

**STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF HENRY**

The Henry County Board of Commissioners held a Regular Public Meeting *in-person* on Tuesday, July 15, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. at the Henry County Administration Building (Community Room), 140 Henry Parkway, McDonough GA. HenryTV also streamed this live online at its website, as well as Charter/Spectrum Channel 180 and Facebook Live.

Carlotta Harrell, Chair
Johnny Wilson, District 1 Commissioner
Neat Robinson, Vice Chair/District 2 Commissioner
Dee Anglyn, III, District 3 Commissioner
Michael T. Price, District 4 Commissioner
Kevin J. Lewis, District 5 Commissioner

Staff Present: Cheri Hobson-Matthews, County Manager; Kevin Johnson, Deputy County Manager; Rachel Mack, County Attorney; and Jasmin Head, Deputy County Clerk

INSTRUCTIONS TO PARTICIPATE

HENRY COUNTY CODE OF CONDUCT

(Sec. 2-2-128: Conduct during public meetings)

INVOCATION

The Invocation was given.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge was recited.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Harrell made the following ANNOUNCEMENTS:

ADDED WALK ON ITEMS:

1. Fountain on the Square
2. City of Hampton Annexation
3. Data Center/Discussion Only

Commissioner Lewis made a motion to approve the added items; **Commissioner Price** seconded. The motion carried 6-0-0.

PROCLAMATIONS/ RECOGNITIONS

A. Veteran's Day Proclamation (*Presenter Amber Smith, Public Relations Specialist*)

B. Employee Years of Service Recognition (*Presenter: Holly Lafontaine, HR Director*)

- **5 Years of Service**

Adelina Reynolds - Magistrate Court

Alexandra Newsome - Sheriff's Office

Brandy Hench - E911

Carltez Jefferson- Sheriff's Office Daniel

Podsiadly - Sheriff's Office Devon

Iwanski - Police Department

John Harrison - Tax Assessor's Office

Martha Burnett - Sheriff's Office

Parker Spurlock - Parks and Recreation

- **10 Years of Service**

Raymond LaDuke - Police Department

Shane Mosley - Parks and Recreation

- **20 Years of Service**

Deborah Day - Probate Court

PRESENTATIONS:

A. **Airport Master Plan Update** (Presenter: Cooper Carry/Consultant)

Deputy Director Kamau As-Salaam introduced Ms. Allison Bickers of Cooper Carry, the lead consultant for the Airport District Master Plan. **Mr. As-Salaam** explained that the plan will be incorporated into the Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) rewrite, scheduled for the first quarter of 2026. **Mr. As-Salaam** stated that Ms. Bickers would provide an overview of the planning process to date, the conceptual vision for the master plan, and outline the next steps in the project's development.

Ms. Allison Bickers, on behalf of Cooper Carry and the Planning and Zoning Department, presented an update on the Airport District Master Plan, developed in collaboration with Henry County staff, the Airport Executive Director, Echo Park Speedway, the Development Authority, Georgia Power, and multiple community stakeholders. The plan encompasses approximately 3,000 acres, extending from south of the approved Grove Development to the Hampton city limits and county line.

The Master Plan establishes a long-term vision for a balanced district that integrates entertainment, residential, recreational, and light industrial uses while preserving Henry

County's natural environment and enhancing economic growth. Designed in coordination with the Airport Master Plan, it ensures compatibility with future airport expansion. Key zoning concepts include an Entertainment District at the south end near Echo Park Speedway, envisioned with major entertainment venues, retail, restaurants, and limited residential options, all promoting a pedestrian-friendly, "park once and stay" environment. Transition areas to the north incorporate townhomes and single-family housing connected with existing developments. A designated Data Center and Light Industrial Zone will feature sustainable, visually compatible architecture with minimal environmental impact. The northwest Recreational and Eco-Tourism Zone supports low impact uses such as glamping, camping, outdoor recreation, trails, and potential sports tourism facilities. The northern Woodland Oasis comprises roughly 1,000 acres of low-density housing, a sports park, natural preservation areas, and a north-south trail network to reduce reliance on Highway 41. Design priorities emphasize stormwater as an amenity integrated into public spaces, walkability, connectivity, and cohesive sustainable growth guided by forthcoming architectural standards. Strategically, the plan provides a framework to guide private development, support the Development Authority's recruitment efforts, and enhance regional tourism by retaining visitors who might otherwise travel elsewhere. Next steps include drafting Architectural and Design Guidelines aligned with the ULDC rewrite in partnership with TSW and continued collaboration with landowners and developers to implement phased development consistent with market conditions and community goals.

Commissioner Anglyn requested a timeline for implementation.

Ms. Bickers explained that development will depend on private landowners' timelines but emphasized the plan's role as a guiding and promotional tool for consistent long-term growth.

Commissioner Lewis and the Board expressed appreciation for the collaborative effort and the master plan's role in shaping responsible, visionary growth in Henry County.

The Board thanked Ms. Bickers, **Mr. As-Salaam**, and all participating partners for their extensive collaboration and vision in developing the Airport District Master Plan, recognizing it as a foundational tool for guiding strategic, sustainable development in the district.

B. Transportation SPLOST Update - District I (*Presenter: Clayton Carte, Senior Public Relations Specialist/Henry County SPLOST*)

Senior Public Relations Specialist for Henry County SPLOST, Clayton Carte, provided an update on transportation projects in Commission District 1, marking the beginning of a new monthly rotation in which each district will receive dedicated project updates. He noted that voters approved the Transportation SPLOST Program in 2021, with revenue collections starting in 2022. The five-year program, running through 2027, is projected to generate \$245 million, with Henry County's share totaling approximately \$165 million. These funds support seven major road projects across the county, along with \$9.75 million designated for resurfacing efforts.

Mr. Carte highlighted that District 1 which includes the communities of Locust Grove, Hampton, and Ola has two of the seven major SPLOST transportation projects. The first is the widening of

Bill Gardner Parkway from I-75 to State Route 155, expanding the roadway from two to four lanes with a center median and adding eight-foot shared-use paths on both sides for pedestrian and bicycle access. Right-of-way acquisition is roughly 70% complete, with construction anticipated to begin in summer 2026. This project is expected to significantly improve traffic flow and multimodal access in the Locust Grove area, particularly benefiting school and commuter travel.

The second major project is Phase 1 of the State Route 81 widening from Postmaster Drive in McDonough to North Bethany Road near Bethany Baptist Church. This project will expand the roadway to four lanes with a center median, sidewalks, and a shared-use path. Right-of-way acquisition is fully complete, and the Georgia DOT plans to let the project for construction in January 2026, with visible construction expected to begin in spring 2026.

Mr. Carte also reported that District 1 resurfacing projects funded through SPLOST were completed in 2022, including improvements on Peeksville Road, Stroud Road, and South Ola Road. Residents may view project maps, photographs, and ongoing status updates at www.henrycountysplost.com.

The Board expressed appreciation for the update and noted strong support for the Bill Gardner Parkway widening, emphasizing its importance for local school traffic and overall community mobility. The Chair thanked the SPLOST Department for its continued communication and dedication to project progress. The Board formally received the District 1 transportation update, noting that major projects remain on schedule for anticipated 2026 construction starts and that future meetings will feature updates for the remaining commission districts.

A. Public Safety Update *(Presenter: Chief Mike Ireland, Public Safety Director)*

Chief Mike Ireland, Public Safety Director and Police Chief, along with representatives from the Henry County Police Department, Fire Rescue, E911, Emergency Management, and Community Resources, provided an extensive update highlighting five years of progress and investment in public safety across Henry County. The presentation emphasized significant advancements in growth, infrastructure, personnel, and budgeting, made possible through the continued support of the Board of Commissioners and the community. Public safety now comprises approximately 50.3% of the County's General Fund and Special Service District budget, reflecting the Board's prioritization of emergency services. Over this period, the County has made historic investments to ensure that public safety services keep pace with population growth, community expectations, and national operational standards.

The Henry County Police Department reported notable achievements in personnel expansion, technology improvements, and community policing enhancements. Authorized staffing levels have increased, and new patrol units and upgraded technologies have strengthened operational readiness. The Real-Time Crime Center, opened in 2020, now provides a comprehensive surveillance network that improves situational awareness and response times. Significant vehicle investments were made, including 175 new police vehicles purchased between August 2022 and January 2023, totaling \$8.4 million, with an additional \$2.6 million in 2021. Facility upgrades include the North Precinct in Eagles Landing, purchased in 2022 and opened in November 2023,

funded through \$2.2 million in SPLOST, and the Fairview Watch Office, a \$4 million SPLOST-funded project opened in January 2022. Equipment additions such as the Bearcat armored vehicle, new patrol units, motorcycles, Tasers, and body cameras have strengthened operations. A recent compensation study increased the starting salary for certified officers from \$44,884 to \$54,557 in 2024, supporting recruitment and retention.

Henry County Fire Rescue reported over \$38.4 million in investments in fire and rescue apparatus and equipment, including 19 fire trucks, 6 ladder trucks, 6 ambulances, 4 remounts, and 2 heavy rescue vehicles. Facility enhancements include the completion of Fire Station 6 and the scheduled November 7, 2025 “Push-In” ceremony for Station 16. Staffing growth continues with 20 new firefighter positions added for the future Fire Station 18 on Harold Drive and another 20 planned for 2025. These improvements enhance coverage, improve ISO ratings, and help reduce homeowners’ insurance costs.

E911 Communications reported handling approximately 376,000 emergency calls annually and providing 16,000 hours of training each year. The center was recognized as Georgia’s E911 Dispatch Center of the Year. System upgrades include modernized software, expanded training, and a backup 911 center located at the Police Department. The Board previously approved \$2.6 million in August 2023 for the design of a new E911 and Emergency Operations Center. E911 staff have also supported critical regional emergency responses, including Hurricane Ian and the Rockdale Bio Lab fire, and consistently exceed national call-answer-time standards.

The Emergency Management Agency (EMA) highlighted strengthened disaster readiness through new mobile command units, updated community alert systems, and emergency shelter operations. In May 2022, the Board approved \$2.7 million for two mobile command vehicles, greatly enhancing field response capabilities. EMA has effectively managed multiple severe weather events and disaster operations over recent years.

The Community Resources Division, a newly formed department, has expanded countywide engagement and outreach. The division has coordinated more than 319 community engagement events over the past four years and continues to lead large-scale initiatives, including an upcoming outreach event on November 21 at JP Moseley Park. The division has become an essential link between public safety departments and the community.

Budget updates reaffirmed that public safety represents just over half of the total county budget, underscoring the Board’s commitment to safety and emergency readiness. The Fiscal Year 2026 budget will continue to prioritize personnel expansion, facility upgrades, and ongoing technology improvements.

Chief Ireland and County staff expressed deep gratitude to the Board of Commissioners, County Manager, and Henry County residents for their sustained support and investment in public safety. Chief Ireland concluded by recognizing his leadership team and departmental staff for their professionalism, dedication, and continued service to the community. The presentation was informational, with no Board action required.

Following the presentation, the Board of Commissioners unanimously expressed appreciation for the work and dedication of Henry County's public safety personnel. Commissioners commended the Police Department, Fire Rescue, E911, Emergency Management, and Community Resources for their professionalism, responsiveness, and significant improvements across staffing, equipment, and facilities. Several commissioners offered special recognition to Community Resources Director Amanda Reeves for her outstanding leadership, compassion, and community engagement—particularly noting her efforts in coordinating food distribution and supporting vulnerable residents.

Commissioners encouraged continued community outreach throughout the county, including expanded partnerships with the school system to reach northern districts. They also acknowledged the resilience of public safety employees who have remained committed through periods of rapid growth and budget constraints, highlighting the importance of youth engagement programs such as the Police Athletic League and Explorers.

In closing, the Board thanked Chief Ireland and all public safety personnel for their steadfast service and contributions to maintaining a safe and thriving Henry County. Chief Ireland expressed gratitude for the Board's support and reaffirmed the department's commitment to serving residents with excellence.

CONSENT AGENDA

Cheri Hobson-Matthews, County Manager read the consent agenda as follows:

CAPITAL PROJECTS:

- A. Resolution approving the proposal from Building Envelope Management to renovate the roof on the Judicial Annex in the amount of \$192,159.40 utilizing Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Bond Funds. (*Presenter: Hutch Purvis, Executive Director*)(*Exhibit 1*)
Resolution 25-344
- B. Resolution approving the proposal from Com-Tech to run fiber to the Judicial Annex and Aquatic Center in the amount of \$410,140.40 utilizing Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Bond Funds. (*Presenter: Jamie Pownall, Technology Services Director*)(*Exhibit 2*)
Resolution 25-345
- C. Resolution approving a contract with RoofConnect National Roofing Services for a new membrane roof at Fire Station #3 (located at 3030 State Route 42, Stockbridge, GA) in the amount of \$209,235.00 through Omnia Partners Contract, utilizing Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Bond Funds. District 4 (*Presenter: Hutch Purvis, Executive Director*)(*Exhibit 3*)
Resolution 25-346

COUNTY ATTORNEY:

- A. Resolution approving an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the City of McDonough, re: County Jail Property (*Presenter: Rachel Mack, County Attorney*)(*Exhibit 4*)
Resolution 25-347
- B. Resolution approving an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the City of McDonough, re: Old Golf Course Property (*Presenter: Rachel Mack, County Attorney*)(*Exhibit 5*)
Resolution 25-348

COURTS:

- A. Superior Court - Resolution adopting locality pay in the amount of \$20,106.00 to comply with House Bill 85 regarding Superior Court Judicial Compensation Reform (*Presenter: Angie Sorrow, Deputy Director/Financial Services*)(*Exhibit 6*)
Resolution 25-349
- A. Resolution authorizing approval of annual reoccurring broadband data purchase through Loudoun Communications for LTE systems on public safety radios at a cost of \$112,596.00, utilizing E911 Repairs and Maintenance Account (*Presenter: Tamika Kendrick, E911 Director*)(*Exhibit 7*)
Resolution 25-350

HUMAN RESOURCES

- A. Resolution approving Medicare Advantage Renewals for 2026 for Retirees (post-65). (*Presenter: Holly Lafontaine, HR Director; and James Ford, Epic Insurance Brokers on behalf of the Michael Gasses Agency*)(*Exhibit 8*)
Resolution 25-351

SPLOST

- A. Resolution approving the purchase of Technology Storage Hardware in the amount of \$284,182.60, via GA State Contract, utilizing SPLOST VI funds (SP6009). (*Presenter: Jamie Pownall, Technology Services Director*)(*Exhibit 9*)
Resolution 25-352
- B. Resolution to authorize the acquisition of 2,603.76 sf of Right of Way, more or less, in Land Lot 205 of the 2nd District, Henry County, Georgia, by negotiated contract or condemnation pursuant to provision of O.C.G.A. Section 32-3-4 through Section 32-3-19 (Bill Gardner Parkway- Parcel 13, TSPLOST District 1.) (*Presenter: Roque Romero, P.E., SPLOST Director*)(*Exhibit 10*)
Resolution 25-353

- C. Resolution to authorize the acquisition of 673.38 square feet of Right of Way, and 270.91 square feet of Temporary Easement, more or less, in Land Lot 235 of the 2nd District, Henry County, Georgia, by negotiated contract or condemnation pursuant to provision of O.C.G.A. Section 32-3-4 through Section 32-3-19 (Bill Gardner Parkway- Parcel 7, TSPLOST District 1.) (*Presenter: Roque Romero, P.E., SPLOST Director*)(*Exhibit 11*)

Resolution 25-354

- D. Resolution to authorize the acquisition of 1,675 square feet of Right of Way, more or less, in Land Lot 204 of the 2nd District, Henry County, Georgia, by negotiated contract or condemnation pursuant to provision of O.C.G.A. Section 32-3-4 through Section 32-3-19 (Bill Gardner Parkway - Parcel 53, TSPLOST District 1.) (*Presenter: Roque Romero, P.E., SPLOST Director*)(*Exhibit 12*)

Resolution 25-355

- E. Resolution to authorize the acquisition of 1,790 square feet of Right of Way, 9,200.64 square feet of Permanent Easement, 415.05 square feet of temporary easement, and 3,601.82 square feet of driveway easement, more or less, in Land Lot 109 of the 6th District, Henry County, Georgia, by negotiated contract or condemnation pursuant to provision of O.C.G.A. Section 32-3-4 through Section 32-3-19 (Jonesboro Road Widening Project - Parcel 42, TSPLOST District 5.) (*Presenter: Roque Romero, P.E., SPLOST Director*)(*Exhibit 13*)

Resolution 25-356

(This Ends the Consent Agenda)

Commissioner Lewis made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; **Commissioner Anglyn** seconded. The motion carried 6-0-0.

REGULAR AGENDA

ADDED ITEM: Resolution approving a contract with Prime Contractors, Inc. for the construction of a new Fountain located at the McDonough Square, in the amount of \$441,527.50, utilizing Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Bond Funds. (*Lynn Planchon, Capital Projects Director*) **Resolution 25-357**

Capital Projects Director Lynn Planchon presented a resolution to approve a contract with Prime Contractors for the construction of a new three-tier fountain at the center of McDonough Square. The \$441,527.50 project will be funded through Capital Improvement Plan bond funds and completed under Sourcewell EZIQC Contract No. GA-ST-02040820-PCI, facilitated by Gordian. The scope includes installation of a 20-by-20-foot fountain, stone pavers, electrical and plumbing components, landscaping, and a granite seat wall. The fountain will stand approximately 11 feet 6 inches tall with bowl diameters of 9 feet, 5 feet, and 2 feet 10 inches. Prime Contractors has operated since 1979, and the subcontractor experienced in pool and fountain installations since 1993 previously constructed the City of Roswell Square fountain.

The project is designed to enhance the beautification and public appeal of McDonough Square. Following the presentation, the Board engaged in discussion of the proposed contract.

Commissioner Wilson expressed concern that the item appeared as a walk-on and noted that not all commissioners were aware of or involved in the preparation of the project proposal.

Vice Chair Robinson echoed those concerns, emphasizing the need for fiscal responsibility when allocating capital funds. The Commissioner referenced other pressing infrastructure and facility needs within the County, including improvements in the Fairview area and at the County jail and library, and questioned prioritizing \$400,000 for a fountain over those needs.

Commissioner Lewis supported the concept of beautification but expressed concern that public announcements about the fountain were made prior to Board review and approval of funding.

Commissioner Price supports the beautification efforts but questioned the overall project cost, the procurement process, and specific line items within the contractor's estimate, noting that some pricing appeared higher than market rates. The Commissioner also raised technical concerns about equipment use relative to the site size and stressed the need for fiscal prudence with taxpayer funds.

Commissioner Anglyn provided background on the project's origin following the 2020 removal of the statue from the McDonough Square. The Commissioner explained that the proposed fountain is intended to serve as a symbol of healing and renewal for the community, representing a partnership between the County, McDonough Main Street, and the City of McDonough. The project has been a District 3 priority through the budget process, with collaboration from city officials and community stakeholders.

Commissioner Anglyn made a motion to approve; **Commissioner Lewis** seconded. The motion carried 3-2-1 (with Commissioner Wilson and Vice Chair Robinson voting in opposition -- and Commissioner Price abstaining due to lack of information).

T-SPLOST:

- A. Resolution approving the Henry County Water Authority utility relocation estimated cost for Mill Road Widening in the amount of \$566,913.22 and a Budget Amendment in the amount of \$386,992.22. TSPLOST District 5. *(Presenter: Bert Bivins, SPLOST Deputy Director)(Exhibit 14)*

Resolution 25-358

Bert Bivins, SPLOST Deputy Director presented a T-SPLOST item requesting approval for the relocation of Henry County Water Authority utilities in support of the Mill Road widening project, Phase One, from Jonesboro Road to Peachtree Pedalers. The total relocation cost is \$566,913.22, funded through District 5 Revenue Saving Bonds for the Henry County Water

Authority and supplemented via T-SPLOST collections. Staff recommended approval of both the budget amendment and the utility relocation cost estimate.

Commissioner Lewis made a motion to approve; **Commissioner Anglyn** seconded. The motion carried 6-0-0.

B. Resolution Rescinding Resolution# 24-210 for the Georgia Power relocation estimate cost and approve a revised relocation cost in the amount of \$5,720,041.00 for the Rock Quarry Road Widening Project. TSPLOST. *(Presenter: Bert Bivins, SPLOST Deputy Director)(Exhibit 15)***Resolution 25-359**

SPLOST Deputy Director Bert Bivins presented a T-SPLOST request for approval to relocate Georgia Power utilities associated with the Rock Quarry Road widening project from Eagles Landing Parkway to North Henry Boulevard. The Board had previously approved a cost estimate under Resolution 24-210 in August 2024; however, Georgia Power submitted a revised estimate totaling \$5,720,041, an increase of \$131,854 due to higher material and engineering costs. Funding for the revised amount is available in a T-SPLOST account. Staff recommended rescinding Resolution 24-210 and approving the new cost estimate.

A motion was made to rescind Resolution 24-210 and approve the revised utility relocation cost estimate of \$5,720,041.

Chair Harrell made a motion to approve; **Commissioner Anglyn** seconded. The motion carried 6-0-0.

PLANNING AND ZONING:

- A. HC-AM-25-01 (Not a Public Hearing/Discussion Only) An Ordinance Amending Article I of Chapter 3-4 of the Code of Ordinances of Henry County, Georgia regarding the regulation of tethering of animals in Henry County. Countywide. *(Presenter: Toussaint Kirk, Executive Director, Planning and Zoning; and Captain Michael Hobgood, Animal Care and Control Director)(Exhibit 16)* **NO ACTION TAKEN**

Executive Director of Planning and Zoning, Toussaint Kirk, and Animal Care and Control Director, Captain Michael Hobgood, presented information at the request of Commissioner Price regarding current animal tethering standards outlined in Chapter 3-4, Section 3-4-9 of the Henry County Code of Ordinances. The discussion focused on whether to remove the tethering provisions added in 2021 and revert to the pre-2021 ordinance.

Captain Hobgood expressed strong opposition to removing tethering provisions entirely, noting that doing so could negatively affect residents who rely on tethering due to fencing restrictions, financial constraints, disabilities, or the needs of working and herding dogs. He explained that eliminating tethering allowances could result in penalties for responsible pet owners, increased shelter intakes, higher euthanasia rates, additional complaints, and expanded court and enforcement burdens. He also noted that Henry County's current standards align with those in neighboring counties. **Captain Hobgood** recommended limiting tethering to humane trolley

systems and stated that the ordinance could be modified to restrict tethering to certain hours if desired.

Commissioner Price emphasized the need to review contradictions within the ordinance related to tethering and trolley systems, while some board members expressed concern that changes might place the interests of pet owners above the welfare of animals. The Board agreed that animal welfare should remain the priority and that tethering regulations must be both humane and practical.

This discussion served as an informational item only. Staff was directed to collaborate and return in December with a revised recommendation for the Board's consideration that balances animal welfare with realistic enforcement practices.

B. AP-25-03 (Public Hearing) Remigius Idaewor of Ellenwood, GA, requests an appeal to the denial of a conditional use for property located at 585 Scarborough Road in Land Lot 222 of the 12th District. The property consists of 0.573 +/- acres and the request is for the appeal of the Zoning Advisory Board denial for a non-home occupation personal care home. District 2. (*Presenter: Kenta Lanham, Planner III*)(*Exhibit 17*) **Resolution 25-360**

Kenta Lanham, Planner III, presented the appeal of the Zoning Advisory Board's (ZAB) denial of Conditional Use request CU-2411 for a personal care home at 585 Scarborough Road within the Twin Pines subdivision. The property is zoned R-2 single-family residential, and the applicant is requesting approval to operate a non-home occupation personal care home serving up to six clients who require assistance with daily living activities, including eating, bathing, grooming, dressing, toileting, and medication supervision. Staff noted that installation of a sprinkler system is required to meet life-safety standards.

Mr. Lanham reviewed the ZAB history, stating that the Board denied the application at its September 11 meeting, despite staff recommending approval with conditions. The applicant filed a timely appeal on September 30. Staff recommended that the Board overturn the ZAB's denial and approve the conditional use request with the following conditions: installation of a fence, installation of a sprinkler system, and limiting the approval to the current applicant/owner (non-transferable). A potential condition requiring a generator was considered but ultimately not recommended due to the significant hardship it would impose on the applicant.

Chair Harrell raised concerns were raised about the lack of a requirement for a generator at the personal care home. She asked what the plan would be if the power went out, particularly for residents who rely on electrically powered medical equipment.

Chief Michael Black of the Henry County Fire Department provided additional clarification regarding the feasibility of requiring a generator for the proposed personal care home. He explained that retrofitting a single-family residence to accommodate a generator would create a significant financial hardship, with estimated costs ranging from \$8,000 to \$30,000. He also noted that alternative fuel storage options within a residential subdivision are limited and pose safety and logistical concerns.

Chief Michael Black emphasized that although the home is licensed as a state-regulated commercial care facility, it remains a residential structure and has been deemed fire-safe with the required sprinkler system. He further noted that the residence is equipped with alarm systems directly connected to the fire department, ensuring rapid emergency response without the need for a generator requirement.

Staff emphasized that in the event of a power outage, the responsibility for resident safety, including any relocation or alternative measures, lies with the owner/operator of the personal care home, not the county.

The board noted the discussion, with no change recommended to the previously omitted generator condition.

Chair Harrell called for a public hearing.

In Favor:

Michelle Battle, representing Pacific Health Group, spoke in support of the proposed personal care home at 585 Scarborough Road, Ellenwood, GA in the Twin Pines subdivision. The 0.53-acre R-2-zoned property is intended to serve four adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, offering 24-hour supervision and personal care services licensed through the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities. Ms. Battle emphasized the community need for such homes, noting that they enable residents to live in integrated, non-institutional settings consistent with the 1999 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, which supports community-based care. She stated that the home will function much like a family residence, will not negatively affect the neighborhood's character, and provides adequate parking, onsite turnaround space, and a large backyard.

Ms. Battle explained that traffic impacts will be minimal, limited mainly to staff shift changes and occasional visitors, and noted that residents may leave the home for work or activities. Addressing concerns about emergency power, she clarified that required backup for medical equipment is handled individually and that mandating a whole-home generator would create significant financial and logistical burdens. She concluded by stating that the personal care home would provide safety, stability, and inclusion for vulnerable adults while contributing positively to the community through local employment and property tax revenue. She expressed support for approving the conditional use request with the staff-recommended conditions.

In Opposition:

Mildred Schmelz, a longtime resident, expressed concern about Northern Henry County being rezoned for multiple personal care and group homes, noting that another home exists nearby and asserting that homeowners' input had been disregarded.

Unknown Speaker, echoed these concerns, highlighting inconsistencies in the applicant's representations over time regarding the clientele and layout of the home, expressing uncertainty about oversight, staffing, and compliance, and questioning the integrity of the process. They

emphasized that while they support care for disabled or elderly individuals, the lack of clarity and transparency regarding this particular property raised significant concerns.

Public Hearing is closed.

Vice Chair Robinson acknowledged the importance of providing quality care for residents with disabilities but emphasized that the placement of personal care homes within residential neighborhoods must align with thoughtful planning and the broader community vision. She thanked community members for voicing their concerns and shared her personal experience with disability care, noting that her aunt resides in a purpose-built disability community designed to support independence, employment and quality of life.

Vice Chair Robinson expressed concern that small residential homes may not always offer the level of care or space needed for individuals with disabilities, and that surrounding neighbors may be unprepared or unaware of how to appropriately interact with these residents. She reiterated that while personal care homes serve an important purpose, they also operate as businesses, and their location must be selected carefully to ensure both resident well-being and neighborhood compatibility.

She stressed the importance of quality, intentional growth and expressed opposition to placing personal care homes in residential areas without sufficient planning and structure. She advocated for a model similar to established disability care communities, where residents can live safely, comfortably and with full opportunities for community engagement. Vice Chair Robinson clarified that her position is not opposed to individuals with disabilities or the need for long-term care but focused on ensuring that such facilities are placed in appropriate locations that best support those they serve.

Vice Chair Robinson made a motion to deny the request; **Chair Harrell** seconded. The motion of denial carried 6-0-0.

ITEMS ADDED:

ADDED: AX-25-08 The City of Hampton has received a request for annexation of properties along Wynn Drive at the intersection with Fears Drive, consisting of 60.16 +/- acres in Land Lots 233 and 234 of the 6th District. District 1 and 5. **No vote to object from the Board.**

Planner III Kenta Lanham presented a request from the City of Hampton to annex approximately 60.16 acres located at the intersection of Wynn Drive and Fears Drive. The property is currently zoned RA (Residential Agricultural) and PD (Planned Development) with a future land use designation of Low-Density Suburban, allowing up to two dwelling units per acre. The City of Hampton is seeking annexation through the 100% method and intends to maintain the existing zoning and land use designations. Staff reported no objections to the request and noted that the annexation would not significantly affect surrounding land use. However, they recommended that the City consider the zoning conditions previously established under RZ 0904, approved on August 18, 2009.

The Board agreed to take no action to object, allowing the annexation to proceed automatically with no objection.

*****Chair Harrell and Commissioner Anglyn left the meeting at 11:32 a.m. (Commissioner Anglyn returned at 11:37 a.m.) (Chair Harrell returned at 11:50 a.m., and went directly into Executive Session)***

ADDED: (Discussion Only) Data Center Ordinance and Development Strategy **No action taken.**

Deputy Director Kamau As-Salaam presented an update on ongoing efforts to regulate data centers in Henry County, including a draft ordinance and memorandum prepared for Board review. Staff explained that data centers represent a rapidly evolving and technically complex land use with significant potential impacts on infrastructure, water and energy demand, noise, and surrounding community character. The proposed regulatory framework aims to balance economic opportunity with environmental responsibility by requiring both conditional use approval by the Board of Commissioners and mandatory development agreements to address site-specific technical considerations such as cooling systems, water use, backup power, energy efficiency, and sustainability performance.

Key components of the draft ordinance include restricting data centers to the M-1 and M-2 zoning districts, establishing 200-foot setbacks from public rights-of-way and 500-foot setbacks from residential property lines, requiring 200-foot landscape buffers, implementing noise and architectural standards, and mandating early coordination with utility providers. Development agreements will ensure flexibility as technology evolves while maintaining oversight and accountability. Staff also noted ongoing coordination with the ULDC rewrite consultants, sustainability specialists, and utility partners to refine standards and best practices. The Board was asked to allow additional time for review to ensure the data center ordinance aligns with the broader ULDC rewrite before formal adoption.

Commissioner Anglyn emphasized the importance of establishing a clear and formal data center ordinance to set expectations for developers and prevent last-minute adjustments during project review. He thanked staff for their extensive research and preparation.

Commissioner Lewis reflected on the development process over the past year, noting that staff appropriately delayed drafting until adequate research could be completed. He raised concerns about certain site standards, specifically questioning why the residential setback had been reduced from his previously requested 1,000 feet to 500 feet and whether the minimum site size of 20 contiguous acres should be increased. Both commissioners agreed on the value of requiring a development agreement for each data center, noting that this approach provides needed flexibility while ensuring community protection and regulatory adaptability as industry standards evolve. Overall, Board discussion underscored the importance of thoughtful planning, safeguards for residents, and the ability to adapt regulations to rapidly changing data center technologies.

County Manager Comments:

- **Trunk or Treat & National Night Out:** Thanked everyone for participation in this successful event.
- **November 10th District 5 Townhall** Commissioner Lewis has a Townhall at N. Mt. Carmel Rec Center.
- **5k or 10k Turkey Trot** on Thanksgiving Day.

Public Comments

No one signed up.

Approval of Minutes

A. October 7, 2025 Regular Board of Commissioners meeting minutes.

Commissioner Wilson made a motion to approve; **Commissioner Anglyn** seconded. The motion carried 5-0-1 with Chair Harrell not being present for the vote.

Executive Session (Re: Pending/Potential Litigation; Personnel and Real Estate)

Commissioner Lewis made a motion to approve; **Commissioner Anglyn** seconded. The motion carried 5-0-1 with Chair Harrell not being present for the vote.

Reconvene from Executive Session

Commissioner Anglyn made a motion to approve; **Commissioner Lewis** seconded. The motion carried 5-0-1 with Chair Harrell not being present for the vote.

Approval of an Affidavit and Resolution pertaining to Executive Session

Commissioner Price made a motion to approve; **Commissioner Lewis** seconded. The motion carried 5-0-1 with Chair Harrell not being present for the vote.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

A. November 4, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. is a Called BOC Meeting, re: Planning & Zoning Items

B. Canceled: November 18, 2025 Regular BOC Meeting at 6:30 p.m.

C. December 2, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. is a Regular BOC Meeting.

Vice Chair Robinson adjourned the meeting at 12:42 p.m.

*Carlotta Harrell, Chair
Henry County Board of Commissioners*

*Stephanie Braun
County Clerk*