

**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING  
PIKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

The Pike County Board of Commissioners held its Regular Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, November 12, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in the Courthouse, Main Courtroom, 16001 Barnesville Street, Zebulon. Chairman Briar Johnson convened the meeting and Commissioners Tim Daniel, Tim Guy, Ken Pullin and James Jenkins attended. County Attorney/County Manager Rob Morton and County Clerk Angela Blount were also present. (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1(e) (2)).

1. **CALL TO ORDER**..... **Chairman J. Briar Johnson**
2. **INVOCATION**.....**Silent Invocation**
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**..... **Chairman J. Briar Johnson**
4. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA - (O.C.G A. § 50-14-1 (e) (1))**

County Manager Rob Morton requested that the agenda be amended to include, under New Business, Item n: consideration of approval of the 2025 lease and resolution for a 140-15 Motor Grader through Caterpillar Financial.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Guy to approve the amended agenda to include the addition New Business Item n. Approve/deny 2025 Lease and Resolution for a 140-15 Motor Grader through Caterpillar Financial Services, motion carried 5-0.**

5. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1(e) (2))**
  - a. Minutes of the October 28, 2025, Regular Monthly Meeting.
  - b. Minutes of the October 28, 2025, Executive Session.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Guy/Daniel to approve the minutes of the October 28, 2025 Regular Monthly Meeting and the October 28, 2025 Executive Session, motion carried 5-0.**

6. **INVITED GUEST**

- a. Employee Recognition for service to Pike County.

**Jeffery Hilton** with Pike County Planning and Development was recognized for five years of dedicated service to Pike County. County Manager Rob Morton commended Mr. Hilton for his hard work and commitment to the county. Planning and Development Director Jeremy Gilbert also expressed his appreciation for Mr. Hilton’s significant contributions to the department, whether through inspections or code enforcement, or other areas of responsibility. Mr. Gilbert added that he would like to have another five years working with Jeff, he is an outstanding employee. Jeffery Hilton was presented with a 5-year certificate and pin.

7. **REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONS, DEPARTMENTS, COMMITTEES, AUTHORITIES**

- a. Monthly Reports submitted from County Departments and County Authorities, including a Revenue/Expenditure Statement for all departments and a summary check register.

Commissioner Jenkins noted that the Tax Assessor’s Board minutes were missing. Commissioner Daniel noted that several departmental reports were missing. Chairman Johnson encouraged all departments to submit their reports, as Commissioners and the public read them.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Guy to accept reports, motion carried 5-0.**

- b. County Manager Report

Update on County finances for the following funds/accounts:

General Fund .....	\$1,495,236.53
Fire Dept. Donations.....	\$12,159.13
Cash Reserve Account.....	\$214,999.09
Jail Fund .....	\$22,179.41
E-911 Fund .....	\$71,728.08
DATE Fund .....	\$21,848.59
Juvenile Court Fund.....	\$14,547.70
Residential Impact Fees.....	\$360,955.55
Commercial Impact Fees .....	\$39,850.82
C.A.I.P FUND .....	\$29,390.45
General Obligation SPLOST 2022-2028.....	\$1,199,164.61
L.M.I.G. Grant (DOT).....	\$1,213,843.45

- c. County Manager Comment

County Manager Rob Morton noted the annual audit for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 was underway, with auditors on-site for their field work November 12, 2025 through November 14, 2025. The audit is due by December 31, 2025.

The Impact Fee Advisory Committee met on November 5, 2025 and the next meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.

The McKinley Road project is nearing completion, with the top layer of paving pending. CM Morton noted he has a meeting with the consulting engineer, Mark Whitley, to review McKinley Road and other projects.

The proposed paving project list is being updated with cost estimates and will be submitted for review at the Board of Commissioners November 25, 2025 meeting for consideration, comments and/or modification for possible approval.

Future paving projects will proceed in the following order after McKinley Road: Wood Creek Road, Old Zebulon Road, and Blanton Mill Road.

Tax Appeals hearings scheduled for last Thursday were cancelled due to waiver agreements. Hearings conducted Friday; additional hearings scheduled for Thursday, November 13, 2025.

The Lamar County Regional Solid Waste Management Authority is possibly seeking to expand the Cedar Grove Municipal Solid Waste Landfill, with a public hearing on December 8, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at the City of Milner Community Public Library, located at 159 Main Street Milner, Georgia.

d. Commissioner Reports

District 1 –Tim Daniel – No report.

District 2 –Tim Guy thanked Public Works for the maintenance of roads in District 2.

District 3 – Ken Pullin – No report.

District 4 – James Jenkins noted that the Tax Assessors’ meeting had been scheduled for Tuesday, November 11, 2025. He stated that he and another citizen attended at the scheduled time, only to learn that the meeting had been rescheduled due to the holiday. He further noted that the County website continued to list the Tax Assessors’ meeting on the original date after the rescheduling had occurred.

Commissioner Jenkins also expressed interest in having other Boards—specifically the Planning and Zoning Board and the Board of Tax Assessors—livestream their meetings on YouTube. County Manager Rob Morton stated that implementing livestreaming for additional Boards would require a policy decision. He explained that the County Clerk currently handles livestreaming for the Board of Commissioners, and that each Board would need its own designated, technically capable personnel to manage livestreaming. Commissioner Jenkins observed that the Board of Commissioners should have a backup in place for occasions when the County Clerk is unavailable. CM Morton noted that he currently serves as the backup.

At-Large Chairman Briar Johnson commended Lavetrece Walker, Director of the Senior Citizen Center, for achieving a 100% score on the Health Department inspection for the second consecutive time, noting that this accomplishment is particularly significant given the age of the facility.

Chairman Johnson commended the County Clerk for her dedication. After attending training sessions that ended at 5:00 p.m., she returned to the office and worked until 9:00 p.m. or 10:00 p.m. on several nights to complete her duties, including preparations for the current meeting.

Chairman Johnson proposed a future discussion regarding improvements to the Board’s public communication efforts through social media. He noted that the Board has not effectively disseminated information to the public in the current social-media-driven environment. The Chairman stated that, in his personal experience, when he explains the Board’s actions to constituents, they generally understand the reasoning, even when they disagree; however, the primary issue is a lack of initial information. He further observed that this gap can create a public perception that the Board is being secretive, which is not the Board’s intention. The Chairman requested that Board members consider ways to improve public outreach.

Chairman Johnson noted that, with Veterans Day approaching, although he is not a veteran, he holds strong support for military personnel. He invited all attendees who have served in the military, or who have close relatives who have served, to stand and be recognized for their service and sacrifice.

e. County Attorney Report to Commissioners

County Attorney Rob Morton had not report.

**8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a. **SUP-25-06** Talking Rock Cabin at Prayer Mountain, LLC Owner and Fountian Grove Springs, LLC Applicant requests a special use permit to allow for the sale of bulk spring water and the shipping and transportation of the spring water from property located on the east side of US Highway 19 South, North of Sheppard Road, Meansville GA, 30256. The subject properties are further identified as Parcel IDs 084 047B and 084 047A and is in Land Lots 174, 175, 177, 178, 179, 180 and 207 of the 8th District. The property consists of 759.60+/- acres. Commission District 3, Commissioner Ken Pullin.

Planning and Zoning Director Jeremy Gilbert addressed the Board stating the Planning and Zoning Board presented its recommendation, a Public Hearing was held on October 28, 2025, and the final decision was postponed to allow for further review and for an absent Commissioner to be present. The Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval with five conditions: 1) A business license shall be required for the proposed use and renewed annually if the business is still in operation. The applicant shall supply a copy of all inspections and permits from the Department of Agriculture each year with the business license application, 2) Paved access shall be provided from US Highway 19 to the proposed facility for the truck loading area for the filling of water. Access shall meet the standards of the Pike County UDC and must go through the development permit process, 3) Incorporating Monitoring and Fluctuating Reports as indicated by the applicant will be provided to the county on a monthly basis, 4) Prior to the Issuance of any Development or Building Permit, a Hydrologic or Geological study shall be prepared by the applicants and reviewed by the Flint River Keepers. A report shall be given to the Pike County Water and Sewerage Authority from the two entities: the applicant and the Flint River Keepers for review. The Pike County Water and Sewerage Authority will provide

an opinion to the Pike County Planning and Development office for review, 5) No county road will be used to access the commercial part of the property. Ingress/egress will be from US Highway 19 only.

Chairman Johnson noted that if the Board considers approving the Special Use, he would like to add an additional condition that operations shall be conducted on the property between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

Commissioner Pullin stated before a decision was made that he wanted to read a statement. The very nature of an application for a special use permit indicates that the proposed use is not a permitted use in the zoning district where the proposed use is located or will take place. In this case, the bulk sale of spring water is not a permitted use. Therefore, an application for a special use permit was required to even consider the possible bulk sale of water. The Board received a lot of information related to the proposed bulk sale of spring water that will be from water source(s) on the subject property. There is much concern about whether the proposed special use for the bulk sale of spring water will be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties, or to the general neighborhood and whether it will adversely affect the health or safety of Pike County residents. The Board received conflicting information regarding these issues from the applicant versus the opponents. Based on the growth projections for Pike County and the known challenges regarding countywide water services and quality, there is a sufficient basis to find that the proposed bulk sale of spring water at this location could be detrimental to the use and development of adjacent properties, to the general neighborhood, and, that the proposed use could adversely affect the availability of water service and water quality in this southern portion of Pike County. In addition, there is a potential safety hazard related to the proposed ingress and egress of the delivery trucks at the specified location. In short, Commissioner Pullin noted his concerns regarding the proposed use include 1) it could be detrimental to the use and development of adjacent properties, 2) it could adversely affect the health of Pike County citizens due to possible negative affect on water service and quality in Pike County; and, 3) the possible hazard from the vehicular movement, namely the ingress and egress of delivery trucks, to the location. Based on these concerns, I move to deny the application 25-06 for a special use permit for the bulk sale of spring water.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Pullin/Jenkins to deny SUP-25-06, motion carried 4-1, with Chairman Johnson opposed. The motion to deny was based on the following concerns:**

- 1. The proposed use could be detrimental to the use and development of adjacent properties.**
- 2. The proposed use could adversely affect the health of Pike County citizens due to possible negative impacts on water service and quality in Pike County.**
- 3. The potential hazard associated with vehicular movement, specifically the ingress and egress of delivery trucks, to and from the location.**

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Consider one appointment to the Pike County Agribusiness Authority to fill a three-year unexpired term, set to expire December 31, 2027. *Applicant has met the criteria.*

Heather McLendon of Meansville is the applicant. County Manager Rob Morton reported he interviewed Ms. McLendon finding that she has the necessary background and would be a great asset. Ms. McLendon has already spoken with the Agribusiness Authority's Chairman, Rusty Gwyn, about strategic plans related to local farms.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Pullin/Daniel to approve the appointment of Heather McLendon to the Pike County Agribusiness Authority , motion carried 5-0.**

- b. Approve/deny renewal of alcohol license (Pouring – beer, wine and distilled spirits) for Stacy Johnston, J2 Hospitality LLC d/b/a Slices Pizzeria, 421 Plaza Drive, Zebulon, GA. *Applicant has met criteria.*

**Motion/second by Commissioners Jenkins/Daniel to combine agenda items b through h as one motion, motion carried 5-0.**

**Motion/second by Commissioners Jenkins/Daniel to approve agenda items b through h, alcohol license renewals, motion carried 5-0.**

- c. Approve/deny renewal of alcohol license (Pouring – beer, wine, and distilled spirits) for Jeremy Crumbley d/b/a Pedros Zebulon Co., 212 Plaza Drive, Zebulon, GA. *Applicant has met criteria.*

**See combined motion under agenda item b.**

- d. Approve/deny renewal of alcohol license (Retail Sales – beer and wine) for Saifullah Bhamani, Nabiha USA Inc d/b/a The Rock Store, 4131 Hwy 19 South, Meansville, GA. *Applicant has met criteria.*

**See combined motion under agenda item b.**

- e. Approve/deny issuance of alcohol license (Pouring – beer, wine, and distilled spirits) for Tracy Wallace d/b/a Barnstormer's Restaurant and Grill, LLC, 349 Jonathan's Roost Rd, Williamson, GA. *Applicant has met criteria.*

**See combined motion under agenda item b.**

- f. Approve/Deny alcohol license (Retail Sales – beer and wine) for Bimal Patel, Royal 77 LLC dba Zebulon Whistle Stop, 5900 Highway 19 South, Zebulon, GA. *Applicant has met criteria.*

**See combined motion under agenda item b.**

- g. Approve/deny renewal of alcohol license (Retail Sales – beer and/or wine) for Mark McKernan, Grey Wolf Inc d/b/a Hunters Corner, 12471 Highway 18, Williamson, GA. *Applicant has met criteria.*

**See combined motion under agenda item b.**

- h. Approve/deny renewal of alcohol license (Retail Sales – beer) for Naushad Rehmatullah, Zebulon Investment LLC d/b/a Cadies Corner, 10030 Hwy 19 North, Zebulon, GA. *Applicant has met criteria.*

**See combined motion under agenda item b.**

- i. Discussion of Employee Christmas luncheon.

County Manager Rob Morton noted that the Board had previously decided to consolidate all employee appreciation events into a single event, the Christmas luncheon. He proposed a cap of \$20.00 per employee, which is less than half of the current total budget allocated for multiple employee appreciation events. County Manager Morton then requested that the Board select a date for the Christmas luncheon, offering December 18th or December 19th as options.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Pullin/Daniel to approve Friday, December 19, 2025, as the date for the Employee Christmas Luncheon, with an allocation of \$20.00 per employee, motion carried 5-0.**

- j. Discussion of request for Impact Fee refund.

County Manager Rob Morton addressed the Board stating the Board received a demand for a refund and a notice of appeal dated October 8, 2025. The impact fee in question was paid on September 8, 2025. based on the eligibility criteria set forth in the County’s Ordinance Section 157.09 Refunds of the Impact Fee Ordinance. The ordinance states Eligibility for a Refund – Upon the request of a feepayor regarding a property on which a development impact fee has been paid, the development impact fee shall be refunded if: Capacity is available in the Public Facilities for which the fee was collected but service is permanently denied; or the development impact fee has not been encumbered or construction has not been commenced within 6 years after the date the fee was collected. CM Morton stated that the request for a refund does not meet the eligibility criteria for a refund and recommended denial.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Guy/Daniel to deny request for Impact Fee refund, motion carried 4-1, with Commissioner Pullin abstaining due to personal friendship with applicant.**

- k. Discussion of declaring 2007 Sterling Dump Truck surplus.

County Manager Rob Morton stated that the dump truck has 362,000 miles, and the estimated cost to repair the injection pump, fuel injectors, and fuel lines ranges from \$15,000 to \$17,000. CM Morton recommended surplus the 2007 Dump Truck, VIN: 2FZHATDA17AY27320 and selling with other equipment previously declared surplus.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Guy to approve declaring the 2007 Sterling Dump Truck as surplus and authorize to sell with other equipment previously declared surplus, motion carried 5-0.**

- l. Approve/deny the FY 2024-2025 Final Budget Amendments and Resolution.

County Manager Rob Morton stated that the financial administrator, Clint Chastain, has been working with auditors on year-end reconciliations. The resolution is a “cleanup” action to cover any over-expenditures by transferring of expenses allocations remaining/unexpected at the end of the fiscal year. The fiscal year in question ended on June 30, 2025. CM Morton recommended approval.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Guy/Daniel to approve the FY 2024-2025 Final Budget Amendments and Resolution, and to authorize Chairman Johnson to sign related documents, motion carried 5-0.**

- m. Second Reading of Text Amendment to the Code of Ordinance of Pike County, GA, Title XV: Land Usage, Chapter 166, Solar Farm Ordinance.

County Manager Rob Morton noted that a moratorium had previously been enacted to allow time for updating the applicable code. He stated that there have been no substantive changes between the first and second readings of the proposed text amendment. The first reading was presented at the Board of Commissioners meeting on October 28, 2025. County Manager Morton recommended approval of the second reading of the text amendment and authorization for the Chairman to execute all necessary documents.

Chapter 166. (Proposed amendments are in red)

#### **§ 166.05 GENERAL STANDARDS AND RESTRICTIONS**

(C) Buffers/ setbacks: There shall be established a 50-foot wide planted or natural buffer along the entire perimeter (save for necessary access points) of the solar farm property. The County reserves the right to require additional plantings in a buffer deemed to be insufficient in plant material to constitute a proper screen. Ground mounted solar panels shall be setback at least 100 feet from property lines, and inverters shall be setback at least 250 feet from property lines. If field conditions necessitate having inverters closer to property lines than the specified standard, then a variance may be applied for with the **Planning and Zoning Board**. All-other accessory structures related to the solar farm shall be setback at least 50 feet from any property line. **There shall be a 150-foot-wide buffer for all streams and all state buffers for wetlands shall be enforced.**

(K) Reasonable accessibility for emergency services shall be required. An address for the solar farm for ease of location by emergency services shall be required. Fire safety training shall be provided by the owner/operator to Pike County Fire Department annually.

(M) Prior to construction, the Developer will perform baseline water quality testing using industry-standard methods within the site for pollutants reasonably related to construction or operation of a solar energy facility. The baseline testing results shall be provided to the County within sixty (60) days of the commercial operations date, and on one-year intervals thereafter until the fifth anniversary thereof, the Developer shall perform follow-up testing and shall test at five-year intervals thereafter. If testing indicates the presence of pollutants reasonably attributable to the solar facility, the Developer shall coordinate with the appropriate regulatory authorities regarding any necessary remedial actions in accordance with applicable law.

(N) All structures located on the solar farm property shall be located a minimum of 500 feet from any inhabitable structure.

(O) The number of solar farm permits issued within the county shall be limited to one (1) per 20,000 residents, based on the most recent U.S. Census data or official population estimate provided by the state. No new licenses shall be issued if the current number of licenses meets or exceeds the population-based cap. When licenses become available, they shall be awarded through a public lottery system administered by the County Clerk's Office. The County shall review population data every five (5) years to determine if adjustments to the license cap are warranted.

#### **§ 166.06 ABANDONMENT OR CESSATION**

The Official Code of Georgia, Annotated contemplates solar power facility agreements between Grantors (Owners) and Grantees (lessees/tenants) related to solar power facilities. Accordingly, if there is a solar power facility agreement pursuant to OCGA §46-3-67-§46-3-69.L then the decommissioning requirements as set forth in OCGA §46-3-69-§46-3-69.1 shall control. If there is no solar power facility agreement, however, then it is the responsibility of the parcel owner to remove all obsolete or unused systems within 6 months of cessation of operations, exclusive of periods of force majeure (acts of God, storms, etc.). At the discretion of the Zoning Administrator, the owner may apply for a six-month extension of the removal process, if substantially, but not totally, complete. Reusable components are to be recycled whenever feasible. Disposal of all solid and hazardous waste shall be in accordance with all local, state, and federal waste disposal regulations. Proof of any and all disposal of materials shall be provided to Pike County upon completion of removal. Prior to the approval of a solar farm permit, a bond at least equal to the estimated cost of removing the solar power facilities from the landowner's property and restoring the property to the conditions described in Code Section 46-3-69. shall be provided. The amount of the bond shall be determined by an independent third-party professional engineer licensed in this state; pursuant to OCGA §46-3-67-§46-3-69.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Guy to approve the second reading of the Text Amendment to the Code of Ordinances of Pike County, Georgia, Title XV: Land Usage, Chapter 166, Solar Farm Ordinance, motion carried 5-0.**

- n. Approve/deny 2025 Lease and Resolution for a 140-15 Motor Grader through Caterpillar Financial Services. (added per amended agenda)

County Manager Rob Morton requested the Board's approval of the 2025 lease through Caterpillar and the associated resolution for the 140-15 motor grader, which will replace the motor grader for which the Board previously authorized a buyout and subsequent sale by auction at the last meeting. The lease terms consist of 60 monthly payments of \$3,741.47 and a final payment of \$128,900.00, for a total of \$298,201.00. County Manager Morton noted that the lease payments through June 30, 2026, are included in the approved FY 2025/2026 budget.

**Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Pullin to approve the 2025 Lease and Resolution for a 140-15 Motor Grader through Caterpillar Financial Services and to authorize the Chairman and County Manager to sign all related documents, motion carried 5-0.**

**10. PUBLIC COMMENT (Limited to 5 minutes per person) - NONE**

**11. EXECUTIVE SESSION - NONE**

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion/second by Commissioners Guy/Daniel to adjourn at 9:40 a.m., motion carried 5-0.**

---

J. Briar Johnson, Chairman

---

Angela Blount, County Clerk