

January 6, 2026
Regular Session
Bonifay, Florida

The Holmes County Board of Commissioners met for a Regular Session on the above date with the following members present: Commissioner Wade Ellenburg, Commissioner Wilmer Stafford, Commissioner Clint Erickson, and Commissioner Earl Stafford, Chairman of the Board.

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, and David Corbin, Project Director, were present.

Angie Purvee, Finance Director, was present and kept the minutes.

Chairman Stafford called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. David Corbin, Project Director, led the prayer and pledge. The Board welcomed new Commissioner Wade Ellenburg.

The first agenda item was Agenda Additions and Deletions. The following changes were made to the posted agenda:

- Commissioner Item) Smith Chappel Road and Grover Lewis Road Easements – added
- Agenda Item) Pittman VFD Brush Truck Repairs – deleted
- Commissioner Item) Burying Animal Carcasses on Weekends – deleted
- Commissioner Item) Purchase Brush Cutters and Surplus Old Equipment – deleted
- Agenda Item) Satisfaction of SHIP Lien – added
- Agenda Item) SCRAP and SCOP Applications – added
- Commissioner Item) Striping to County Roads 179A and 163 - added
- Agenda Item) Liberty Life Insurance - added

Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to accept the amended agenda with Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to adopt the minutes from the December 2, 2025 Regular Session. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Adrienne Chapman, Dogwood Lakes resident, requested an update on implementing a MSBU, a special tax assessment, on the Dogwood Lakes parcels. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford advised that the MSBU was a dead issue due to lack of support.

Richard Willsey, a private citizen, stated his opposition to the Board changing the time of future Regular Sessions. He also opposed changing the current Board policy requiring an employee to resign before running for a commissioner seat.

Doug Rimmel, Ponce de Leon Fire Chief, stated that the design for the new Ponce de Leon Fire Station is complete. He requested assistance with site work from the County involving clearing the property and supplying dirt. The Board requested to view the site design before committing to a mutual aid agreement with Ponce de Leon.

Jane Dellwo, Board Administrative Assistant, presented Resolution 26-02 authorizing the Chairman to execute the Small County Outreach Program (B-SCOP) Agreement for repairs to the Jack Johnson Lane bridge

over Blue Creek. She advised that the grant amount is \$95,700 and Dewberry Engineers will do the design work. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to adopt Resolution 26-02. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

(Resolution 26-02)
(Agreement)

Danielle Dubin, Dubin Acquisitions LLC, proposed to donate Dogwood Lakes Parcel Number 0908.04-004-000-009.000 to the County. She advised that, in lieu of the property donation, she is willing to donate the sell proceeds to the County for use at Dogwood Lakes. The Board urged Ms. Dubin to attempt to sell the parcel to the public sector with a realtor. The Board agreed to revisit this matter if the parcel does not sell within 120 days.

Commissioner Ellenburg offered a motion to re-appoint Jeremy Rolling to the Holmes County Development Commission Board District 2 seat. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second. Commissioners Ellenburg, Wilmer Stafford and Erickson voted yes with Chairman Stafford voting no. The motion passed.

Commissioner Ellenburg offered a motion to appoint Brady Gilmore to the Holmes County Development Commission Board District 2 seat. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to appoint Judy Powell to the Holmes County Development Commission Board as the member at large. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a motion to re-appoint Johnny Sutton to the Holmes County Development Commission Board District 1 seat. Commissioner Ellenburg offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Tim Parson, Liberty Partners, advised that the Florida Association of Counties Legislative Day and the Florida Rural Counties Day are scheduled for January 21st and 22nd in Tallahassee. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to use Board Contingencies to reserve hotel rooms for six County representatives to attend the events. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, presented the scoring of the Holmes County RFP 25-57 responses for Disaster Recovery Administration Services and Holmes County RFP 25-58 responses for Debris Monitoring Services. He discussed the qualifications that were considered by the scoring committee. Attorney Nolin advised that Metric Consulting had scored the highest for administrative services and DRC scored the highest for debris monitoring. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford advised that he would abstain from the vote awarding the administrative services contract due to a family member being an employee of Metric Consulting. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to table awarding the disaster management services contract to the next meeting so that Commissioner Mitch Johnson would be present for the vote. Commissioner Ellenburg offered a second and the

motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to table awarding the debris monitoring contract to the next meeting. Commissioner Ellenburg offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

(Bid Scoring Tabulation Sheets)

Jane Dellwo, Board Administrative Assistant, presented a Release of Lien for SHIP recipient Theresa Wilson at 1923 Nottingham Road. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion for the Chairman to sign the release. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

(Release of Lien)

Jane Dellwo, Board Administrative Assistant, advised that the Florida Department of Transportation (DOT) started accepting applications for the Small County Road Assistance Program (SCRAP) and the Small County Outreach Program (SCOP) projects. She stated the County could submit two SCRAP and two SCOP applications. Discussion included submitting the next phases of recently approved projects and other roads in need of improvement. The Board agreed by consensus to table this matter to the next meeting.

Jane Dellwo, Board Administrative Assistant, stated that Liberty National Life Insurance requested to provide payroll deduction insurance to County employees at the next open enrollment. The Board agreed by consensus to defer the request to the Insurance Committee.

David Corbin, Project Director, expressed his appreciation for the hard work of departing Board Secretary Erin Todd.

Tim Parson, Liberty Partners, advised that the EMS building is the final phase of the Government Efficiency Center (GEC) project. John Tate, Holmes County Sheriff, requested that the Board waive or reimburse the EMS building permit fee paid by the contractor. Discussion included the precedent set with other fee waiver requests. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a motion to reimburse Contractor Bret Alford the \$2,665.26 fee with Building Department funds and then use County funds to pay the permit fee. Commissioner Ellenburg offered a second. Commissioners Ellenburg, Wilmer Stafford and Erickson voted yes with Chairman Stafford abstaining from the vote.

(Abstain from Voting Form)

Rod Adams, Melvin Engineering, stated that DOT recommended the County apply for the Transportation Alternative Program (TA) to fund the reconstruction of the sidewalk negatively impacted by the widening of County Road 181. He presented Resolution 26-01 approving the TA application. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a motion approving Resolution 26-01 with Commissioner Erickson offering a second. The motion passed unanimously.

(Resolution 26-01)

(TA Application)

Rod Adams, Melvin Engineering, presented the Project Gateway Infrastructure Improvement bid results and the Engineer's Recommendation of Award. He stated that American Sand & Asphalt Paving was the low bidder, but the company submitted a formal request to withdraw their bid. ECSC, LLC of Panama City was the next lowest bidder with a bid approximately \$1.1 million over the grant funding available. Mr. Adams presented options to reduce the scope of work to get the project within budget. The options included deleting the road-base work on the Pond Drive and Thomas Drive as well as deleting the sewer lift station. Mr. Adams recommended awarding the contract to ECSC, LLC in the amount of \$5,270,217 and reducing the scope of work as proposed contingent on State approval. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion approving the engineer's recommendation. Commissioner Ellenburg offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

(Bid Summary)
(American Sand Formal Bid Withdrawal)
(Scope of Work Reduction)

Rod Adams, Melvin Engineering, discussed a property dispute that is threatening to delay the Ponce de Leon Pilot Travel Center project. He advised that the adjacent property owner has reneged on signing a utility easement for a waterline. Mr. Adams discussed options to work around the issue involving either reducing the water extension by 300 feet or moving the water line. Mr. Adams stated that enough project contingencies should be available to pay for the option selected. The Town of Ponce de Leon will have to approve the option because the project is within the city limits.

Brian Lemieux, Alday-Howell Professional Services, presented the Turbeville Bridge bids stating that S&W Construction was the low bidder at \$515,998. The bid is over the budget remaining for the project. The Board agreed by consensus to table this matter until the next meeting.

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, presented a proposed Employee Policy and Procedures Amendment implementing a \$2.00 per hour stipend for the hours an employee works as an interim foreman, supervisor, or manager. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a motion approving the proposed policy amendment effective January 1, 2026. Commissioner Ellenburg offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

(Policy Amendment)

Nate Nolin, County Attorney, discussed advising Commissioner Erickson to abstain from voting on issues related to the water level at Dogwood Lakes. He stated that Commissioner Erickson is directly affected by the water level of Dogwood Lakes due to owning property on the canal separating the large lake from the small lake. Attorney Nolin requested direction from the Board about obtaining an opinion from the Florida Commission on Ethics on the issue to settle any future voting issues. Private citizens, Garrett Valcourt and Richard Willsey, discussed commissioners representing the communities where they live. Commissioner Ellenburg offered a motion approving Attorney Nolin's request to seek an opinion from the Florida Commission on Ethics on the matter. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Erickson discussed the overtime for the Board's administrative staff that was removed from the 2025-2026 budget. Discussion included the difficulty flexing the extra hours worked for evening Board meetings. Commissioner Erickson offered a motion to move \$6,000 from Board Contingencies to the Board's overtime budget. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Ellenburg discussed selling surplus equipment to purchase two brush cutters. Discussion included the Road Department's use of the asphalt reclaimer and auctioning off tractor-mounted attachments. The Board agreed by consensus to obtain the estimated worth of the surplus equipment to see if the amount will purchase two brush cutters that cost an estimated \$300,000 each.

Commissioner Ellenburg discussed the County's Dirt Policy allowing residents to receive two free loads of "ditch dirt" depending on availability. He discussed the need to ensure that Road Department Foremen are delivering only "ditch dirt" to the residents and not going beyond 50 feet off the right-of-way to deliver the dirt.

Commissioner Wilmer Stafford advised that Walton County quoted \$5,000 to paint the center line on County Road 179 from Pheil Drive to the Alabama state line. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a motion to use \$5,000 of LOGT funds to have Walton County stripe the 8.4 miles contingent on Walton County approving the request. Commissioner Ellenburg offered a second and the motion passed unanimously. The Board directed Project Director David Corbin to send the request to Walton County for their Board's consideration.

Commissioner Wilmer Stafford proposed giving Project Director David Corbin authority to hire law enforcement officers to patrol Lake Cassidy on major holidays. Holmes County Sheriff John Tate stated that the contract with the State Parks pays \$35 per hour when deputies are needed at the parks. Discussion included the following:

- Enforcement of Park Ordinance 19-01
- Extra patrol may be needed on weekends as well as holidays
- Handling calls for citizens at the lake without a permit
- Funding a full-time deputy for Lake Cassidy
- Hiring private security
- Number of deputies needed at the park
- Interlocal agreement with Walton County to patrol the lake

County Attorney Nate Nolin provided the history of the County's acquisition of the Lake Cassidy property. Commissioner Wilmer Stafford offered a motion to use the Lake Cassidy permit revenue to fund hiring law enforcement officers to patrol Lake Cassidy on major holidays. Commissioner Ellenburg offered a second and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Wilmer Stafford advised that Robert Ward has offered to deed the County a right-of-way easement to his property on Smith Chapel Road and Grover Lewis Road in exchange for the County clearing the easement so he can put up fencing. Discussion included obtaining the easement for future paving of the roads and the need to survey the property for the easement. The Board agreed by consensus to table this matter to view the property.

Commissioner Ellenburg requested center-line striping for 2.9 miles of County Road 179A and 3.4 miles for County Road 163. The Board agreed by consensus to see if Walton County will submit a quote to do the striping for these roads.

There being no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.


Clerk


Chairman