

Minutes of Public Hearing
Elbert County Board of Commissioners
January 12, 2026

1. Discussion and consideration of a request by Josefina Rodriguez to rezone two (2) acres from RR (Rural Residential) to R1 (Single Family Residential) at 2762 Zero Road, Bowman, Ga. This request is to allow for the parcel to be split and an additional home placed on it. Map and parcel 011 012L. Planning and Zoning recommended approval by a 6-0 vote. There were no public comments.
2. Discussion and consideration of a request by Raul Badillo Ponce to rezone 4.99 acres from A (Agricultural) to R1 (Single Family Residential) at 2262 Raymond Anderson Rd., Elberton, GA. This request is to allow for the property to be split and a new home to be built on the new tract. Map and parcel 039 089. Planning and Zoning recommended approval by a 6-0 vote. There were no public comments.

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Elbert County Board of Commissioners
Monday, January 12, 2026

1. Chairman Lee Vaughn called the meeting to order. Present were Commissioner David Hunt, Commissioner Casey Freeman, Commissioner Chris Alexander, Commissioner Mike Scoggins, Commissioner Freddie Jones, County Administrator Allen Hulme, CFO Macie Witcher, County Attorney Bill Daughtry, County Clerk Tamara Butler and media.
2. After the pledge to the United States flag the invocation was given by Mr. Daughtry.
3. **Adoption of the Agenda.** Chairman Vaughn asked for a motion to add 13a) Discussion and consideration to approve a change to the language for the hospital referendum ballot. Commissioner Freeman made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

4. **Adoption of the Minutes of December 8, 2025.** Commissioner Scoggins made a motion to approve the minutes of December 8, 2025. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
5. **Public Comments on Agenda Items.** There were no public comments.
6. **Discussion and consideration of a request by Josefina Rodriguez to rezone two (2) acres from RR (Rural Residential) to R1 (Single Family Residential) at 2762 Zero Road, Bowman, Ga.** This request is to allow for the parcel to be split and an additional home placed on it. Map and parcel 011 012L. Planning and Zoning recommended approval by a 6-0 vote. Commissioner Scoggins made a motion to approve this rezone request. Commissioner Hunt seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
7. **Discussion and consideration of a request by Raul Badillo Ponce to rezone 4.99 acres from A (Agricultural) to R1 (Single Family Residential) at 2262 Raymond Anderson Rd., Elberton, GA.** This request is to allow for the property to be split and a new home to be built on the new tract. Map and parcel 039 089. Planning and Zoning recommended approval by a 6-0 vote. Commissioner Alexander made a motion to approve this rezone request. Commissioner Scoggins seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
8. **Discussion and consideration of the reappointment of Steve Banks to the Development Authority Board.** Commissioner Freeman made a motion to approve Mr. Steve Banks reappointment. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
9. **Discussion and consideration of a Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) for 2026.** Mr. Hulme stated we had contacted the local banks for bids. Bids were received from Northeast Georgia Bank and Pinnacle Bank. The interest rates are almost the same. His recommendation is to accept the bid from Pinnacle Bank at a 4% interest rate and no loan fee and to take advantage of the Commercial Sweep Service they offer. The maturity date will be set at December 31, 2026. Commissioner Freeman made a motion to approve the bid from Pinnacle Bank. Commissioner Hunt seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
10. **Discussion and consideration to move the airport checking account from Regions Bank to Pinnacle Bank.** Mr. Hulme stated Pinnacle Bank requires this change to be documented in the minutes and to also have a signer on the account, which will be Randall Haralson, and also Allen Hulme and Macie Witcher. Commissioner Alexander made a motion to approve. Commissioner Hunt seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

11. **Discussion and consideration of a rental agreement with Top Gun Sports USA for tournaments held at McWilliams Park.** Mr. Hulme stated the rental agreement is for four (4) travel ball tournaments to be held at McWilliams Park. The county will collect the rental fees of \$200 per field per day. Little League will collect the money for concessions. Mr. Daughtry stated what we have now is a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) but, before their first event, we will have an actual lease agreement that covers everything. Commissioner Freeman made a motion to approve the rental agreement. Commissioner Scoggins seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
12. **Discussion and consideration of a Resolution Setting Qualifying Fees for the 2026 Election and Authorizing Publication of Same.** The Qualifying fees are as follows:

Office	Qualifying Fee
Chairman, Board of Commissioners	\$219.40
Board of Commissioners, District 2	\$110.89
Board of Commissioners, District 4	\$110.89
Board of Commissioners, District 5	\$110.89
Board of Education, District 2	\$88.00
Board of Education, District 3	\$88.00
Board of Education, District 5	\$88.00

Commissioner Freeman made a motion to approve the 2026 Qualifying fees. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

13. **Mr. Kenneth Downer to address the board regarding North Rainbow Drive.** Mr. Downer discussed issues with road conditions. Also discussed the waterline being on the county right-of-way. He stated it is his understanding that the county can't maintain the road because it is considered a private road. He said that he doesn't want the road beautified, but to maintain the road at the end of where the pavement ends to Greater Heights Church. Chairman Vaughn stated that we cannot put any county equipment on a private road. Mr. Hulme said that he will get with someone at the city to get an answer about the waterline.
- 13a) **Discussion and consideration of a Resolution Requesting Georgia Representative Rob Leverette to introduce in the General Assembly a bill to authorize a non-binding referendum on the question of whether Elbert County shall enter into an agreement with the Hospital Authority d/b/a Elbert Memorial Hospital to provide for payments toward uncompensated patient care to be funded by the levy of additional ad valorem tax of 1 mil for a period of 5 years.** Mr. Daughtry stated he streamlined the ballot from what was originally written.

Commissioner Alexander made a motion to not approve either ballot and to rescind last month's vote and not have a referendum. Commissioner Freeman seconded the motion. Chairman Vaughn asked if there was a reason why Commissioner Alexander made that motion and he replied there are several reasons but he doesn't think he needs to elaborate. Chairman Vaughn asked if he didn't want the public to vote on it and he replied "not at this time". Commissioner Freeman stated it was a little premature to call for a vote; from what he understands from the meetings and the reports from the hospital; they are not in dire straights as they were in 2019. He understands they have challenges as we all do, but they need to work thru them. Commissioner Alexander said he thinks there are other ways the hospital can survive without putting the burden on the taxpayers. The motion by Commissioner Alexander to not put this on a referendum passed by a 5-0 vote.

14. **Finance Report.** Ms. Witcher reported the General Fund is operating under budget thru December. SPLOST has a cash balance of 1.9 million and TSPLOST has a cash balance of 3 million and Hotel/Motel tax fund has a balance of \$22,000 for local projects. She said that looking back as far as the accounting software would allow, the data showed that we have had to borrow from a TAN since 2007, but 2025 was the first year we have not had to borrow, largely in part because of the Insurance Premium tax money that we received in October.
15. **Adjournment.** Commissioner Scoggins made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Commissioner Alexander. The motion passed unanimously.