

Minutes of Public Hearing
Elbert County Board of Commissioners
November 10, 2025

- 1) Discussion and consideration of a request by Wendy Berg to rezone from RR (Rural Residential) to A (Agricultural) at 3536 King Hall Mill Road, Bowman, GA. Map and parcel 003 009B and 003 009C. This request is to allow for this to be joined with an adjoining parcel. Planning and Zoning recommended approval by a 7-0 vote. There were no public comments.
- 2) Discussion and consideration of a request by Donnie Hudson to rezone from RR (Rural Residential) to R1 (Single Family Residential) at 2399 Hudson Road, Elberton, GA. Map and parcel 055 025A. This request is to allow for the parcel to be split. Planning and Zoning recommended approval by a 7-0 vote. There were no public comments.

Minutes
Elbert County Board of Commissioners
Monday, November 10, 2025 5:30 PM

- 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 Clerk Tamara Butler and media. County Attorney Bill Daughtry was absent
- 2) After the pledge to the United States flag the invocation was given by Commissioner Jones.
- 3) Adoption of the Agenda. Commissioner Freeman made a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
- 4) Adoption of the Minutes of October 14, 2025. Commissioner Alexander made a motion to adopt the minutes of October 14, 2025. Commissioner Hunt seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
- 5) Public Comments. Ms. Donna Wood stated she lives in the Goss community and some neighbors shoot and have target practice, but not at all hours of the day and night and not loud explosives. She went on to say that the state statute does have an exception for what is considered as forbidden under our noise ordinance. She encouraged the Commissioners to listen to what Ms. Beeson has to say regarding loud, unreasonable noise.
- 6) Discussion and consideration of a request by Wendy Berg to rezone from RR (Rural Residential) to A (Agricultural) at 3536 King Hall Mill Road, Bowman, GA. Map and parcel 003 009B and 003 009C. This request is to allow for this to be joined with an adjoining parcel. Planning and Zoning recommended approval by a 7-0 vote. Commissioner Scoggins made a motion to approve this rezone request. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
- 7) Discussion and consideration of a request by Donnie Hudson to rezone from RR (Rural Residential) to R1 (Single Family Residential) at 2399 Hudson Road, Elberton, GA. Map and parcel 055 025A. This request is to allow for the parcel to be split. Planning and Zoning recommended approval by a 7-0 vote. Commissioner Freeman made a motion to approve this rezone request. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
- 8) Ms. Margie Beeson to address the Board regarding loud, unnecessary and unreasonable noise. Ms. Beeson discussed HB614. She stated she is not trying to take away the right to fire arms, but is complaining of the unnecessary firing of guns at all times of the day and night. She read from Georgia Code 16-11-173, which in part allows for counties and cities to reasonably limit or prohibit the discharge of firearms within their boundaries. She also asked that we adopt Georgia HB614 that authorizes local governments in Georgia to regulate the use of consumer fireworks to protect equine facilities. Sheriff Callaway stated that he has been

informed by every court in the county this is a civil issue not a criminal issue. As far as state law that we enforce now, there is nothing his office can do.

- 9) Tax Commissioner Lorrie Higginbotham to give an update on the Tax Digest. Mrs. Higginbotham stated HB 581 and the new exemptions were a problem for the software vendor, therefore, tax bills could not be sent out on time. The issues were resolved at the end of October. Public Hearings will have to be held and the school district will have to adopt their millage rate before tax bills can be sent out. Tax bills should be sent out in December and will be due sometime in January 2026.
- 10) Discussion and consideration of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Board of Regents of the University Systems of Georgia by and on behalf of the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension and Elbert County. This is an MOU that is approved annually. Commissioner Alexander made a motion to approve the MOU. Commissioner Freeman seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
- 11) Discussion and consideration of the TSPLOST Roads List. Mr. Hulme stated the estimated total project cost is \$2,624,000. This will be sent out for sealed bids. Commissioner Scoggins made a motion to approve seeking bids for this project. Commissioner Freeman seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
- 12) Discussion and consideration of a bid for the motor grader lease. Chairman Vaughn stated we have two (2) motor graders; one that is about 14 years old and one (1) that has just come off a lease, so we need to make a decision to buy out the lease or buy a new one. He said it is the recommendation of Kris Williams, Road Superintendent to not re-lease one and revisit this in the spring. Commissioner Alexander made the motion to accept Mr. Williams recommendation. Commissioner Freeman seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0. Commissioner Alexander made a motion to revisit this again in the spring; seconded by Commissioner Hunt. The motion passed 5-0.
- 13) Discussion and consideration of retention bonuses for employees. Mr. Hulme stated this is a retention bonus for full and part-time employees; which is included in the budget and needs the approval of the commissioners. The amounts are the same as in the past with
- 14) \$500 for full-time and \$250 for part-time. Commissioner Scoggins made a motion to approve the retention bonuses for employees. Commissioner Hunt seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
- 15) Discussion and consideration of a Mutual Aid Agreement Memorandum of Understanding by and between Anderson County, South Carolina and Elbert County. Mr. Hulme stated we do not have anything in writing with Anderson County as with other counties, but said if aid is needed for EMS or the Sheriff's Office, we should have an MOU in place so that they do not have to make calls to ask permission each time. Commissioner Alexander made the motion to approve this MOU with Anderson County. Commissioner Freeman seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
- 16) Discussion and consideration of a supplement of \$300 per month for Court Reporters. This will replace the \$500 per month supplement for Judges. Chairman Vaughn stated that as of January 1, 2026, local counties do not have to supplement the Judges salary; but the Judges recommended to give \$300 to court reporters, since it has been very difficult to find and retain court reporters. Commissioner Hunt made a motion to approve the supplement to court reporters. Commissioner Freeman seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
- 17) Finance Report. Ms. Witcher reported the General fund is under budget thru October. General budget expenditures are just over \$541,000 more than the prior year. The Registrar's office was over budget due to the special election and should even out throughout the year. Also, the Sheriff's Department was over budget by \$47,000 and the Recreation Department was over budget by a little over \$13,000 due to some upfront cost for fall sports. Also, we have saved about \$20,000 in the last four (4) months by changes that have been made. SPLOST has a balance of \$1.77 million and TSPLOST has a balance of \$2.65 million. Hotel/ Motel tax fund has a balance of about \$23,000 for local projects.
- 18) Adjournment. Commissioner Hunt made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Commissioner Alexander. The motion carried 5-0.