants from state and federal. A lot of folks probably don't know that. And I would like to know that the total of all this that I'm giving you again guys do know that this is the round about number for businesses and home owners of just \$3,000, this is for million dollar homes the way down to the forties, thirties of \$3,000. Your total is going to be \$74,574,000. OK. Now also I'm going to ask you about what is your total balance for this year, for what you did need. I know I was looking at it, but I didn't get a running total. I see right here that you charged half a million dollars for street lights last year. Half a million. I'm looking at some other numbers here that I'm really kind of astounded by the numbers that I see. I did not quite tally all the millions for the salary on down, but I really don't see it coming up to \$74,574,000 and that again is giving you a very, very, very low rate of \$3,000 per home, per business and I'm very, very sad of what you've done to the people that are 65 and over. I just want you to know I'm very sad, because you know that they are struggling. I live at 1517 Cave Spring Road and I wrote y'all a letter. I would also like to know at the end of this meeting if you could tell me how many assessments when they came to you and asked you to reassess their homes could you please give me some numbers how many you accepted and how many you denied? I would like to know that at the end if you would please. Also again, I would like to know the total between the very good number I gave y'all and the total that y'all had last year of 2024 budget. That's all I have for you. Have a good day."

Mark Coryea, 5721 Big Texas Valley Road; "My name is Mark Brandon Coryea. I live at 5721 Big Texas Valley Road. Of course, like everybody else, the millage rate increase. Also too, home value increases. I don't understand how, y'all can base...to give an example my neighbor.. his house is a few hundred square feet bigger than mine yet his house is being taxed for \$440,000. Mine is being taxed for \$307,000. But yet my home is only worth 220. So I'm already going to pay tax on 40% on 300 and you're going to go up on the millage rate, that's another tax. My other question is why don't y'all give more breaks for seniors or people who are on disability. Myself, I'm on disability. My wife has to stay home, stay home to help take care of me and what not. I guess living paycheck to paycheck is a little struggle, you know. Let's see, my other question is it may irritate some people, it may not, it don't matter. How come people, I understand the conservation act. But what I don't understand is when my grandfather owned 78 acres off Big Texas Valley Road and I own one and a half and his taxes for the year were \$782 and mine were almost \$3,000. So I just don't understand that why they get such a break and we don't. I appreciate it."

Sergio Ortega, 1410 North Broad Street; "Alright, I'll make this really quick. Sergio Ortega, Floyd County Libertarian Party, 1410 North Broad Street. 2017 SPLOST budget set aside \$2 million for stadium improvements, Floyd County overspent that budget by 412%. That budget also set aside \$3.4 million for vehicle fleet, Floyd County overspent by 300%. Floyd County recently met to approve a data center in Coosa so you guys can get more property tax money. Now you're here

demanding a bigger budget. Are you insane? I've already accepted that some of yall have made up your minds. We could have a whole city block outside protesting on the millage rate and you'd already vote in favor of it. The Floyd County Libertarian Party will back any candidate that will unseat these incumbents and I think everyone in this room should too. Also, extend the time. What happened to no taxation without representation. You have a whole room of people wanting to speak and we've got five minutes left. That's all. Thank you."

John Hodgson, Floyd County; "Ms. Watters, County Commissioners thanks for your time. So I do have a couple of questions. If I recall properly at the end of 2024 we had a \$40 million surplus, so I don't understand. You know, according to Floyd County records, additionally um it's being called for an \$8 million short term loan from what I'm reading in documents so, I'm curious about that as well. What we're seeing within you know political parties, for example Texas Gov. Ron Abbot and Gov. Ron DeSantis they're pushing for no property taxes in their states. Um, Ms. Marjorie Taylor Greene just on July 7, said that people are tired of tax increases federally with state and local government. She just posted that on her Facebook and here's her home county raising taxes again. So I'd like to know why we're punishing property owners and not looking at and not looking at other alternatives, for example, raise the sales tax a nickel and just get rid of property tax altogether. That should be more than enough, thank you. That should be more than enough to fund the county. I hate to say it with the amount of money coming in it almost feels like Floyd County needs its own DOGE committee. One other thing I'd like to mention and I'd like to give some time to other people. Mr. McCord and Ms. Grass, who is the finance director of Floyd County, on June 24 they signed a comprehensive financial statement for 2024, I'm sure you're familiar, but it says we anticipate we will be able to handle the current economic forecast with minimal adverse impacts locally. Six percent is not a small percentage, that's a big percentage for property owners. For us to be punished and front the bill I don't feel like is fair as a local property owner, as well as everyone else in this room. The sales tax would spread it evenly across anybody and everything within Floyd County that's purchasing a coke or a car. Why punish just the property owners, I appreciate your time."

Heather Huether, 43 Lake View Drive; "I own 10 properties in Floyd County. I own two businesses. As a business owner, I understand if you go over budget things cost more than you anticipate. What we do is that we eat the cost but I know that's not always accessible. I'd like to talk about my personal property taxes. From 2022, I paid \$1,400, 2023 it went up to \$2,600, 2024 it went up to \$3,300 and now they're increasing it another \$37,000 in value for a home that I have done absolutely nothing to except to maintain it. I know there's other citizens in this room that are in the same boat. When we own multiple properties, it affects us increasingly. The citizens of Floyd County cannot sustain continued increases every year. We don't make enough money here for that. I have talked to several elderly people that we have went and put handrails in for, that are telling me they're going to have to sell

their home and downsize because they cannot afford to continue paying these property taxes. That breaks my heart, those are the people we should be looking out for. It's gotten insane. I agree, I want to just say I agree on the point of sales tax. We were told if we voted for SPLOST it wouldn't be all on the property owners, it would be for everybody to pay but our taxes went up again, on top of the SPLOST. That's all I have to say, thank you."

Cynthia Heaton, 521 North Avery Road; "My property borders the Coosa data center proposed site and, you know, that meeting there was about as many if not more people there and they felt unheard. This is your opportunity to let them feel heard. Represent the people that are here that are telling you this is not what they want and as our representatives we would expect that you are going to honor that because we certainly haven't felt honored up until now."

Vicky Perkins, 6 Deckle Drive; "I share everybody's same feelings about it just keeps going up and up and my question is how do you get the assessments? There is a new subdivision that is behind our subdivision. Ours is an older subdivision. So of the new houses that are bigger, better they're making our house values go up through the roof but we've not done anything to ours. How in the world do you compare apples to apples. I don't even know where you're getting the numbers. It blows my mind so please help us understand because we're not at all. Thank you."

After the twenty minutes ended, Chair Watters declared the public hearing closed.

Mr. McCord gave a presentation of the property tax and millage rate process.

Senator Chuck Hufstetler spoke regarding HB 581 and how it would affect property taxes.

Mr. Jackson addressed questions brought up regarding money spent on the AdventHealth stadium.

Commissioner Hancock addressed some of the issues brought up during the public hearing.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Watters called the regular meeting to order at 7:07 pm

III) INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG -- Commissioner Burnes

IV) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mike Burnes made a motion to approve, seconded by Rhonda Wallace. The motion carried 5-0.

V) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

V.1) Adopt minutes of Caucus, Executive Session and Regular Meeting of July 8, 2025.

The minutes were approved by common consent.

VI) SPECIAL RECOGNITION

VII) PROCLAMATION

VIII) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REGARDING MATTERS ON THE AGENDA

IX) FIRST READING

X) SECOND READING/PUBLIC HEARING

XI) PUBLIC HEARING

XI.1) Adopt an ordinance of the Floyd County Board of Commissioners to close an unopened area of right of way on Houston Street.

Mr. McCord presented the item to the commission. Chair Watters explained the rules of the public hearing and declared the public hearing open by asking if anyone was present to speak in favor. Seeing no one to speak in favor, Chair Watters ask if there was anyone to speak in opposition. Seeing no one to speak, Chair Watters closed the public hearing.

Scotty Hancock made a motion to approve, seconded by David Thornton. The motion carried 5-0.

XII) RESOLUTIONS

XII.1) Consider a resolution providing for the issuance and sale of a tax anticipation note in the principal amount of \$8,100,000 and for other related purposes.

Mr. McCord presented the resolution to the commission.

Mike Burnes made a motion to approve, seconded by David Thornton. The motion carried 5-0.

XII.2) Consider a resolution calling for a referendum to submit to the electors of Floyd County, Georgia, the question of whether Floyd County, Georgia shall be authorized to permit and regulate the sale of distilled

spirits by the drink, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 3-4-92, and authorizing subsequent sales.

Mr. Jackson presented resolutions #2 and #3 to the Commission.

Rhonda Wallace made a motion to approve, seconded by Scotty Hancock. The motion carried 4-1 with David Thornton voting no.

XII.3) Consider a resolution calling for a referendum to submit to the electors of Floyd County, Georgia, the question of whether Floyd County, Georgia shall be authorized to permit and regulate Sunday Sales of alcoholic beverages by the drink, to include distilled spirits, from 11:00 A.M. until 12:00 Midnight, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 3-3-7, and authorizing subsequent sales.

Mike Burnes made a motion to approve, seconded by Scotty Hancock. The motion carried 4-1 with David Thornton voting no.

XIII) CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chair Watters stated they will meet with the city of Rome on August 5th to discuss HB581. Chair Watters also stated there is a tentative ribbon cutting scheduled for the library amphitheater on August 13 and they are still searching for a new Development Authority director.

XIV) COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Vice Chair Wallace gave updates from the Administrative Services Committee as well as the PD move to Glenwood. Commissioner Hancock gave an update on the LEC renovation as well as an update on paving. Commissioner Burnes stated the Wings Over North Georgia Airshow will be October 17-19. Commissioner Thornton stated he attended the Cattlemen's Association meeting as well as the Area Commissioner's Luncheon. Commissioner Thornton also attended DFCS board and DDA.

XIV.1) Public Safety Committee

a. Next Meeting, Thursday, August 21, 10:00 AM, 2025

XIV.2) Administrative Services Committee

a. Next Meeting, Thursday, September 25, 10:00 AM, 2025

XIV.3) Elected Officials Committee

a. Next Meeting, Friday, August 1, 2:00 PM, 2025

XIV.4) Public Utilities & Transportation Committee

a. Regular Meeting, Wednesday, August 20, 8:00 AM, 2025

XIV.5) Special Committee Reports

a. Fire Overview Committee

Next Meeting, Tuesday, September 9, 10:30 AM, 2025

b. Joint Services Committee

Next Meeting, Tuesday, August 5, 9:00 AM, 2025
c. Rome-Floyd Planning Commission
Next Meeting, Thursday, August 7, 2:30 PM, 2025
d. Joint Development Oversight Committee
Next Meeting, Tuesday, August 5, 10:00 AM, 2025
e. Joint Solid Waste Commission
Next Meeting, Tuesday, October 28, 8:30 AM, 2025
f. Transportation Policy Committee
Next Meeting, Wednesday, September 17, 10:00 AM, 2025
g. Airport Commission
Next Meeting, Wednesday, September 17, 4:00 PM, 2025
h. SPLOST Project Overview Committee
Next Meeting, TBD, 2025
i. RFPR Advisory Committee
Next Meeting, Tuesday, August 19, 12:00 PM, 2025
j. Floyd County Library Board
Next Meeting, Thursday, August 21, 4:00 PM, 2025

XV) MANAGER'S REPORT

Ag Center Director Kate Harman gave an update on the Ag Center and showed the site plans for the project.

XVI) ATTORNEY'S REPORT

XVII) CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Chumbler reported that the Consent Agenda was in order.

Rhonda Wallace made a motion to approve, seconded by Mike Burnes. The motion carried 5-0.

XVII.1) Consider request from the Sheriff's Office to approve the purchase of Pepperball products in the amount of \$10,095.00 using technology grant funds from the Sheriff's Office equipment account (\$9,495) and the Sheriff's Office supplies account (\$600). There will need to be a budget increase in the equipment account.

XVII.2) Consider request from Finance to approve the Mental Health Court grant #B75-8-030 for the period 7/1/2025 - 6/30/2026. This grant will provide federal funds in the amount of \$18,564 and will not require a local match. This will require an increase to the revenue budget of \$18,565.00 and an increase to the expense account of \$18,565.00.

XVII.3) Consider request from Finance to approve the Adult Drug Court grant #B75-8-029 for the period 7/1/2025 - 6/30/2026. This grant will provide federal funds in the amount of \$45,760 and will not require a local match. This will require an increase to the revenue budget of \$45,760.00 and an increase to the expense account of \$45,760.00.

- XVII.4) Consider request to approve a memorandum of understanding regarding Purdue opioid settlement.
- XVII.5) Consider a request to cancel the December 23, 2025 Board of Commissioners meeting.
- XVII.6) Consider request from Airport to approve a Land Lease for Sale of Corporate Hangar Building #650.
- XVII.7) Consider request from Purchasing to approve for permission to deem the vehicles and equipment listed below as surplus items to be auctioned on GovDeals.com. The Public Works Department Staff have examined the vehicles, and they have been considered unsalvageable for Floyd County use.
- XVII.8) Consider request from Human Resources to approve the proposed 2025-2026 Employee Benefits Plan.
- XVII.9) Request from Finance to accept the FY2024 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG). This is a reimbursement based grant covering the period 7/1/2024-6/30/25. It provides federal funds of \$28,895.00 and a local match of \$28,895. This is an annual grant and will not require a budget adjustment.

XVIII) OLD BUSINESS

XIX) NEW BUSINESS

- XIX.1) Consider request from Purchasing to award a contract to E Dunay Design, LLC for Architectural Services for phase two of the facility, involving a shooting range and impound facility. This vendor provided the same service for the current completed renovation for the Floyd County Police Department headquarters.

Mr. McCord presented the item to the commission.

Mike Burnes made a motion to approve pending final legal review., seconded by Rhonda Wallace. The motion carried 5-0.

- XIX.2) Consider request from Clerk's Office to approve a new license for beer consumption off-premise to Bilal Malik for Malik Vape Shop 4 Inc located at 3793 Martha Berry Highway. All fees and requirements have been met by the applicant.

Mr. McCord presented the item to the commission.

Rhonda Wallace made a motion to approve, seconded by Mike Burnes. The motion carried 4-1 with David Thornton voting no.

- XIX.3) Consider request from Clerk's Office to approve a new license for beer and wine consumption off-premise to Saurabh Patel for Community

Shop located at 2523 Shorter Avenue. All fees and requirements have been met by the applicant.

Mr. McCord presented the item to the Commission.

Mike Burnes made a motion to approve, seconded by Rhonda Wallace. The motion carried 4-1 with David Thornton voting no.

XIX.4) Consider request from the Clerk's Office to approve a waiver of hearing and stipulation to sanctions regarding an amusement game room license for Sunshine Food Mart located at 4970 Rockmart Road. All fees and requirements have been met by the applicant.

Mr. McCord and Mr. Jackson presented the item to the commission.

Scotty Hancock made a motion to approve, seconded by David Thornton. The motion carried 5-0.

XIX.5) Consider request to approve Change Order from ASG regarding Alto Park fields in the amount of \$8,485.00 using funds from 2023 SPLOST. This will require a budget increase of \$8,485.00 to GL Account # 320648 - 66149.

Rhonda Wallace made a motion to approve, seconded by Mike Burnes. The motion carried 5-0.

XX) OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Watters stated the commission entered into executive session to discuss litigation and potential litigation. No action was taken.

Commissioner Wallace recognized Mary Kate Wheeler with Junior Service League for being present.

XXI) PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

XXII) ADJOURN

With no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:42 pm.