Columbia County
Board of County Commissioners

Minutes of
September 4,2025

The Columbia County Board of County Commissioners met in a regular scheduled meeting in the auditorium of the School Board Administrative Complex at 05:30 pm. The meeting opened with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America followed.

Commissioners in Attendance: Co-Chairman, Robby Hollingsworth
Commissioner, Kevin Parnell
Commissioner, Everett Phillips
Commissioner, Rocky Ford

Others in Attendance: County Manager, David Kraus ("CM")
Assistant County Manager Kevin Kirby (ACM")
County Attorney, Joel Foreman
Deputy Clerk, Melissa Williams
Columbia County Admin. Secretary, Ellen Snyder
Columbia County Admin. Supervisor, John Crews
Economic Development Director- Jennifer Daniels
Finance Officer, Amy Overstreet
Columbia County Fire Chief, Jeff Crawford
Columbia County Landscape & Parks Director, Clint Pittman
Director of Human Resources, Kari Guy
Public Information Officer, Dennis Rivera

Agenda Additions/Deletion

Additions: None

Deletions: None

MOTION by Commissioner Phillips to approve the agenda. SECOND by Commissioner Ford. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearings

Troy Crews, Columbia County Building & Zoning Director

(1) Public Hearing-Special permit-SP250801 for a Music Festival at Suwanee Valley Resort on October 2nd-5th from 10:00 A.M. to 11:00 P.M.-District 1.

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to approve SP250801. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

David Kraus, County Manager

(2) Resolution No. 2025R-36 – Pine Ridge Court MSBU local improvement and maintenance assessments.

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to approve with no changes Resolution No. 2025-36. SECOND by Commissioner Parnell. The motion carried unanimously.

(3) Resolution No. 2025 R-37- Spring Hollow Street lighting MSDU.

MOTION by Commissioner Parnell to approve with no changes Resolution No. 2025-37. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

(4) Resolution No. 2025R-38 Carolyn Heights Street Lightning Lighting MSBC**.**

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to approve with no changes Resolution No. 2025-38. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

(5) Resolution No. 2025R-33- Emerald Lakes Street Lighting MSBU.

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to approve with no changes Resolution No. 2025-33. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

(6) Resolution No. 2025R-35 Laurel Lakes Street Lighting MSBU.

MOTION by Commissioner Phillips to approve with no changes Resolution No. 2025-35. SECOND by Commissioner Ford. The motion carried unanimously.

(7) Resolution No. 2025-34 – Forest Cove Subdivision Maintenance MSBU.

MOTION by Commissioner Phillips to approve with changes Resolution No. 2025-34. SECOND by Commissioner Parnell. The motion carried unanimously.

(8) Resolution No. 2025R-40 -Solid Waste Collection and Disposal Services increase of $ 12.09**.**

Commissioner Ford spoke about Suwannee County not doing trash pick-up.

MOTION by Commissioner Phillips to approve with changes Resolution No. 2025-40. SECOND by Commissioner Parnell. The motion carried unanimously.

(9) Resolution No. 2025R-39 – Fire Protection Services with an increase of $10.00.

Citizen Comment:

Paula Miller -RV Park offered a comment

County Manager, David Kraus offered a comment.

County Fire Chief, Jeff Crawford spoke on the RV spaces have been assessed at 1200 squares feet.

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to approve with changes Resolution No. 2025-39. SECOND by Commissioner Parnell. The motion carried unanimously.

(10) First Hearing- Fiscal Year 2025-2026 adoption of millage rate- 7.815 no change.

Citizen Comment:

Stew Lilker offered a comment on the millage rate.

Commissioner, Ford commented you add property to the tax rate. The special money you get out of the budget, people who did not show up should not get the money.

County Attorney, Joel Foreman spoke about this being an interlocal agreement.

Citizen Comment:

Brandon Davis offered a comment on taxes increasing.

Commissioner Ford, commented about the assessment percentage.

County Attorney, Joel Foreman stated that the Property Appraiser sets the rate and cannot go over 3% because of homestead.

Citizen Comment:

Laurie Aikens asked a question about the rollback list.

County Manager, David Kraus offered a comment about the new rate.

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to approve the first hearing 2025-2026 Adoption of Millage Rate. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

(11) Set FY 2025-2026 millage rate for the Municipal Service Taxing unit (MSTU) -Columbia County Industrial Park.

Citizen Comment:

Stew Lilker offered a comment and spoke about the Industrial Park millage rate.

County Attorney, Joel Foreman commented the people using it are the ones that pay for the park. General public does not pay the taxes.

MOTION by Commissioner Parnell to approve 2025-2026 millage rate the Municipal Service Taxing unit (MSTU) – Columbia County Industrial Park. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

(12) First Public Hearing- Adoption of FY 2025-2026 Annual Budget

Citizen Comment:

Stew Lilker made a comment about road funding.

County Attorney, Joel Foreman commented the $21,000.00 covers the Industrial Park-taking care of their maintenance. We will see growth in the next year.

County Manager, David Kraus spoke about the 4 million dollars resurfacing county-wide roads, which will have to go before the Board.

Commissioner Ford, stated that engineering completes a list of which roads need to be resurfaced.

Co-Chairman, Hollingsworth stated they spread the money through the 5 counties and districts.

County Manager stated that this money comes from the gas taxes.

Citizen Comment:

Jeff Todd offered a comment about dirt to pavement roads.

Commissioner Ford, spoke about the older roads not having enough easements and no right of way.

County Attorney, Joel Foreman stated that dirt to pavement is more expensive, it is cheaper to repave.

County Manager David Kraus stated that the road dirt/pave is done by DOT Grants.

Discussion ensued.

MOTION by Commissioner Parnell to approve first public hearing of the adoption of FY 2025-2026 Annual Budget. SECOND by Commissioner Ford. The motion carried unanimously.

(13) First Public Hearing – Adoption of FY 2025 -2026 Annual Budget- Columbia County Industrial Park.

Citizen Comment:

Mark Magastadt, made a comment about electricity and gas.

Patricia Hefner asked a question about being able to see who is going into the Industrial Park.

Co-Chairman, Hollingsworth spoke about new companies and producing jobs to keep our people employed.

Economic Development Director, Jennifer Daniels will show Patricia Hefner the website.

Commissioner, Parnell recommended adding to the BOCC website, allowing citizens to view updates to the Mega Park.

Citizen Comment:
Daphane Carroll had a question about the pollution in the residential area near the Industrial Area.

Co-Chairman, Hollingsworth stated that it is clean area and having a safeguard- DEP regulated.

County Attorney, Joel Foreman stated the DEP has a safeguard in place.

County Manager, David Kraus stated that there will be a buffer in place between the industrial area and residential area.

MOTION by Commissioner Phillips to approve first public hearing of the adoption of FY 2025-2026 Annual Budget-Columbia County Industrial Park. SECOND by Commissioner Parnell. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Consent Agenda

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to approve the Consent Agenda SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of Consent Agenda

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to the Adoption of Consent Agenda SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

(1) **-**BCC Administration-Meeting Minutes-Workshop July 10, 2025

(2) **-** BCC Administration-Meeting Minutes- Regular August 07,2025

(3) -BCC Administration- Beginning Issuance of Permits- Turkey Creek (Woodborough North)
(4) – Purchasing – Surplus Items
(5) - Library Closing Request for Automation System Migration
(6) – Library Strategic Plan
(7) – State Aid to Libraries Grant Agreement & Certification of hours, free library service and access to materials
(8) -Zoning Department- Special family lot request – SFLP250801 – Request by Hargis & Mary Sandage request to deed 1.01 acres to son- James Hardage- District 2

(9) -Zoning Department – Special family lot request-SFLP250804-Request by Dewey Glenn to deed 5.01 acres to Granson, Stephen Harris – District 2

(10)-Zoning Department – Special family lot request-SFLP250804-Request by Dewey Glenn to deed 5.01 acres to Granson, Stephen Harris – District 2

(11) - Zoning Department – Special family lot request- SFLP250802- Request by Trudis Dubose to deed 5.01 acres to grandson, Trey Dubose – District 4

Discussion and Action Items

Joel Foreman, County Attorney

(1) -Resolution No. 2025-42 – Resolution to dissolve IDA

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to approve Resolution No. 2025-42 -to dissolve IDA. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

(2) – Opioid Settlement

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to approve Opioid Settlement. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

(3) – Addendum to Lake City- Columbia County Humane Society Contract

MOTION by Commissioner Phillips to approve the addendum to Lake City-Columbia County Humane Society Contract. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

Rocky Ford, County Commissioner District 2

(4) Economic Development Update – Cornerstone Project

Developer, Scott Stewart spoke about the project and the 3-year tax rebate from the Economic Board. He also spoke about the lift station, the city's part and the money to the city.

Jennifer Daniels, Economic Development Director spoke about the Cornerstone The project scored for 8 years of tax rebate. However, they are only asking for 3 years.

1) Capital investment
2) Jobs
3) Rate-wage

The city will own and operate the lift station.

Commissioner Phillips, asked about the lift stations on both sides.

County Attorney, Joel Foreman spoke about the tax rebate, the taxes must be paid and then the Property Appraiser will do the rebate.

Jennifer Daniels, Economic Development Director stated that the developer only gets the rebate on the property he owns.

Commissioner, Rocky Ford stated that we are not giving the developer any money.

The county is helping the city with the utilities.

Discussion ensued.

Citizen Comment:

Stew Lilker asked about a vote. County Attorney Joel Foreman answered the question with a no vote. The $377,000.00 will go to the city for the lift station. The lift station will be the City's, and they will own it.

Commissioner Ford, spoke about the incentives to help the city or business to come to Lake City

Columbia County Attorney, Joel Foreman spoke about the Economic Incentive Board to vote to use 12405- Columbia County does not give near as much money.

Discussion ensued.

Citizen Comment:

Dillon Adams made a comment about utility benefit affordable workforce housing, different behind capacity.

David Kraus, County Manager

(5) FY 2025-26 Budget- Position Descriptions

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to approve the Position Descriptions. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

(6) RFQ 2025-G 500 Acre Engineering Services-Phase One- $1,011,000.00.

MOTION by Commissioner Parnell to approve the RFQ 2025-G 500Acre Engineering Services-Phase One-$ 1,011,000.00. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

(7) BA 25-56 Approval to transfer funds from TDC reserves for the RC Track building- $ 275,000.00.

MOTION by Commissioner Phillips to approve the transfer of funds from TDC reserves for the RC Track Building-$ 275,00.00. SECOND by Commissioner Ford. The motion carried unanimously.

(8) 2025-O- Columbia County Gateway RC Track Building - $ 648,591.00.

MOTION by Commissioner Phillips to approve 2025-O Columbia County Gateway RC track Building. SECOND by Commissioner Ford. The motion carried unanimously.

(9) FY 25/26 Small County Consolidated Solid Waste Grant Agreement with DEP-Agreement No. CW004- $ 93,750.00.

MOTION by Commissioner Phillips to approve FY 25/26 Small County Consolidated Solid Waste Grant Agreement with DEP-Agreement No. CW004- $ 93,750.00. SECOND by Commissioner Ford. The motion carried unanimously.

(10) 2025-26 Opioid Abatement Funding – Purchase Order Agreement- $ 426,739.00.

MOTION by Commissioner Ford to approve 2025-26 Opioid Abatement Funding- Purchase Oder Agreement - $ 426,739.00. SECOND by Commissioner Phillips. The motion carried unanimously.

Open Public Comments to the Board- 3 Minute Limit - None

Staff comments and County Commissioners:

Commissioner Kevin Parnell wanted to thank the Fire Department for the job they did during the Cedar Park Fire. He found out about it on Facebook. He wants to know how we can have a better way to get the information out there to let the public know.

County Attorney, Joel Foreman stated the PIO officer would let them know when something happens. We will work on getting the information out to the public.

Public Information Officer, Dennis Rivera spoke about getting the developing events out to the public. He is working with the Sherriff's office and the Fire Department.

County Commissioner, Rocky Ford thanked Commissioner, Kevin Parnell for what he had done with the fire at Cedar Park.

Commissioner, Everett Phillips was thanking the Veterans and the employee that works with the county that helps the Veterans become full-time.

Commissioner, Rocky Ford Stated that the project Cornerstone was a good project.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 07:33 PM.

ATTEST:

_____
Robby Hollingsworth Co- Chairman
Board of County Commissioner

_____
James M. Swisher, Jr.
Clerk of Court & County Comptroller