

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

The Pike County Board of Commissioners held its Regular Monthly Meeting on Tuesday, February 24, 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))**

Commissioner Ken Pullin requested an amendment to the agenda, proposing that item (e) under New Business be moved to be heard after item (a) under New Business, with all subsequent items adjusted accordingly.

Motion/second by Commissioners Pullin/Guy to approve the amended agenda by moving item (e) under New Business to be heard after item (a) 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 February 11, 2026, Regular Monthly Meeting.

Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Guy to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2026 Regular Monthly Meeting, 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 March. 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	\$3,174,935.27
Fire Dept. Donations.....	\$10,709.57
Cash Reserve Account.....	\$322,327.49
Jail Fund	\$27,320.40
E-911 Fund	\$148,644.74
DATE Fund	\$17,807.65
Juvenile Court Fund.....	\$15,251.43
Residential Impact Fee	\$174,901.24
Commercial Impact Fees	\$14,195.39
C.A.I.P FUND	\$29,399.24
General Obligation SPLOST 2022-2028.....	\$1,091,055.77
L.M.I.G. Grant (DOT).....	\$572,513.99

c. County Manager Comment

County Manager Rob Morton reported that Fiscal Year 2026–2027 budget proposals have been received from most departments, with a few still outstanding. Once all submissions are received, staff will begin entering the data into the budgeting system, after which departmental budget meetings will commence in March. The draft budget is scheduled to be presented to the Board of Commissioners at the end of April.

County Manager Morton noted that he met with Department Directors, Authorities, and Constitutional Officers on Monday morning and will provide the Board with a separate written update within the next week summarizing key items discussed.

He further reported that a virtual conference is scheduled for Wednesday, February 25, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. to discuss county property and the master plan with the consultant.

County Manager Morton expressed condolences to the family of Bobby Blount, who served as Chairman of the Board of Commissioners from 2002 to 2004.

d. Commissioner Reports

District 1 – Commissioner Daniel – No report.

District 2 – Commissioner Guy – No report.

District 3 – Commissioner Pullin stated that he has not received an update regarding the Animal Shelter on Harden Road, which is currently in code violation. Commissioner Pullin also noted that several codes within the Unified Development Code require review and potential amendments.

County Manager Morton responded that, regarding the Animal Shelter, the county has not received a new application. Code Enforcement can investigate operations and issue citations as appropriate. There should be no shelter operations until a permit is issued. County Manager Morton further stated that the Planning and Zoning Board should conduct periodic reviews of proposed code changes and provide a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners. Changes are processed as text amendments.

District 4 - Commissioner Jenkins noted the concerns raised in the Town Hall portion of the meeting, of the ongoing issues in the Hutchinson Farms subdivision have persisted for some time and need to be reviewed and addressed by the county.

At Large Chairman Briar Johnson reported that he held a “Coffee with the Chairman” event at 1828 Coffee today from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. He noted that attendees asked many thoughtful questions and stated his intention to hold the event on a monthly basis.

Chairman Johnson also encouraged everyone to review the monthly department reports available online. They have a lot of good information about what is going on in the county.

e. County Attorney Report to Commissioners

County Manger/County Attorney Rob Morton reported that answers and defenses have been timely filed in the *Talking Rock Cabin/Fountain Springs* litigation (February 6) as well as in the *David Hughes* litigation (February 16). Attorney Morton further stated that a motion to Dismiss and Brief in Support, has been filed on behalf of the Board of Assessors concerning a Petition for Review filed by a citizen challenging the Board of Equalization’s decision to deny his tax appeal. The Court has scheduled the matter for a hearing on the March 16–17 calendar.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE

9. NEW BUSINESS

a. Consider Tax Refund application from William and Deborah Gregory in the amount of \$2,235.79.

Chief Appraiser Greg Hobbs addressed the Board and reported that the tax refund application submitted by William and Deborah Gregory, in the amount of \$2,235.79, concerns property located in Mill Race with a home constructed in 2022. He explained that the refund is due to an overpayment resulting from an incorrect square footage assessment. The residence is a two-story home, and the second-floor square footage had been inaccurately calculated.

Motion/second by Commissioners Pullin/Daniel to approve the refund in the amount of \$2,235.79, motion carried 5-0.

b. City of Zebulon Annexation – Parcel # 066 032 (5.807 acres).

County Manager Rob Morton stated that the Board had been provided with the Notice of Annexation and Zoning from the City of Zebulon concerning approximately 5.807 acres. He explained that this acreage is part of a larger parcel, most of which already lies within the city limits. The property, located on Williamson–Zebulon Road, is proposed for annexation to support the expansion of the Staxi company. The Board of Commissioners did not raise an objection to the annexation.

Discussion only, no motion entertained.

c. Discussion of the Health Benefits RFPs.

The County received five valid proposals for health benefits services from **MSI, Alliant, Mark III, Marsh McLennan, and Epic Insurance**. County Manager Morton requested that the Board entertain a motion to formally receive the submitted proposals for internal review. He further noted that the topic will be placed on a future agenda for the Board’s consideration.

Note for the record that none of the proposals were opened during the meeting.

Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Guy to receive the submitted Health Benefits Request for Proposals (RFPs) and to authorize the County Manager to review and evaluate the proposals, with a recommendation to be brought back before the Board for consideration, motion carried 5-0.

d. Review the current status of the FY 25/26 budget.

Finance Administrator Clint Chastain addressed the Board regarding the status of the Fiscal Year 2025–2026 budget. He reported an estimated budget shortfall of approximately \$500,000 to \$600,000 for the current fiscal year. The shortfall is attributed in part to lower-than-projected property tax revenues and several unbudgeted expenses, partially offset by conservative budgeting practices and asset sales.

Chastain explained that the County had anticipated \$10.6 million in revenues; however, only \$9.2 million has been recognized due to the delay in the reassessment of commercial properties, which had been expected to increase revenue. He noted that adopting the rollback rate rather than increasing taxes placed the County in a “tight spot.”

He further reported that approximately \$200,000 in unbudgeted general funds was required as the County’s match for the CDBG project on Tanyard Road, and that corrective management actions at the landfill, mandated by the State, created additional unanticipated expenses.

Chastain stated that expenditures are projected to exceed revenues for the fiscal year. Departments have tightened their budgets, and Public Works has postponed certain projects to maintain financial stability. He noted that the County is expected to break even from an audit standpoint.

He also advised the Board that LMIG funding, which historically supported improvements to 23–25 roads annually, will be largely committed to debt service for those road projects over the next decade, limiting future flexibility.

Chastain highlighted additional constraints, including the exhaustion of asset-sale opportunities and approaching ARPA deadlines, with expenditures required to be obligated by December 31, 2025, and fully spent by December 31, 2026. Reduced budget flexibility is anticipated in future years.

He reported that the commercial property reassessment began in January and is nearing completion, which may improve revenues in the next fiscal year. He also noted that the State’s notice process has been delayed since COVID-19, and consulting costs were incurred after the budget was adopted.

Commissioner Jenkins expressed his appreciation to Finance Administrator Clint Chastain for his work and commended him for his service to Pike County. Commissioner Jenkins stated that Mr. Chastain is an exemplary employee in the Finance Administration role and noted that, in his view, the County has not had a better individual serving in that position.

Discussion only, no motion entertained.

- e. **PUBLIC HEARING:** To receive public input regarding **REZ-26-01** Jason Betsill Owner, and applicant request a rezoning from AR (Residential Agricultural) to RR (Rural Residential) for property located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Campground Road and Highway 18, Zebulon, GA 30295. The property consists of 182.751+/- acres in Land lots 123 & 124 of the 8th District, further identified as parcel ID 092 017. The request is to rezone the property for the purpose of constructing a 30-lot single-family subdivision with a minimum lot size of 5 acres. Commission District 3, Commissioner Ken Pullin.

Planning and Development Director Jeremy Gilbert addressed the Board and stated that the application before them is a request to rezone the subject property from A-R (Agricultural-Residential) to RR (Rural Residential) for the development of a 30-lot single-family residential subdivision, along with a 2-acre outparcel intended for potential governmental use. The applicant is proposing a minimum lot size of 5 acres, which exceeds the 3-acre minimum permitted under the RR zoning district.

According to the conceptual plan submitted, the applicant will install new internal streets and will be required to pave Campground Road in accordance with Unified Development Code requirements. The property proposed for rezoning is currently vacant. The parcel is a timber tract that has recently been harvested and replanted.

Staff recommended approval of the rezoning request. The Planning and Zoning Board heard the request on February 12, 2026, and recommended denial. Gilbert noted that this request concerns rezoning only, not subdivision plat approval.

Commissioner Pullins asked why the Planning and Zoning Board recommended denial. Gilbert responded that the Board cited concerns related to health, safety, and general welfare. He added that the Character Area Plan supports RR zoning for this location.

Public Comments

In Favor:

No one came forth.

In Opposition:

- Kayla McDermitt
- Fisher Law
- Eddie Lewis
- David Gish
- Ed English

Residents expressed concerns regarding increased traffic, loss of privacy, potential impacts on well water, strain on public services (including schools, recreation, and EMS), and the deterioration of the rural environment. Multiple speakers highlighted safety issues at the intersection of Campground Road and Highway 18, citing a severe skew angle and limited sight distance.

Gilbert noted that under existing A-R zoning, up to five-lot subdivisions may be approved administratively; subdivisions of more than five lots require preliminary plat approval by the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners. He further stated that intersection issues should be addressed regardless of subdivision activity. Access to State Route 18 is controlled by the Georgia Department of Transportation, and the County cannot independently require or deny access.

Gilbert also noted that the current ordinance does not require a residential-to-residential buffer, but such a buffer could be imposed as a condition if the rezoning were approved. The Board reiterated that they were not approving a subdivision plat, only considering the rezoning request.

Motion/second by Commissioners Pullin/Jenkins to deny REZ-26-01 based on public health, safety and welfare, motion carried 5-0.

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

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. County Manager Rob Morton requests an Executive Session for 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), germane to personnel.

Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Pullin to adjourn Regular Session and enter into Executive Session at 7:33 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 2-24-2026.

2.

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

3.

The executive session was called to order at 7:33 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:

No 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);

Yes 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 24th day of February 2026.

Sworn to and subscribed
Before me this 24th day of February 2026.

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

My commission expires: August 10, 2026.

Motion/second by Commissioners Daniel/Guy to adjourn Executive Session and enter into Regular Session at 7:54 p.m., motion carried 5-0.

12. ADJOURNMENT

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

J. Briar Johnson, Chairman

Angela Blount, County Clerk