

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

The Pike County Board of Commissioners held its Regular Monthly Meeting on Tuesday, January 27, 2026 at 6:30 p.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.....Kyle Garner**
- 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 reported that the county received a withdrawal notice for agenda item 9. (f) and requested that the agenda be amended to remove the item. Commissioner Pullin raised concerns regarding ongoing activity at the Harden Road property/Animal Shelter despite a prior commitment to cease operations until a special use permit is approved. A letter was received on October 31, 2025 stating the property owner would cease all activity until a special use permit was approved. Despite this, activity has allegedly continued, affecting neighbors.

Motion/second by Commissioners Guy/Daniel to approve the amended agenda by removing Item (f) under New Business, motion carried 5-0.

- 5. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1(e) (2))**
 - a. Minutes of the January 14, 2026, Regular Monthly Meeting.
 - b. Minutes of the January 14, 2026, Executive Session.

Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Guy to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2026 Regular Monthly Meeting and the minutes of the January 14, 2026 Executive Session, motion carried 5-0.

- 6. **INVITED GUEST - NONE**
- 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. *There are no Department reports as they will be provided during the first Board meeting of February. Revenue/Expenditure Statement and Detail Check Register is included.*

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

- b. County Manager Report
 - Update on County finances for the following funds/accounts:
 - General Fund\$3,671,254.40
 - Fire Dept. Donations.....\$10,608.62
 - Cash Reserve Account.....\$227,672.96
 - Jail Fund\$25,757.74
 - E-911 Fund\$65,818.99
 - DATE Fund\$18,487.76
 - Juvenile Court Fund.....\$14,950.77
 - Residential Impact Fee\$127,458.15
 - Commercial Impact Fees\$12,628.40
 - C.A.I.P FUND\$29,396.23
 - General Obligation SPLOST 2022-2028.....\$1,676,184.54
 - L.M.I.G. Grant (DOT).....\$619,675.74

- c. County Manager Comment
 - County Manager Rob Morton presented an emergency need to replace a wheeled excavator (Gradall) due to frequent and costly repairs totaling nearly \$45,000 on its obsolete Mercedes engine. He reported that the current engine could be repaired at an estimated cost of \$169,131.46, while a new excavator equipped with a Volvo engine is priced at \$604,990.00. County Manager Morton recommended a lease-purchase agreement for five years for the new excavator, with monthly payments of \$10,216.54 to be funded through SPLOST and further recommended selling the existing excavator on GovDeals. He noted that Gradall is the only manufacturer of a highway-speed wheeled excavator, which is essential for rapid storm response, and that no suitable used machines were available. The equipment is considered to provide productivity equivalent to ten workers. Commissioner Guy questioned if alternatives like used equipment were explored. CM Morton responded that a new machine with a warranty was deemed the best option after analysis and that the old equipment could be sold on GovDeals and the proceeds would be applied towards the purchase of the new excavator.

Motion/second by Commissioners Guy/Pullin to approve the lease-purchase option for the acquisition of the Wheeled Excavator (Gradall), motion carried 5-0.

Motion/second by Commissioners Guy/Pullin to approve the sale of the old excavator through GovDeals, motion carried 5-0.

County Manager Rob Morton reported that Development of Pike County will hold a kickoff meeting for Project Gabriel—the proposed Highway 19/County Farm Road/Highway 18 Connector—with the consultant on February 4, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. Because the meeting was rescheduled from its original date, CM Morton noted that he will be unable to attend until closer to noon due to a prior commitment and requested that one or two Commissioners attend the kickoff meeting at the Chamber. Commissioners James Jenkins and Tim Daniel stated they will attend.

CM Morton further reported that the Parks and Recreation GOSP project is moving forward following the Board of Commissioners' approval of the use of Impact Fees at the last meeting. The project kickoff meeting is scheduled for February 5, 2026, with the time to be determined.

CM Morton expressed his appreciation to the following individuals for their work during the recent winter storm: Jim Totten, EMA Director; Chris Goodman and the Public Works Department; and Ken Lalimiere and Craig Hendrix with Building and Grounds. He also thanked Angela Blount and JoAnn Wrye for working during scheduled time off to prepare for the workshop and meeting.

County Manager Rob Morton stated during the workshop that a request had been made for the Board of Commissioners to consider approving a 50-foot right-of-way on Woodcreek Road instead of the standard 60-foot width.

Motion/second by Commissioners Jenkins/Daniel to approve the 50-foot right-of-way on Woodcreek Road, motion carried 5-0.

CM Morton noted that it was confirmed in the workshop that the parking lot between the annex building and the commissioner's office to be moved up on the paving project priority list.

d. Commissioner Reports

District 1 – Commissioner Daniel – No report.

District 2 – Commissioner Guy – No report.

District 3 – Commissioner Pullin – No report.

District 4 - Commissioner Jenkins – No report.

At Large Chairman Briar Johnson thanked County Manager Rob Morton and staff for their work during the recent winter storm and for keeping everyone informed. He also expressed his appreciation to Commissioner Tim Daniel for presiding over the last Board of Commissioners' meeting during his absence due to illness.

Chairman Johnson announced that he will host a "Coffee with the Chairman" event at 1828 Coffee on February 24, 2026, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., inviting the public to attend, receive county updates, and ask questions.

e. County Attorney Report to Commissioners

County Attorney Rob Morton noted that a pending worker's compensation claim has been settled by the insurance carrier for \$95,000.00. The county has received word of the settlement but has not yet seen the final documentation.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE

9. NEW BUSINESS

a. Declare identified Extension Office property as surplus and authorize disposal.

County Manager Morton stated that the items remaining in the Extension Offices at 70 Gwyn Street need to be addressed in connection with the sale of the property to the First Baptist Church. CM Morton requested approval to declare the listed items as surplus and to authorize their disposal. The property includes 6 desks, 25 chairs, 5 tables, and 7 filing cabinets, with an estimated total value of no more than \$200.00, which would be offset by the cost of disposal. It is intended that the First Baptist Church will dispose of any listed items that it cannot use.

Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Pullin to approve declaring the identified Extension Office property located at 70 Gwyn Street as surplus and to authorize its disposal, motion carried 5-0.

b. Consideration of a revised resolution to include the Board of Education qualifying fees for 2026 County Election.

County Manager Rob Morton stated the original resolution for qualifying fees, approved earlier in the month, did not include information from the Board of Education. The county received the necessary information from the Board of Education since the last meeting and recommended approval of the revised resolution, which includes the qualifying fees previously set for the Board of Commissioners as well as the qualifying fees for the Board of Education.

Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Guy to approve the revised resolution to include the Board of Education qualifying fees for the 2026 County Election, motion carried 5-0.

c. Discussion on whether to send out Request for Proposals for health insurance services.

County Manager Rob Morton stated that, as previously discussed, the county did not issue bids last year for its health benefits because the Board authorized the current broker/consultant, Marsh-McLennan (formerly McGriff and BB&T), to negotiate with existing providers. He noted that the renewal period for health benefits is approaching with negotiations typically starting in February-March, and if the Board wishes to issue RFPs for these services, the process will need to begin as soon

as possible. Last year, the broker negotiated a renewal increase in the “low teens,” down from initial estimates in the 20% range. There have been questions during the past year about the current provider’s implementation of software systems. The county has used MSI in the past. CM Morton replied no, the county does not have a standard policy for how often to issue RFPs; it is a case-by-case decision. Other providers have contacted the county, and at least three presentations have been submitted from various vendors. Due to significant cost of healthcare services, the Board determined there was no downside to seeking competitive proposals.

Motion/second by Commissioners Pullin/Guy to approve sending out Request for Proposals (RFPs) for county health insurance services, motion carried 5-0.

- d. Discussion of annexation notices received by the City of Zebulon.

County Manager Rob Morton stated that the Formal Notices of Annexation received on January 23rd were forwarded to the Board in a separate email and had also been referenced in correspondence last week. He noted that the County has until February 22, 2026, to provide the City of Zebulon with any written objections to the proposed annexations and the associated proposed zoning classifications. CM Morton reported that he has reviewed the notices and discussed the proposed annexations with Jeremy. Based on the information provided, staff does not identify any reason to object to the annexations, particularly given that the properties are seeking to connect to the City of Zebulon’s sewer system. City of Zebulon intends to annex two areas: a 2.29-acre parcel at Highway 19 and Old Zebulon Road and a total of 8.92 acres across three parcels on Highway 19. The city intends to zone both areas as Highway Commercial.

Commissioner Pullin raised concern that new developments that are annexed in the city do not pay county impact fees which affect the county’s school system and parks. Commissioner Pullin suggested that an agreement with the city regarding impact fees should be a condition for not objecting to future annexations. CM Morton stated he can meet with the new City Administrator and Mayor to discuss the impact fee issue in relation to annexations and report back at the February meeting.

Chairman Briar Johnson noted that four properties included in the agenda packet total more than a hundred acres in the proposed annexation.

No motion was entertained. The Board reached a consensus to allow the County Manager to meet with the City of Zebulon Administrator and the Mayor regarding the annexation.

- e. Discussion of authorizing study of Griffin Judicial Circuit.

County Manager Rob Morton reported that he received an email correspondence earlier in the week regarding authorization of a study of the Griffin Judicial Circuit and the potential separation of Fayette County from the Circuit. He stated that he also received a call from Representative Beth Camp on the 22nd to discuss the matter. Representative Camp has not taken a formal position and noted that this issue has been reviewed approximately every five years.

CM Morton stated that, based on their discussions, there is no anticipated cost to Pike County for the study. Given the absence of any expected financial impact, he sees no reason to oppose the request. CM Morton requested the Board’s approval for him to send an email to Representative Camp expressing support for the study, noting that a formal resolution is not required.

Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Guy to approve authorizing the study of the Griffin Judicial Circuit, motion carried 5-0.

- f. **Applicant Request to Postpone PUBLIC HEARING:** To receive public input regarding **SUP-25-07** Leann Connell Owner and Applicant requests a special use permit to allow the operation of a dog rescue facility to be located on property at 661 Harden Road, Zebulon, GA 30295. The subject property is identified as Parcel ID 090 012B and is in Land Lots 99 of the 8th District. The property consists of 15+/- acres. Commission District 3, Commissioner Ken Pullin.

The agenda was amended to remove this Item.

- g. **PUBLIC HEARING:** To receive public input regarding **SUP-25-08** Tyler J. Waller Owner and Applicant requests a special use permit to allow for outside storage in the US Highway 19 Overlay for property located at 14911 US Highway 19 Griffin, GA 30224. The subject property is further identified as Parcel ID 074 086 and is in Land Lot 104 of the 2nd District. The property consists of .094+/- acres. Commission District 4, Commissioner James Jenkins.

Planning and Development Director, Jeremy Gilbert, stated the application before them is a request for a special use permit to allow outside storage within the Highway 19 overlay district. The applicant initially planned a two-phase development, which would have required more significant temporary outside storage. The first phase would consist of grading the site, installing a commercial driveway, detention pond and gravel parking and fenced in area. The second phase would include the building of a 3,000 sq. ft. building and paving the parking area and landscaping the site. After discussions, the applicant may consolidate into a single phase, which would minimize the need for outside storage. The site is in the overlay and will be required to go through the overlay review prior to any development. The site has recently been cleared off and an old mobile home removed. According to the applicant they will not use the site for parking or other commercial activities until after the zoning and special use permits have been heard and approved. The applicant has already submitted an application for the overlay review process. Staff and the Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval with one condition: 1. All outdoor storage shall be screened and not visible from the public right-of-way. The screening shall be either a wooden privacy fence or landscaping that completely screens the storage at time of planting.

County Manager Rob Morton suggested consolidating the public hearings for Items g. (SUP-25-08) and h. (REZ-25-13), as they related to the same property and the special use permit is contingent on the rezoning. This approach was previously recommended by the Planning and Zoning Board.

Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Guy to approve consolidating Agenda Items (g) and (h) under New Business for the Public Hearing, motion carried 5-0.

Public Comments

In Favor:

- Steve Reeves

In Opposition:

No one came forth.

Commissioner Pullin questioned the requirement for a temporary fence for outside storage, given the applicant's intent to build in a single phase. Jeremy Gilbert explained that the condition was recommended by the Planning Board to ensure screening in case the two-phase plan proceeded, preventing unscreened materials from being visible along the Highway 19 corridor. The condition allows for either a fence or landscaping to provide screening. Chairman Johnson inquired about building material requirements within the overlay district. Jeremy Gilbert confirmed the overlay review will ensure compliance. The applicant plans to use a brick skirt with hardy board and potentially board batten siding, which meets district requirements that restrict materials like plan metal or wood. Chairman Johnson asked about the timeframe between phases. Jeremy Gilbert confirmed the applicant's desire to do both phases at once, but the condition was kept as a precaution.

Motion/second by Commissioners Jenkins/Daniel to approve SUP-25-08 with one condition, motion carried 5-0. Condition is as follows:

- 1) All outdoor storage shall be screened and not visible from the public right-of-way. The screening shall be either a wooden privacy fence or landscaping that completely screens the storage at time of planting.**
- h. **PUBLIC HEARING:** To receive public input regarding **REZ-25-13** Tyler J. Waller Owner and Applicant request a rezoning from AR (Residential Agricultural) to C-3 (Heavy Commercial) for property located 14911 US Highway 19 Griffin, GA 30224. The subject property is further identified as Parcel ID 074 086 and is in Land Lot 104 of the 2nd District. The property consists of .094+/- acres. The request is to rezone the lot commercial for a shop and office for a well company. Commission District 4, Commissioner James Jenkins.

Planning and Development Director, Jeremy Gilbert, stated the two applications are for a single 0.94-acre property located at 14911 U. S. Highway 19, identified as Parcel ID 074-086. The agenda item before them is a request to rezone the property from A-R (Agricultural-Residential) to C-3 (Heavy Commercial) to construct a 3,000 sq ft office/shop building for Waller and Sons Well Company. This rezoning is supported by the Future Land Use Map, which designates the area as a commercial character area and an arterial overlay corridor. Planning Staff and the Planning and Zoning Board both recommended approval with three conditions: 1. An application for an Overlay Review shall be required in accordance with Article 16 of the Pike County Unified Development Code, 2. Buffers must be established in accordance with Article 26 of the Pike County Unified Development Code, and 3. Outdoor storage shall have an approved Special Use Permit prior to any outdoor storage is kept on the property.

Public Hearing combined with Agenda Item g.

Motion/second by Commissioners Jenkins/Daniel to approve REZ-25-13 with three conditions, motion carried 5-0. Conditions are as follows:

- 1) An application for an Overlay Review shall be required in accordance with Article 16 of the Pike County Unified Development Code.**
- 2) Buffers must be established in accordance with Article 26 of the Pike County Unified Development Code.**
- 3) Outdoor storage shall have an approved Special Use Permit prior to any outdoor storage is kept on the property.**

10. PUBLIC COMMENT (Limited to 5 minutes per person)

- a. David Allen to address the Board regarding Tax Assessments.

David Allen expressed that he hoped that new appointments to the Tax Assessors Board would address ongoing issues of erroneous property assessments. Mr. Allen spoke on recurring errors, from the Tax Assessor's Department, citing examples from past Board of Commissioners' minutes where refunds were issued for incorrect assessments. Mr. Allen questioned how the department, which states it does not do interior inspections, obtains erroneous data, suggesting it stems from "laziness, incompetence, or corruption," and requested the Board of Commissioners to address the issue.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. County Manager Rob Morton request Executive Session for consultation with the county attorney, or other legal counsel, to discuss pending or potential litigation, settlement, claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions brought or to be brought by or against the county or any officer or employee or in which the county or any officer or employee may be directly involved as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(1), germane to pending or potential litigation.

Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Guy to adjourn Regular Session and enter into Executive Session at 7:32 p.m., motion carried 5-0.

CLOSED MEETING AFFIDAVIT
[A copy of the affidavit must be filed with the minutes of the meeting]

STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF PIKE

AFFIDAVIT OF PIKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Members of the Pike County Board of Commissioners, being duly sworn, state under oath that the following is true and accurate to the best of his/her knowledge and belief:

1.

The Pike County Board of Commissioners met in a duly advertised meeting on 1-27-2026.

2.

During such meeting, the Board voted to go into closed session.

3.

The executive session was called to order at 7:32 p.m.

4.

The subject matter of the closed portion of the meeting was devoted to the following matter(s) within the exceptions provided in the open meetings law:

Yes Consultation with the county attorney, or other legal counsel, to discuss pending or potential litigation, settlement, claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions brought or to be brought by or against the county or any officer or employee or in which the county or any officer or employee may be directly involved as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(1);

No Discussion of tax matters made confidential by state law as provided by O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(2) and _____ *insert the citation to the legal authority making the tax matter confidential*);

No Discussion of the future acquisition of real estate as provided by O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(4);

No Discussion or deliberation on the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or employee or interviewing applicants for the position of the executive head of an agency, as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(2);

No Other – Germane to authorizing negotiations to purchase, dispose of or lease property.

Pike County Board of Commissioners:

J. Briar Johnson, Chairman	(L.S.)
Tim Daniel, Commissioner	(L.S.)
Tim Guy, Commissioner	(L.S.)
Ken Pullin, Commissioner	(L.S.)
James Jenkins, Commissioner	(L.S.)

This the 27th day of January 2026.

Sworn to and subscribed
Before me this 27th day of January 2026.

Robert L. Morton
Morton & Morton Associates
County Attorney and Notary Public

My commission expires: August 10, 2026.

Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Pullin to adjourn Executive Session and enter into Regular Session at 7:53 p.m., motion carried 5-0.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion/second by Commissioners Pullin/Guy to adjourn at 7:54 p.m., motion carried 5-0.

J. Briar Johnson, Chairman

Angela Blount, County Clerk