



Coweta County Board of Commissioners

22 East Broad Street
Newnan, GA 30263
www.coweta.ga.us

Public Hearing/Regular Meeting Session

Minutes

Shannon Zerangue
Fran Collins
770.254.2601

August 19, 2025

6:00 PM

**Commission Chambers
37 Perry Street
Newnan, GA 30263**

Coweta County Board of Commissioners

Call to Order

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Bill McKenzie	District 2 - Chairman	Present
John Reidelbach	District 4 - Vice Chairman	Present
Jeff Fisher	District 1	Present
Bob Blackburn	District 3	Present
Alphonso Smith	District 5	Present
Michael Fouts	County Administrator	Present
Kelly Mickle	Assistant County Administrator	Present
Sandy Wisenbaker	Assistant County Administrator	Present
Tod Handley	Public Works Administrator	Present
Nathan Lee	County Attorney	Present
Fran Collins	Deputy County Clerk	Present

The Honorable Board of Commissioners of Coweta County, Georgia met in Public Hearing/Regular Meeting Session on Tuesday, August 19, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Called to Order

Chairman McKenzie called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman McKenzie led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Invocation

Invocation was given by Commissioner Smith.

Notification of Location of Rules

Chairman McKenzie explained that the rules governing the meeting could be found on the County's website as well as on the table located in the lobby outside the meeting room.

Announcements and Comments from the Commissioners

Chairman McKenzie called for any announcements and/or comments from the Board.

Commissioner Smith expressed appreciation to all those in attendance and explained that it is encouraging to see how many members of the public are interested in the meeting.

Regular Session

Awards and Presentations

1. Department Spotlight - Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation Director Jim Gay presented an overview of the Coweta County Parks and Recreation Department. He explained that the department is divided into two (2) divisions, Recreation and Event Services. The Event Services division oversees the use of all community centers and the Fairgrounds Complex, and manages all right-of-way (ROW) use permits for bike rides, filming and other needs. Event Services Division Director Tray Baggarly also serves as the liaison to the Georgia Camera Ready Program and does a tremendous job. The Recreation division provides organized recreational activities for a wide range of activities, including youth sports, art, senior programming and more.

He highlighted the following success stories of the department:

- Parks and Recreation, in partnership with the county athletic associations, hosted fifteen (15) tournaments across the park system this past spring. These tournaments were heavily attended by local teams and staff received a lot of positive feedback from them. This summer, Parks and Recreation hosted over forty (40) camps and special activities that introduced a variety of programming to Coweta County residents, ranging from baseball to metal detecting. In addition, Parks and Recreation partners with the Atlanta Braves organization, Young Artists of Newnan, Connect Sports, and others. Program staff also supported five (5) special events that included Coweta County Library summer events, and back-to-school events hosted by local nonprofits. In addition, the summer youth flag football program hosted well over three hundred (300) participants this season. Staff does a tremendous job creating these opportunities.
- Event Services began reserving facilities for multiple events being held in a single weekend in June. Historically, only a single event was allowed per weekend, but

thanks to a partnership with Code Enforcement, Event Services staff has been successful in handling multiple reservations on a single weekend. Over the course of a year, this will provide approximately one hundred-ten (110) additional weekend reservation opportunities for the County's citizens.

- Senior Services continues to introduce new active programs and educational courses. In addition to the Tommy Thompson Senior Activity Center, Senior Programming is now being offered at Leroy Johnson Community Center, Canongate Community Center, and Madras Community Center. In addition, Senior Services, along with the Corrections Institute (CI) and many employee volunteers, served nearly seven hundred (700) local seniors over a period of two (2) days at our summer luncheon in June. He expressed appreciation to the CI for providing food, dishes, and serving seniors, and to the employee volunteers.

Mr. Gay further explained that the County has experienced growth in indoor programming over the past few years. As the indoor sports season approaches, there will be girls' volleyball and basketball, followed by volleyball again in the spring. Those sports are a little more difficult to program and are limited because they use indoor facilities. Staff has made a few changes to accommodate more participants and end/limit programming caps. Facility rentals continue to be a popular service, with adjusted rates and the ability to increase rentals on weekends, staff plans to implement a better software platform that is more user-friendly for the citizens. Fall sports are underway for all Association Athletics, including soccer, baseball, and girls' softball. Staff has organized programs, including tackle football and volleyball, and will be finishing up registration while adult softball is underway. They are currently registering for youth futsal, volleyball, and art programs. In closing, he explained that a Senior Services concert and lunch will be held on August 22, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. at the Tommy Thompson Senior Activity Center, and the Kiwanis Fair is scheduled for September 18-28, 2025 at the Coweta County Fairgrounds.

Chairman McKenzie expressed appreciation to Director Gay for the work he and his staff do not only for the children, but also for the adults and senior citizens of Coweta County.

Approval of Minutes

2. Request Approval of the Minutes from the Public Hearing/Regular Meeting Session Held on August 5, 2025

Motion to: Approve

The Board voted to approve the minutes from the Public Hearing/Regular Meeting Session held on Tuesday, August 5, 2025.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bob Blackburn

SECONDER: Jeff Fisher

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Consent Agenda

3. Confirm Execution of a Proclamation Designating "Newnan-Coweta Humane Society Day" in Coweta County

Motion to: Confirm

The Board voted to confirm execution of a proclamation designating "Newnan-Coweta Humane Society Day" in Coweta County.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bob Blackburn

SECONDER: Alphonso Smith

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Mr. Bill Johnson from the Newnan-Coweta County Humane Society (NCCHS) expressed appreciation to the Board and explained that NCCHS is a non-profit, all-volunteer organization. Members have kept the organization going for over fifty (50) years, operate on donations and fund-raisers, serve the community through a monthly pet pantry that assists families that can't afford to feed their pets, and provide medicine for pets. NCCHS also has an outstanding relationship with Coweta County Animal Services.

Warden Jeff Rogers congratulated the NCCHS on reaching their 50th anniversary, recognized the passion they have for animals, and expressed appreciation from both the Prison and Animal Services for their partnership and support over the years. He also expressed appreciation to NCCHS member Linda Earhart, Lieutenant Tom Bush from Animal Services and Animal Shelter Coordinator Rebecca Bradley for their hard work and dedication.

4. Confirm Execution of a Proclamation Designating "Sanford Cousin's Day" in Coweta County

Motion to: Confirm

The Board voted to confirm execution of a proclamation designating "Sanford Cousin's Day" in Coweta County in honor of his 90th birthday.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bob Blackburn

SECONDER: John Reidelbach

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Supplemental and Non-Agenda Items

Motion to: Approve

The Board voted to approve the addition of one (1) Non-Agenda item for discussion.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: John Reidelbach

SECONDER: Bob Blackburn

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Public Hearing (The Chairman will call for any comments regarding the following items after each item is presented)

5. **Public Hearing Regarding a New Package Beer and Wine License Application Filed by Amin Merani in Operation of Chevron Food Mart (AKS Partners USA, Inc.) Located at 870 East Highway 16, Newnan - District 2**

Business License Associate Joy Thompson explained that Mr. Amin Merani, license representative and sole owner of Chevron Food Mart (AKS Partners USA, Inc.) located at 870 East Highway 16, Newnan (Parcel # 088-2060-009), has submitted an application for a new package beer and wine license. This location has had an active alcohol license within the past twelve (12) months (Mac's Market (Newnan 870 Management, LLC); therefore, a certificate from a Georgia-registered land surveyor indicating distances as defined in *Section 6-46 of the Coweta County Alcohol Ordinance* is not required. The Business and Alcohol License Division has conducted a comprehensive review of the application and has determined that it is complete and meets all relevant requirements. The required background checks (GCIC) and fingerprint reports (GBI) for Mr. Merani have been finalized, confirming the qualifications as stipulated in the *Alcohol Ordinance*. In closing, she recommended that the license not be released to the applicant unless the location is open within six (6) months from the date of approval by the Board, and upon final approval from the Georgia Department of Revenue (Alcohol License Division), Coweta County Fire Marshal, Coweta County Environmental Health Department, and Coweta County Community Development (Zoning Division and Building Permits and Inspections Division).

The applicant was present but declined an opportunity to address the Board.

Chairman McKenzie called for comments in support of or in opposition to the alcohol license. There were none.

Motion to: Close the Public Hearing

The Board voted to close the Public Hearing regarding a new package beer and wine license filed by Mr. Amin Merani, license representative and sole owner of Chevron Food Mart (AKS Partners USA, Inc.) located at 870 East Highway 16, Newnan (Parcel # 088-2060-009).

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: John Reidelbach

SECONDER: Bob Blackburn

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Motion to: Grant

The Board voted to grant a new package beer and wine license to Mr. Amin Merani, license representative and sole owner of Chevron Food Mart (AKS Partners USA, Inc.) located at 870 East Highway 16, Newnan (Parcel # 088-2060-009), subject to the following conditions:

1. The location shall be open within six (6) months from the date of approval.
2. The applicant shall obtain final approval from the Georgia Department of Revenue (Alcohol License Division), Coweta County Fire Marshal, the Coweta County Environmental Health Department, and Coweta County Community Development (Zoning Division and Building Permits & Inspections Division).

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bill McKenzie

SECONDER: Al Smith

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

6. Public Hearing Regarding Petition # REZ 25-05 Filed by Freedom Land Holdings, LLC Requesting to Rezone Property Located at Mary Freeman Road, Lower Fayetteville Road, and Covey Trail, Newnan - District 1

Zoning Associate Nicole Blackwell presented Petition # REZ 25-05 filed by Freedom Land Holdings, LLC requesting to rezone property located at Mary Freeman Road, Lower Fayetteville Road, and Covey Trail, Newnan (Parcels # 111-6001-001, # 111-6001-001A, # 111-6001-006, # 111-6001-007A, # 111-6001-013, # 111-6001-025, # 111-6001-026, # 111-6001-031, # 111-6001-032, # 111-6001-063, # 111-6001-064, # 111-6001-065, # 111-6001-066, # 111-6001-067, # 111-6001-068, # 111-6001-069, # 111-6001-070, # 111-6001-071, # 111-6001-072, # 111-6001-073, # 111-6001-074, # 111-6001-075, # 111-6001-076, # 111-6001-077, # 111-6001-078, # 111-6001-079, # 111-6001-080, # 111-6001-081, and # 111-6001-082) from *RC (Rural Conservation)* to *R-PDP (Residential-Planned Development Project)*. She explained that the subject property consists of 101.36± acres and the applicant is requesting to rezone the property for the construction of a 329-lot residential subdivision containing 166 single-family detached homes and 163 fee-simple townhomes located within a gated section. She presented a map showing an aerial view of the subject

property relative to Mary Freeman Road, Lower Fayetteville Road, and Covey Trail which is a subdivision street within the Quail Ridge neighborhood. Most of the surrounding area is also zoned *RC (Rural Conservation)* except for the adjacent properties located in the City of Newnan (which were also identified on the map). The City of Newnan borders the property to the north, west, and south, and contains high-density residential developments including both single-family homes and townhomes. Given the site's proximity to the City of Newnan, the applicant is proposing the *R-PDP (Residential-Planned Development Project)* overlay. There are three (3) proposed access points, one (1) on Mary Freeman Road and two (2) off Lower Fayetteville Road (one of which is Covey Trail). The applicant has proposed a 50-foot buffer around the perimeter of the development with a smaller section at 25-feet east of Road E (as designated on the site plan). Leavell Drive, an existing access easement serving some of the neighboring properties, runs through a portion of the northwestern buffer. A 20-foot access easement is proposed over the existing portion of Leavell Drive that runs through the buffer to ensure continued access to the neighboring properties. Additional site features include an amenity area and three (3) walking trail segments, one of which is designed to connect all three (3) key areas of the development, including the amenity area, the townhomes, and the single-family detached homes. She displayed renderings and elevations of the proposed townhomes and explained that the development will occur in seven (7) phases, including four (4) phases for the single-family detached homes and three (3) phases for the townhome section. While the plan outlines the residential phases, there is no mention of the timing of the construction of the main amenity area or the proposed walking trails. Proposed amenities include a playground, dog park, pickleball courts, and a clubhouse. She highlighted factors reviewed by staff during the zoning application process and presented fifteen (15) conditions for consideration by the Board should they choose to approve the request.

In closing, she explained that staff received a request from the applicant this morning proffering changes to several of staff's recommended conditions (Conditions # 3, # 5, # 6, # 7, # 8, # 9, # 10, # 11, # 12, # 13, # 15, and to add Condition # 16), and presented a side-by-side comparison of the requested modifications to those conditions as proposed by staff.

Mr. Steven Jones, applicant representative, explained that the developer owns several lots on Covey Trail that do not perk and cannot be developed, along with an additional parcel, but the majority of the land is still owned by the Tate family. He reviewed the site plan for the 101.36± acres, including a proposed 329-lot residential subdivision containing 166 single-family detached homes and 163 townhomes located within a gated section. Townhomes are allowed within the County's *R-PDP* zoning if they are behind a gate and on a private street. There is a centralized amenity area, walking trails, as well as contributions to road improvements. The density (3.1 units/acre) is generally consistent with developments in the surrounding areas, particularly within the City of Newnan. The amenity area includes a 4,780 square-foot clubhouse, pool, playground and

tennis/pickleball courts. Because the walking trails traverse a number of stream courses that flow across impervious areas, making it difficult to maintain paved trails, the applicant is proposing compacted earth instead. In addition, the applicant is proposing a 50-foot buffer but wishes to disturb those buffers to grade and replant. He addressed the PDP Scorecard staff included in the agenda packet and explained that after the future GDOT widening project to improve Lower Fayetteville Road, they believe they could potentially gain an additional 15-40 additional points. In closing, he briefly reviewed the requested modifications to staff's conditions.

Administrator Fouts explained that the applicant has exhausted the allowed ten (10) minutes specified in the rules governing the Commission meetings and has no time remaining to offer rebuttal to any comments in opposition to the proposed rezoning.

Chairman McKenzie called for comments in support of the proposed rezoning.

Mr. Tyrone Tate, River Birch Way, Sharpsburg, explained that he and his wife are owners of property located at 433 and 447 Mary Freeman Road. Their property is located east of the SummerGrove Subdivision. They were concerned at the time about the impact that the development would have on his parents, his wife's parents, and his family. They understood there had been over a hundred (100) years of calling Newnan the City of Homes. Their original intent was to stay and keep their land. He addressed rumors among the public, and explained that the land has not been sold, there is not a closing date, and everything is contingent. They sat down with a number of developers and individuals interested in the land and made sure that they understood that the land had to meet a certain quality of life and standard in Coweta County. In addition, he has worked with the developer to get students at the Central Education Center (CEC) to be involved in their project. This developer has done everything possible to address the concerns of his wife, himself, and his children, who are adults.

Chairman McKenzie called for comments in opposition to the proposed rezoning.

The following citizens spoke in opposition to the proposed rezoning, citing concerns with the existing 94% capacity of students at Welch Elementary School, the development's location within one of the largest zones for elementary schools, that Phase 3 of Poplar Preserve is still being built, that Daybreak Townhomes at Shenadoah have just begun construction and are not occupied, that the developers did not contemplate the burden to the school and to local government, whether this is the type of development that is wanted and is beneficial to the children of the county, the need to eliminate the townhomes from the project because of their proximity to single-family homes on Briandwood Drive and Anniston Court, the need to increase the 50-foot buffer, the need to eliminate direct access to Briandwood Drive, the need to cap (not allow) rentals, that 1,200 signatures were obtained in opposition to the development on a petition, the need to prohibit access to Covey Trail, the loss of mature trees on the heavily wooded property,

impacts to the ecosystem, wildlife, wildlife habitat, infrastructure, and stormwater, increased traffic on Mary Freeman and Lower Fayetteville Road, decreased safety, the project failed *R-PDP* scoring twice (just 60% both times), that the developer provided a revised scoring based on Lower Fayetteville Road being widened, loss of privacy on an older, quiet and semi-rural character area, strain on infrastructure because of the density, over development in a transitional area (Comprehensive Plan), that the traffic engineer has been unlicensed since 2010, that fixes proposed by staff (like turn lanes) are inadequate without traffic light signalization and broader road network upgrades, that Covey Trail is a cul-de-sac not meant for a connector street and would jeopardize resident safety and privacy, that Lee Middle School and East Coweta High School are also at near capacity and the development will cause over crowding, that there is no mitigation plan or contribution from the developer, the strain on public safety services, loss of privacy, erosion and flooding, building on unbuildable land, increasing the current difficulties with getting out of Covey Trail onto Lower Fayetteville Road, that Covey Trail residents will be forced into a Homeowner's Association (HOA), exponential growth, proximity to Lora Smith Road, and that the developer submitted revised conditions.

- Ms. Ashley Nechay, District 1
- Ms. Julie Wall, Heritage Ridge, Newnan
- Ms. Sharon Prince, Cabin Road, Newnan
- Mr. Christian Tam, Covey Trail, Newnan
- Mr. Terry Schneider, Covey Trail, Newnan
- Mr. Jeremy Hyde, Brian Wood Drive, Newnan
- Ms. Deloise Jordan, Covey Trail, Newnan
- Ms. Cierra White, Mary Freeman Road, Newnan
- Ms. Robin Floyd, Bob Smith Road, Newnan
- Mr. Robert Stokely, Fountainhead Way, Sharpsburg

There were no additional comments from staff.

Motion to: Close the Public Hearing

The Board voted to close the Public Hearing regarding Petition # REZ 25-02 filed by Freedom Land Holdings, LLC requesting to rezone property located at Mary Freeman Road, Lower Fayetteville Road, and Covey Trail, Newnan (Parcels # 111-6001-001, # 111-6001-001A, # 111-6001-006, # 111-6001-007A, # 111-6001-013, # 111-6001-025, # 111-6001-026, # 111-6001-031, # 111-6001-032, # 111-6001-063, # 111-6001-064, # 111-6001-065, # 111-6001-066, # 111-6001-067, # 111-6001-068, # 111-6001-069, # 111-6001-070, # 111-6001-071, # 111-6001-072, # 111-6001-073, # 111-6001-074, # 111-6001-075, # 111-6001-076, # 111-6001-077, # 111-6001-078, # 111-6001-079, # 111-6001-080, # 111-6001-081, and # 111-6001-082) from *RC (Rural Conservation)* to *R-PDP (Residential-Planned Development Project)*).

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bob Blackburn

SECONDER: Jeff Fisher

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

In response to a question from Commissioner Fisher, Ms. Blackwell explained that the density of subdivisions in the surrounding areas (all located in the City of Newnan) ranges from 2.8 units/acre to 3.7 units/acre, depending on the subdivision. The proposed density of this development is 3.2 units/acre.

In response to questions from the Board, County Attorney Lee explained that an island cannot be created by annexation and Assistant Community Development Director Sewell explained that if the City of Newnan annexed the totality of this property, it would create an island at the southeastern corner of Mary Freeman Road and Lower Fayetteville Road.

Administrator Fouts explained that there is a 60% method allowed by law.

Attorney Lee confirmed that there is a 60% method allowed by law, but even with a 60% method, you cannot create an island.

Commissioner Reidelbach and Commissioner Fisher expressed concerns regarding the proposed density of the development.

Commissioner Fisher explained that a density of 3.0 units/acre would be more agreeable.

In response to questions from Chairman McKenzie, Public Works Administrator Handley recommended that, if approved, Covey Trail not be used for normal traffic but for gated emergency access only. He explained that staff's original condition was that if Covey Trail was utilized for normal traffic, that left and right turn lanes would be constructed on Lower Fayetteville Road to serve it. However, since reviewing conditions several times, it would work better if the subdivision was not connected, except for gated emergency access.

In response to a question from Commissioner Reidelbach regarding the applicant's proffered Condition # 5 associated with the County acquiring the right-of-way and constructing a roundabout on Mary Freeman Road, Public Works Administrator Handley explained that, if approved, he would recommend that if right-of-way is necessary from the developer's tract that they donate that right-of-way. If right-of-way is necessary from other property owners, then the County would have to pay to acquire it.

Commissioner Fisher and Commissioner Reidelbach expressed that additional time is needed to review the applicant's proffered conditions with staff.

Motion to: Reopen the Public Hearing

The Board voted to reopen the Public Hearing regarding Petition # REZ 25-02 filed by Freedom Land Holdings, LLC requesting to rezone property located at Mary Freeman Road, Lower Fayetteville Road, and Covey Trail, Newnan (Parcels # 111-6001-001, # 111-6001-001A, # 111-6001-006, # 111-6001-007A, # 111-6001-013, # 111-6001-025, # 111-6001-026, # 111-6001-031, # 111-6001-032, # 111-6001-063, # 111-6001-064, # 111-6001-065, # 111-6001-066, # 111-6001-067, # 111-6001-068, # 111-6001-069, # 111-6001-070, # 111-6001-071, # 111-6001-072, # 111-6001-073, # 111-6001-074, # 111-6001-075, # 111-6001-076, # 111-6001-077, # 111-6001-078, # 111-6001-079, # 111-6001-080, # 111-6001-081, and # 111-6001-082) from *RC (Rural Conservation)* to *R-PDP (Residential-Planned Development Project)*.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: John Reidelbach

SECONDER: Jeff Fisher

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Motion to: Continue the Public Hearing

The Board voted to continue the Public Hearing regarding Petition # REZ 25-02 filed by Freedom Land Holdings, LLC requesting to rezone property located at Mary Freeman Road, Lower Fayetteville Road, and Covey Trail, Newnan (Parcels # 111-6001-001, # 111-6001-001A, # 111-6001-006, # 111-6001-007A, # 111-6001-013, # 111-6001-025, # 111-6001-026, # 111-6001-031, # 111-6001-032, # 111-6001-063, # 111-6001-064, # 111-6001-065, # 111-6001-066, # 111-6001-067, # 111-6001-068, # 111-6001-069, # 111-6001-070, # 111-6001-071, # 111-6001-072, # 111-6001-073, # 111-6001-074, # 111-6001-075, # 111-6001-076, # 111-6001-077, # 111-6001-078, # 111-6001-079, # 111-6001-080, # 111-6001-081, and # 111-6001-082) from *RC (Rural Conservation)* to *(Residential-Planned Development Project)* until September 16, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: John Reidelbach

SECONDER: Bob Blackburn

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

7. Continuation of a Public Hearing Regarding Proposed Amendments to Appendix A. Zoning and Development, Article 18. LM Light Industrial District and Article 19. Industrial District of the Coweta County Code of Ordinances Associated with Data Centers

Administrator Fouts explained that over the past few years, the County has received numerous requests for speculative interest in data center developments throughout the county. The majority of these projects did not materialize for various reasons. In February 2025, a rezoning application known as "Project Peach" was filed to seek an expansion of an existing industrial district for a proposed data center development. The rezoning

petition was approved by the Board in April, subject to conditions (see April 15, 2025 minutes). After considering the continued and increased interest in data center developments, both locally and across the region, the Board enacted a moratorium on data centers on May 6, 2025, to consider codifying specific regulations to address this specific land use. The initial *Data Center Ordinance* was drafted by staff with input from the Board. The goal of the ordinance is to objectively address development regulations and impacts of data center developments without bias or focus on existing or proposed specific data center developments.

Administrator Fouts further explained that the recent Newnan-Times Herald article and statements made on behalf of The Citizens for Rural Coweta indicating that citizens' comments were not considered are inaccurate. Feedback and documents provided to staff related to the draft ordinance were included in the July 15th agenda packet. For additional clarity, prior to the July 15th Public Hearing, staff received numerous redline markup documents from legal counsel, Commissioners, developers and staff, including the County's acoustical consultant proposing amendments specific to the draft ordinance. In addition, staff and the Board received numerous emails and documents with general input regarding the proposed *Data Center Ordinance*. These comments were not specific to sections of the draft ordinance, so they were attached in their entirety to the agenda packet. There have been no deliberate efforts by staff to diminish or omit input from the citizens, and there was no selection process or filtering of the feedback. The only action was summarizing the specific markups. Any notion of partiality is simply not true, and it does not represent the efforts of staff. Additionally, at no time throughout this process has staff met with industry experts or developers to seek their specific input on the draft ordinance. While they may have called and asked questions, as have citizens, staff simply did not meet with them to get their feedback specifically. In addition to the correspondence received regarding the ordinance, numerous emails were received regarding "Project Sail", which is a pending rezoning application. Those emails were not included in the packet simply because they are specific to a future petition and not the actual ordinance. This time, County staff followed the same process that has been used for many years in developing new ordinances or an amended ordinance regarding a zoning and development code. Notably, a draft is compiled by staff, a draft is sent to the Board for review, a Public Hearing is scheduled and advertised, and the Board and staff receive input from the public on the proposed ordinance. In fact, over the last few months, staff and the Board have heard several comments from the public applauding the Board for their efforts on the *Solar Energy Systems Ordinance*. Staff followed the same process to draft the *Data Center Ordinance*. The development of this ordinance has highlighted the need for a unified system. Obviously, the comments are coming in via email to individual Commissioners and staff. Staff will take this feedback and work to improve that process. In closing, he explained that Assistant Community Development Director Ben Sewell will present the latest revisions and field any questions from the Board.

Assistant Community Development Director Sewell explained that his presentation will

focus on the revisions to the proposed *Data Center Ordinance* since the original draft ordinance was presented at the July 15th Public Hearing. He further explained that the major structural change to the ordinance was that, in the original draft, data centers would have been allowed by right in *M (Industrial)* district and would have required a *Conditional Use Permit (CUP)* in *LM (Light Industrial)* district. In this revised draft, data centers would be allowed by right in both *M (Industrial)* and *LM (Light Industrial)* districts and must be in/adjacent to an Employment Center or Interstate Gateway Character Area, which are shown in navy blue and purple on the Coweta County Comprehensive Plan map. In addition to structural changes, staff made revisions to several proposed design standards, specifically building design, buffering, noise, construction traffic, and utilities. Regarding building design, staff clarified the verbiage for standards, including an increase in the residential setback from 200 feet to 300 feet, enhanced design standards such as projections/recesses, changes in silhouettes, and to clearly state that data center buildings must be constructed using brick/stone, precast concrete panels, architectural metal (non-reflective), or fiber cement board. Buffering was increased from 200-feet (with the outer 100-feet against residential property to remain natural and the inner 100-feet to be planted) to a 300-foot buffer (outer 100-feet natural and inner 200-feet planted). A sound engineering consultant, Arpeggio, was engaged to review the original noise provisions with limits of 55 dBA at night and 65 dBA during the day, or 10 dBA above ambient at any time. The revised version requires a survey by an acoustic engineer, an independent review by a County consultant, revised sound limits to 5 dBA above ambient during the night and 10 dBA above ambient during the day, and generator testing is limited to weekdays from 9:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m., with no testing on federal holidays. A Construction Traffic Management Plan is now required with review by Public Works, Community Development, Fire Rescue, and the Sheriff's Office and surety bonds may be required by Public Works for road impacts. On-site primary power generation is now prohibited, and backup generators are permitted for outages only. Other standards are still in effect from the original draft ordinance, including fencing, lighting, parking, waste management, visual impacts of equipment and substation placement. In summary, he explained that following the initial Public Hearing (July 15th) and Work Session (July 22nd), staff adjusted zoning district allowances with *M (Industrial)* and *LM (Light Industrial)* by right with locational limits, strengthened design, buffer, and noise standards, and expanded traffic and utility provisions, with other original standards remaining in effect.

In response to questions from Commissioner Blackburn, Assistant Community Development Director Sewell explained that generator testing will be limited to weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with no allowed testing of generators on federal holidays.

Commissioner Reidelbach expressed his belief that lighting should also be kept 3-feet below grade and at a certain lumen level, open loop systems should be prohibited because of evaporation issues, and that generators need to be muffled.

Chairman McKenzie called for comments in support of the proposed ordinance

amendments.

For ease of transcription, the following speakers are not in order of appearance, but in order of their opinion (some of whom may have expressed both support and/opposition during their comment period).

The following citizens spoke in support of data centers and the *Data Center Ordinance*, citing the revenue data centers are purported to generate, citing support for the increase in buffers, noting that in the 300-foot buffer sound will lose 10 dBA per every 100-feet, pointing out that noise created by washing machines inside homes reaches 70 dBA, explaining that the revenue generated will allow for growth and a future for the county, citing that the Commissioners are also county residents and are good people, noting the tremendous amount of study into the subject and the options for citizen input has been well handled, explaining that I-85 helps to limit the amount of exposure to residential properties and is a popular and practical location, explaining that utility co-op charges are not be passed on to consumers, and expressing that data centers should be placed adjacent to industrial and employment centers.

- Mr. Alejandro Glomba, District 2
- Mr. Gene Murphy, Newnan

Mr. Steven Jones, Parkwood Center, Atlanta, expressed appreciation for the efforts and contributions made to the *Data Center Ordinance* so far. He requested clarification in the verbiage of the ordinance regarding the Comprehensive Plan requirements, explained that currently approved or later-approved data centers will automatically be deemed to be located in the Employment Center/Industrial Character Area, substation screening requirements allow planted vegetation and for substations to be visible while the planted vegetation is growing, allow 2-stories in height and for equipment to be on the roof, increase the allowable building height (achievable with an administrative variance) to 90-feet, basing noise tolerance on ambient noise creates ambiguity and uncertainty in the marketplace and other industrial uses are not treated to such rigorous noise requirements, suggested 65 dBA at a residential property line, decibel meters are sensitive instruments which pose an enforcement issue, adequate capacity of utilities available at existing supply lines is also ambiguous.

The following citizens spoke in opposition to the proposed *Data Center Ordinance*, data centers, Project Sail, and the Commissioners citing concerns regarding proper location and regulation of data centers, decommissioning plans and remediation bonds, or other type of financial safeguards, the need for independent noise studies, ongoing monitoring, limits as to when generators can be tested, enforcement of standards, fines, and suspension of occupancy if standards are not adhered to, protecting Coweta County's future, land, and quality of life, the disconnect between citizens and those they were elected to represent,

silencing opinions of those that have spoken in opposition, that the concerns of community are valid and they deserve respect and a strong ordinance, the toll on the environment, resources, generation of heat and waste, loss of greenspace, impact to undocumented Native American historical sites, industrialization of rural Coweta, obsolescence of data center technology, the need for transparency, data centers utilize unprecedented amounts of water and energy, the proliferation of numerous centers in the county, the need for increased scrutiny and oversight by local government and community members, removal as a conditional use in *LM (Light Industrial)* districts reduces the opportunity for additional community engagement, the need for clear articulation of how public comments can be collected and presented for consideration by staff and Commissioners, noise caused by open-loop systems, the need to require closed-looped cooling systems, the need for data centers to be located in employment center/industrial character areas, the need for substation screening, allowable building height (66 feet height up to 90-feet), ambient noise tolerance is ambiguous, 65 dBA at residential property line, etc., compliance with zoning procedure law and due process, the need for the ordinance to have a substantial relation to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare, failure to address local ordinances as far as the Comprehensive Plan and potential implications data centers could have to transportation, types of solid waste, recommendations from the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, the need for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to be required for any data center, the federal Emergency Planning and Community Rights to Know Act requires industrial users to have a plan in coordination with public safety, that data centers should be considered in heavy industrial zoning districts, security from data center cameras at residential properties, known nuisances, affects to health conditions, air pollution, weekly generator testing on Project Sail site, one size fits all ordinance is not appropriate, footprint, acreage, and stricter limitations and boundaries, the venue size for Commission meetings is not large enough, defining data center sizes and categories, Commissioners should consider the gravity and weight of citizen concerns as much as they do developers, exclusion of crypto-mining activities, enforcement mechanisms for exceeding noise limits, noise limits and operating restrictions for construction activities, generator testing, and maintenance activities, regulations regarding on-site power generation, light levels, waste stream accounting, safe storage of fuel, special training for public safety responders, emission standards for vehicles and generators, preventing and tracking ground and municipal water contamination, guarantee facilities do not take priority over citizens as consumers of water and electricity, enhanced mitigations offsets, not chasing data center revenue, offsetting and factoring the cost of impacts to the environment and infrastructure, reduction in quality of life, overstating of data center revenue, risk of bankruptcy, decommissioning and environmental degradation, and the length of time for completion of the project.

- Mr. Tim Ryan, District 3
- Mr. Rob Cole, District 5
- Dr. Chris Manganiello, Water Policy Director of Chattahoochee Riverkeeper Atlanta

- Ms. Laura Beth, District 2
- Ms. Laura Benz, West Broad Street, Newnan
- Ms. Connie Lytten, Wagers Mill Road, Newnan
- Mr. Robert Lytten, Wagers Mill Road, Newnan
- Mr. Neal Wolfe, Thompson Street, Newnan
- Mr. Ben Callaway, Renkin Way, Newnan
- Mr. James Shepherd, District 5
- Mr. Ron Bockrath, District 2
- Ms. Carolyn Wynn, Vine Street, Palmetto

Motion to: Schedule a Called Meeting/Public Hearing and to Continue the Public Hearing

The Board voted to schedule a Called Meeting/Public Hearing on Thursday, September 11, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at the Coweta County Fairgrounds located at 275 Pine Road, Newnan and to continue the Public Hearing regarding proposed amendments to the *Appendix A. Zoning and Development Ordinance, Article 18. Light Industrial, Section 182- Conditional Uses, and Article 19. Industrial, Section 191-Permitted Uses* of the Coweta County Code of Ordinances associated with data centers until Thursday, September 11, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at the Coweta County Fairgrounds.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bill McKenzie

SECONDER: John Reidelbach

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

8. Third Public Hearing Regarding the Proposed 2025 Millage Rates

Administrator Fouts explained that state law requires that the Board approve the millage rate or property tax rate as a levying authority. If there is a tax rate that is proposed that is higher than the state's required rollback rate, then the Board must conduct three (3) public hearings. The proposed rate is above the rollback rate and tonight is the third and final Public Hearing, followed by adoption of the millage rate. He further explained that over the last few months, as staff has worked through the budget and millage rate process, in addition to the normal process, there have been a few changes since 2024. In 2024, the General Assembly passed House Bill 581 (HB 581) limiting annual increases in assessed value of homestead property through a local floating homestead exemption. In November 2024, Georgia voters approved the referendum to enact the floating homestead exemption. Also, earlier this year, the Georgia Department of Revenue (DOR) ruled that only County and School System maintenance and operations (M&O) millage rates or levies are permitted on the state promulgated 2025 Notice of Assessment. Therefore, on the assessment notices mailed this year, only two (2) millage rates were listed, the County M&O and the School System M&O. In the past, the Fire District and the Fire Bond, which are special service districts, would have been included on the assessment

notices, along with any applicable city millage rates. Lastly, he explained that the Board recently executed resolutions establishing three (3) new Special Service Districts, including the Countywide 911, Countywide EMS, and Countywide Parks & Recreation (see May 6, 2025 minutes).

Administrator Fouts explained that there are several parties involved in the process throughout the year, including the Assessor's Office, whose role is to determine the fair market value of property each year as of January 1. They also approve or deny exemptions and process assessed value appeals filed by taxpayers. The Tax Commissioner's primary role is to compile the tax digest and to certify it to the DOR. When all the levying authorities have approved a millage rate, the Tax Commissioner then bills, collects and disburses those taxes to the jurisdictions. The Board of Commissioners' role is also vital in terms of setting the millage rate or tax rate, as well as the annual budget. Finally, the Board of Education (BOE), which is a separate body from the Board of Commissioners, has the responsibility of recommending a school system millage rate, as well as establishing their separate budget.

Administrator Fouts further explained that the process begins in July with the Board of Assessors completing its assessment and notices to taxpayers, and the Board of Commissioners conducting a Public Hearing regarding the budget. In August, the Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education recommended a millage rate and submitted it to the DOR in order to collect taxes. He defined the tax digest as the combined value of real and personal property, and explained that in Georgia, personal and real property are assessed at 40% of the Fair Market Value, unless otherwise specified by law. He reviewed the calculation to determine the millage rate and explained that the mandatory press release, along with the five-year history and the notices of property tax increase, have been completed and advertised.

Administrator Fouts noted that when taxpayers receive their bill, all the levying authorities are listed, but the County is listed at the top of the bill and often citizens assume the County is receiving all the taxes. He provided an illustrated breakdown (based on the 2024 millage rates) of each \$1.00 received, including \$0.6644 to the School System, \$0.2021 to the County for general maintenance and operations, \$0.1250 to the County for Fire, and \$0.084 to the County for the Fire Bonds. He explained that this year, the bill will include the new special service districts. He presented a table showing the 2025 digest, including the categories of real property, personal property, motor vehicles, mobile homes, timber, heavy equipment, the gross digest, exemptions that were applied to those categories, and finally the net digest value. He explained that the table includes those categories from the 2024 digest, reassessments, other/growth, and the total digest for 2025. He noted that the digest increased by almost \$450 million net year over year.

Administrator Fouts addressed several myths and misinformation regarding the millage rates. He explained that many citizens believe that a tax freeze was approved with the

adoption of House Bill 581 (HB 581), which is not the case. HB 581 simply limits the increase of the assessed value of homestead property and does not freeze the millage rate or the associated property taxes. He provided examples of a Notice of Assessment showing a property that decreased in fair market value in 2025 with a basic homestead exemption and a Notice of Assessment showing a property that increased in fair market value in 2025 with a floating homestead exemption. He pointed out that the School System opted out of the floating homestead exemption and therefore the floating homestead exemption will not apply to the School M&O.

Administrator Fouts explained that another myth that has been circulating is that Coweta County has the highest millage rate or property tax in Georgia, which is not true. Anyone can go to the Department of Revenue's website that lists the millage rate for every county in the state at the following address: <https://dor.georgia.gov/local-government-services/digest-compliance/property-tax-millage-rates>. They have approximately ten (10) years of millage rate data on their website.

Administrator Fouts also explained that another myth is that the County's budget process is not transparent to the public. This year, the Board held two (2) Work Sessions that were open to the public and were streamed online. Additionally, as soon as the budget documents were made available to the public, they were posted on the County's website at <https://www.coweta.ga.us/departments-services/departments-f-q/finance>. Multiple years of approved budgets and audited financial statements are available on the County's website.

Another myth Administrator Fouts addressed is the belief that if the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) revenue is growing, then there is no need for a millage rate increase. He explained that the County has been fortunate since 1986 to have a SPLOST, and it has funded many capital projects, but SPLOST cannot be used for operating expenses. It has afforded taxpayers a reduction in property taxes because those capital projects (i.e. fire apparatus, patrol cars, etc.) would otherwise be funded by property taxes. He pointed out that there is information regarding the SPLOST on the County's website under Coweta SPLOST, including expenditures for capital and projects, and this information is updated quarterly.

Administrator Fouts explained that another myth is that new development activity should provide adequate revenue without increasing property taxes. The majority of the County's tax digest is residential (69%) and the cost to provide residential services outpaces the revenue generated by new growth, which is also predominately residential (71% of the new growth in the 2025 digest).

The final myth Administrator Fouts addressed is that the County's millage rate has continuously increased over the past five (5) years. He explained that in three (3) of the last five (5) years (2020, 2021, and 2023) the Board adopted the rollback rate. In 2022

(3.17%) and in 2024 (5.60%), the Board voted to adopt an increase. For 2025, the proposed increase is 4.69% for Maintenance and Operations (M&O), if approved by the Board.

Administrator Fouts provided a brief recap of the proposed Fiscal Year 2026 budget and what is necessary to fund it in terms of property taxes. He also explained that for the 2025 tax year there will be three (3) new special service districts, and those agencies will be removed from the General Fund for transparency. In the Fiscal Year 2025 budget, roughly \$47 million was levied in property taxes with the planned use of \$4.75 million of the Fund Balance. As proposed in the Fiscal Year 2026 budget, approximately \$61.7 million in property tax revenue is needed to fund the budgets for the General Fund, Countywide E911 Fund, Countywide EMS Fund, and the Countywide Parks and Recreation Fund.

Administrator Fouts compared the millage rates from 2024 (4.688 mills) to the proposed millage rates for 2025 (4.817 mills for M&O and 1.12 mills for Countywide Special Service Districts) for a total of 5.937 mills or a change of 1.249 mills over 2024. For this year, the average value of a property with a homestead exemption is \$400,000 and a property without a homestead exemption is \$375,000. Both would be proposed to pay \$890.55 for the County M&O and Countywide Special Service Districts portions of the tax bill, or an increase of \$187.35 (or \$15.61/month). He further explained that if a property owner lives in the unincorporated county or in a municipality that has a contract with the County to provide fire protection, the 2025 Fire District and Fire Bond is an additional 2.389 mills, which would bring their 2025 total to 8.626 mills, or \$1,293.90, which is an increase of \$126.45 (\$10.54/month). The total increase is less because the millage rate in the Fire District and Fire Bond District were reduced from 2025.

In closing, Administrator Fouts reviewed the steps necessary to calculate the millage rate and presented the proposed millage rates for 2025 including the Countywide General M&O (4.817 mills), Countywide Parks and Recreation (0.397 mills), Countywide 911 (0.321 mills), Countywide EMS (0.402 mills), Fire District (2.500 mills), and Fire Bond (0.189 mills).

During his presentation, Administrator Fouts fielded questions from Commissioner Smith, Commissioner Reidelbach, and Commissioner Blackburn, explaining that the Board of Education determines their own millage rate, the floating homestead exemption does include the existing standard \$10,000 homestead exemption, and that in order to not increase the millage, staff would have to make substantial cuts to service, personnel, and benefits.

Chairman McKenzie called for any comments in support of or in opposition to the proposed 2025 millage rates. There were none.

Motion to: Close the Public Hearing

The Board voted to close the third and final Public Hearing regarding the proposed 2025 millage rates.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bob Blackburn

SECONDER: Jeff Fisher

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

9. Request to Set the 2025 Millage Rates

Motion to: Set the 2025 Millage Rates

The Board voted to set the 2025 millage rates as follows and to authorize the Chairman to execute a resolution, certification of documents, and a letter for submittal to the Georgia Department of Revenue (DOR) regarding the establishment of the 2025 millage rates:

	<u>2025 Millage Rates</u>
County M&O - Countywide	4.817
Countywide Parks & Recreation	0.397
Countywide 911	0.321
Countywide EMS	0.402
Fire District	2.500
Fire Bond	0.189
School District*	15.000

*As recommended by the Board of Education

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Alphonso Smith

SECONDER: Bill McKenzie

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Regular Session

Public Comments Regarding Items On the Agenda - This is also time for anyone that wishes to address the Board regarding cases heard at the Public Hearing conducted by the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Chairman McKenzie called for comments regarding any items on the agenda.

Ms. Rhonda Benizzi and Mr. Ed Benizzi spoke in support of Petition # VAR 25-14 (agenda item # 11). They explained that they are the applicants and live at 56 Ballyfin Way, Newnan, located in the new Cresswind Subdivision. They are requesting a 5-foot reduction in the distance between buildings for the installation of a pool. They were assured by the

builder of their home that there was 20-feet of usable space in the backyard for a pool, but the builder did not take into consideration an existing drainage easement which cannot be encroached upon. They are requesting to construct the pool 5-feet from the house.

Mr. Ned Smith, Ballyfin Way, Newnan spoke in support of Petition # VAR 25-14 (agenda item # 11), explaining that he is a neighbor of the Benizzis, and he sees no problem with the pool in the community because he believes it should be a positive for the development.

Recommendations from Community Development and/or the Board of Zoning Appeals

10. Recommend Approval of Petition # VAR 25-15 Filed by Shaun Wedderburn Requesting a Minimum Lot Width at Front Setback Line Variance for Property Located off Tanglewood Road, Newnan - District 3

Zoning Manager Lisa Eschman presented Petition # VAR 25-15 filed by Shaun Wedderburn requesting a minimum lot width at front setback line variance for property located off Tanglewood Road, Newnan (Parcel # 107-5176-059A) along with a recommendation of approval from the Board of Zoning Appeals. She explained that the subject property is a portion of Lot 33 in the Cedar Creek Farms development, Phase 2, which consists of 6.42± acres, and is zoned CC (*Cedar Creek*) district. She further explained that the *Cedar Creek* zoning district was established to protect the Cedar Creek watershed and public drinking water from damage relating to unrestricted development of the watershed. The original lot was established as a 7.50± acre tract (as shown on the final plat recorded on May 13, 1980, in Plat Book 27, Page 99). Between 1980 and 1992, a 1.08± acre portion was subdivided from the original tract, resulting in the creation of a 6.42± acre flag-shaped lot with the lot width at the front property line measuring 80-feet. The current property owner, Tang 13 LLC, acquired the property in May 2023 and is in the process of constructing a two-story, 1,800 square-foot residence that will include two bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a one-car garage. Upon receipt of a complaint from a neighbor, it was discovered prior to the establishment of the concrete foundation that a site preparation permit was issued in error for the site placement of the house. The required lot width at the front setback line is 130-feet, but at the current house site placement, the lot width is only 80-feet. Therefore, the applicant is requesting a 50-foot lot width reduction at the front property line (from 130-feet to 80-feet). She further explained that meeting the 130-foot minimum lot width is challenging because of site constraints, including the designated floodplain, surface drainage areas, and the required 150-foot impervious surface stream buffer. However, the structure can be located 190-feet from the Tanglewood Road right-of-way (ROW) in order to align with the front setbacks of the adjacent homes located to the north and south. She highlighted the factors considered by staff during the application

process, explaining that at the Public Hearing conducted by the Board of Zoning Appeals on July 24, 2025, three (3) citizens spoke in opposition to the proposed variance, and seven (7) citizens submitted audience participation forms in opposition. In closing, she presented two (2) conditions as recommended by the Board of Zoning Appeals for consideration by the Board should they choose to grant the variance request:

1. The minimum lot width at the front setback line shall be 80-foot.
2. The proposed home shall be located no less than 185-feet from the right-of-way of Tanglewood Road.

In response to questions from the Board, Ms. Eschman explained that a soil study has been submitted by the applicant, and they have received approval from the Environmental Health Department for their septic system. The property to the north sits approximately 130-feet from the front property line along Tanglewood Road, and the property to the south sits approximately 240-feet from the front property line along Tanglewood Road. At the Board of Zoning Appeals Public Hearing, the Board recommended that the house be set back an average of the two neighboring properties, or 185-feet from the right-of-way of Tanglewood Road.

Ms. Chris Peter, Tanglewood Road, Newnan, requested that the Board require the applicant to follow the ordinance. Everyone on Tanglewood Road has had to follow the ordinance and every request for a variance has been denied. The applicant's septic system can also be placed at the front of their house.

In response to questions from the Board, Ms. Eschman clarified that the request involves a reduction in the minimum lot width at the front setback line, which is not permitted under the ordinance without a variance. Even if the house were set back 185-feet from Tanglewood Road to align with adjacent properties to the north and south, the lot measures only 80-feet in width, and would still fall short of the 130-foot minimum requirement, requiring a 50-foot reduction.

Administrator Fouts explained that as proposed by the Board of Zoning Appeals, the house would be placed at 185-feet from the right-of-way of Tanglewood Road and the septic system would be placed in the front yard. In addition, the site prep permit was granted in error because of the setback's unique situation and wasn't discovered until a complaint was filed and investigated by Code Enforcement.

Motion to: Grant

The Board voted to grant a 50-foot lot width reduction at the front setback (from 130-feet to 80-feet) for property located off Tanglewood Road (Cedar Creek Farms, Partial Lot, Phase 2), Newnan (Parcel # 107-5176-059A) as requested in Petition # VAR 25-15 filed by

Shaun Wedderburn, subject to the following conditions,

1. The minimum lot width at the front setback line shall be 80-feet.
2. The proposed home shall be located no less than 185-feet from the right-of-way of Tanglewood Road.

RESULT: Passed (4-1)

MOVER: John Reidelbach

SECONDER: Bill McKenzie

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Alphonso Smith

NAYS: Bob Blackburn

11. Recommend Approval of Petition # VAR 25-14 Filed by Edward Benizzi Requesting a Distance Between Buildings Variance for Property Located at 56 Ballyfin Way, Newnan - District 2

Zoning Associate Blackwell presented Petition # VAR 25-14 filed by Edward Benizzi requesting a distance between buildings/structures variance for property located at 56 Ballyfin Way, Newnan (Parcel # 088-2058-134) along with a recommendation of approval from the Board of Zoning Appeals. She explained that the subject property is located in the Cresswind Subdivision, consists of 0.25± acres, and is zoned *RRCC* (Residential Retirement Community and Care) district. The applicant is proposing to install an in-ground swimming pool measuring 15-foot wide by 30-foot long in the backyard. The current ordinance classifies pools as accessory structures and requires that they be located at least 10-feet from any principal building or other accessory structure.

According to the applicant, there is a 20-foot drainage easement for a retention pond at the rear of the property which cannot be encroached upon. Therefore, the applicant is requesting a 5-foot separation between the pool and the house which results in a distance between buildings/structures reduction of 5-feet (from 10-feet to 5-feet). In closing, she highlighted the factors considered by staff during the application process and presented two (2) conditions for consideration by the Board should they choose to grant the variance request.

In response to a question from Commissioner Blackburn, Assistant Community Development Director Ben Sewell explained that since 1990 pools have been defined as buildings/structures in the *Coweta County Code of Ordinances*.

Motion to: Grant

The Board voted to grant a 5-foot distance between buildings/structures reduction (from 10-feet to 5-feet) for property located at 56 Ballyfin Way, Newnan (Parcel # 088-2058-134) as requested in Petition # VAR 25-14 filed by Edward Benizzi, subject to the following conditions:

1. The pool shall be located no closer than 5-feet from the principal dwelling and shall comply with all other applicable setback and development requirements.
2. The applicant shall meet all the requirements of the Community Development Building Permits and Inspections Division.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bill McKenzie

SECONDER: Jeff Fisher

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

12. Request Acceptance of Additional Right-of-Way and Greenway Along Smokey Road at Smokey Hill Estates Tract B, Newnan - District 2

Motion to: Accept

The Board voted to accept the donation of 0.069± acres of right-of-way and 0.169± acres of greenway located along Smokey Road at Smokey Hill Estates Tract B, Newnan (a portion of Parcel # 037-3002-003).

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bill McKenzie

SECONDER: Alphonso Smith

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

13. Request Approval/Execution of a Deed of Open Space Restriction and Easement Over Private Right-of-Way for Property Located in Cresswind at Spring Haven Subdivision, Phase 2C - District 2

Motion to: Execute

The Board voted to execute a Deed of Open Space Restriction for 9.766± acres and an Easement Over Private Right-of-Way associated with the Cresswind at Spring Haven Subdivision, Phase 2C.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bill McKenzie

SECONDER: Alphonso Smith

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Unfinished Business

14. Decision Regarding the Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Budget

Motion to: Adopt

The Board voted to execute a Resolution to Adopt the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget as presented by staff.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bill McKenzie

SECONDER: Bob Blackburn

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

15. Request Appointments to Various Boards/Authorities

No action was taken by the Board regarding appointments to various boards and authorities.

New Business

Bids and Contracts

16. Bid Award Associated with Striping, Raised Pavement Markers, and Pavement Markings on Various County Roads (RB25.11)

Motion to: Execute

The Board voted to execute a contract with TRP Construction Group, on a lowest and best bid basis, to perform the application of thermoplastic striping, thermoplastic pavement markings, and raised pavement markers on various County roads (RB25.11) at a total cost of \$769,181 with \$190,752 (SPLOST) as the County's local match, contingent upon final legal review.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bob Blackburn

SECONDER: John Reidelbach

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

17. Request Approval/Execution of the Indigent Defense Services Agreement with the Superior Court Public Defender

Assistant Administrator Mickle explained that staff is proposing that the Board execute an agreement with the Superior Court Public Defender's Office for the State's fiscal year 2026 (July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026) in the amount of \$773,305.40. The agreement includes the same amount as the prior year for personnel but includes an increase of approximately \$23,000 for rent because of additional space that the Public Defender's Office was provided during Fiscal Year 2025. With the Board's adoption of the County's budget tonight, staff will work with the Public Defender's office to draft an amendment to the agreement associated with the addition of personnel (approved in the County budget)

for consideration by the Board at a future meeting.

Motion to: Execute

The Board voted to execute an Indigent Defense Services Agreement with the Circuit Public Defender for the amount of \$773,305.40.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: John Reidelbach

SECONDER: Bob Blackburn

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Additional Action Items

18. Request Approval to Temporarily Close McIntosh Trail at Twelve Parks Entrances for Roundabout Construction - District 2

Public Works Administrator Handley explained that the developers of the Twelve Parks subdivision will be constructing a roundabout on McIntosh Trail to serve two (2) of the main entrances to the development. The construction of the roundabout will require a short section of McIntosh Trail to be closed for a period of sixty (60) days, weather permitting, to accomplish the construction project. The developer's representative has requested that the detour begin on September 2, 2025. A detour plan has been prepared and proper signage and message boards will be installed one (1) week in advance of the closure and detour to provide advance notice to motorists in the area.

Administrator Fouts explained that in response to recent inquiries received by the Board, a bridge was included in the final plat for the Twelve Parks development. Therefore, it is a condition of zoning that the development be built substantially to the conformance of what was proposed. It is staff's opinion that the bridge must be built, or the development must go back through the rezoning or replatting process. Additional information will be provided to the Board to review.

Motion to: Approve

The Board voted to temporarily close McIntosh Trail for a period of sixty (60) days, weather permitting, to allow for the construction of a roundabout at the main entrance to the Twelve Parks subdivision.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bill McKenzie

SECONDER: Bob Blackburn

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

19. **Request from the City of Haralson for Assistance with Paving on Bill Estes Road - District 1**

Motion to: Approve

The Board voted to provide labor and equipment to assist the City of Haralson with paving Bill Estes Road, with Haralson reimbursing the County for materials.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Jeff Fisher

SECONDER: Bob Blackburn

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

20. **Request Appointment of ACCG Legislative Voting Delegate for the 2025 Conference Business Session**

Motion to: Approve

The Board voted to appoint Commissioner John Reidelbach to serve as a voting delegate for the Business Session of the Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) Leadership Conference being held on October 9, 2025.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bill McKenzie

SECONDER: Jeff Fisher

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

21. **Request Approval to Utilize Various County Roads During the Unity Riders Pink Out Bike Ride**

Assistant Administrator Mickle explained that organizers of the annual Unity Riders Bike Ride are requesting to utilize various County roads for their event on Saturday, October 4, 2025. The event will include approximately sixty-five (65) riders on three (3) routes consisting of 10, 20, and 30 miles, all in the western portion of the county. Each will begin and finish at the Coweta County Fairgrounds, and a list of the roads to be used along with route maps has been provided. The Sheriff's Department is aware of the event, signage will be posted three (3) days prior to the event to inform the public, and each rider is expected to follow the rules of the road during the event.

Motion to: Approve

The Board voted to approve a request from Unity Riders to utilize the Coweta County Fairgrounds and various County roads to host the Pink Out Bike Ride on Saturday, October 4, 2025.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Alphonso Smith

SECONDER: Bob Blackburn

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Supplemental and Non-Agenda Items

22. Request from the Town of Moreland for Assistance with Signage - District 2

Motion to: Approve

The Board voted to provide labor and equipment to assist the Town of Moreland with replacing stop signs on School Street at Ball Street, Post Office Drive at Ball Street, and Brannon Street at Bethlehem Church Street, with Moreland reimbursing the County for materials.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bill McKenzie

SECONDER: Bob Blackburn

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith

Public Comments Regarding Items Not on the Agenda – This section is for any public comments regarding items NOT on the agenda. In accordance with the rules governing the meeting, up to 10 speakers will be afforded 3 minutes to speak and will be respectfully heard by the Board without public display or approval/disapproval from the audience. The Board does not engage with speakers during their comments. The Board will listen to any questions or comments and take them into consideration but will ask the County Administrator or staff to correct any inconsistencies or false statements after the speaker has been heard without debate.

Chairman McKenzie called for comments regarding any items not on the agenda. He explained that in accordance with the rules governing the meeting, up to ten (10) speakers will be afforded three (3) minutes to speak and will be respectfully heard by the Board without public display or approval/disapproval from the audience. The Board does not engage with speakers during their comments. The Board will listen to any questions or comments and take them into consideration but will ask the County Administrator or staff to correct any inconsistencies or false statements after the speaker has been heard without debate.

Ms. Mary Ann Pizzitola, District 4, addressed the Board regarding the *Coweta County Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, Article II. Board of Commissioners, Section 2-32. Code of Ethics*. She explained that this small section of the ordinances addresses the conduct and

expectations of the Board of Commissioners at the local level. Earlier this year, County staff collaborated with the Board to amend *Chapter 2*. However, during the May 6, 2025 Commission meeting, the Board voted 3-2 to postpone any discussion or decision regarding the amendments until a future meeting. Consequently, the Board has not issued any instructions to staff since that time, and she expressed her concerns about when that is going to occur. Secondly, she expressed concerns that Commissioner John Reidelbach filed a formal complaint against a resident (and government employee) that analyzed the proposed data center site using publicly available state and federal data with standard environmental science methods. Commissioner Reidelbach sought to have the resident reprimanded by his employer and urged the citizen to issue a clarifying statement labeling the work as misinformation. Since the message sent by Commissioner Reidelbach was outside of government official channels, it is unclear whether Commissioner Riedelbach was expressing personal grievances or exerting his authority as an elected official. She expressed concerns that this is not the mark of a transparent decision-making process and is a tactic designed to intimidate a citizen for exercising their right to question those in power. Protecting those who raise legitimate concerns is not only good governance but essential to safeguarding our shared future. Lastly, she requested that Commissioner Riedelbach apologize to that municipal worker or step down from office.

Ms. Verna Funk, District 3, addressed the Board regarding impact fees, roads, infrastructure improvements before developments are constructed, and impacts on schools. She complained that none of the Commissioners came to the first responders 911 event, the need to remember the terrible events of 911, and that freedom of speech should be protected.

Executive Session - In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2

There were no issues to be discussed in Executive Session.

Adjournment

Motion to: Adjourn

The Board voted to adjourn the meeting.

RESULT: Passed (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Bob Blackburn

SECONDER: John Reidelbach

AYES: Bill McKenzie, John Reidelbach, Jeff Fisher, Bob Blackburn, Alphonso Smith