

MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP MEETING JANUARY 8, 2026 @ 6:00PM HELD AT THE COMMISSIONER’S OFFICE OF THE WILCOX COUNTY COURTHOUSE.

Those present for the meeting were as follows:

Jamie Handley	Chairman
Clay Reid	Vice Chairman
Kerney Hair	Commissioner
Jowan Johnson	Commissioners
Mel Powell	Commissioner
Michael Pomirko	County Manager
Richard Rhodes	Cedar Creek Fire Chief
Charles Futch	EMS Director

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Jamie Handley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

INVOCATION: Commissioner Mel Powell gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Board of Commissioners and public stood for and recited the pledge of allegiance.

Update on Congressional Direct Spending Funds – Fire Stations (\$402,000.00)

Richard Rhodes and County Manager Michael Pomirko provided the Board with an update regarding a USDA Zoom meeting held earlier that morning. They reported that there are promising opportunities to utilize federal funding; however, the process will require extensive documentation and effort to secure the funds.

Mr. Pomirko informed the Board that an architect will be required for the fire station projects and emphasized the importance of obtaining reasonable pricing to minimize additional costs. He further noted that with the required matching funds and a fire station currently under construction, available funds are already stretched thin. He suggested that, over time, the County may consider establishing separate accounts for each station project and gradually contributing funds to cover matching requirements and other obligations across three or four stations.

Mr. Rhodes advised the Board that he raised concerns with USDA regarding the bidding process for a used fire truck and that discussions with USDA on this matter are ongoing.

Both Mr. Pomirko and Mr. Rhodes stressed the importance of identifying potential fire station locations within the County as soon as possible so that site work may begin immediately following submission of the first round of required documentation. The Board clearly expressed its understanding and agreement to move forward with gathering and submitting the necessary information at this time, with fire station site selection to follow.

A map was presented showing two potential sites that were generally understood by the Board; however, additional mapping or revisions were noted as necessary for a proposed third site.

Mr. Pomirko reminded the Board that projects involving federal funds often involve frequent delays, start-and-stop progress, and additional administrative work.

2. GARLAUDIE Signage

County Manager Michael Pomirko presented an overview of the new signage planned for the CGARLAUDIE station, noting that Dr. McIntyre donated the land for the site. The sign will be ordered in the near future and will be designed to match other County signage.

3. EMA / Fire Director Position

Mr. Richard Rhodes presented a proposal for consideration regarding the EMA/Fire Director position moving forward. He discussed challenges associated with limited staffing, noting that one or two employees are currently covering multiple roles. He emphasized the need for

improved coordination as new fire stations are developed and as documentation requirements increase.

Mr. Rhodes proposed creating an EMA/Fire Coordinator position to address these gaps and help the County remain proactive. He suggested an initial pay range of \$15.00–\$16.00 per hour, with potential growth over time.

The Board engaged in discussion regarding comparable roles in other departments, concerns about starting salary levels, and long-term sustainability. It was agreed that the County should attempt to fill the position but begin at a lower starting salary, with the possibility of increases as training is completed and responsibilities are fulfilled.

4. E-911 Addressing Markers

Mr. Richard Rhodes discussed ongoing issues related to emergency response delays caused by inadequate or missing address identification. He requested that the Board consider implementing address markers at mailboxes, similar to programs used in surrounding counties, potentially for a small fee.

Mr. Rhodes noted that visible address markers could save critical seconds during emergency responses and that responders often have difficulty locating properties due to lack of proper identification. The Board requested that Mr. Rhodes further research the option and coordinate with the County Manager to develop a potential plan of action.

5. Ambulance M-1 Update



Mr. Charles Futch provided an update on the ambulance fleet. He reported that Ambulance M-3 has recently returned to service after repairs, though at some expense. He noted that the fleet includes two new ambulances, M-4 and M-5, which were received in 2025.

Mr. Futch reported that Ambulance M-1, a 2015 model, may require a new engine following recent repairs. Brannen Motor estimated the cost of a replacement engine at approximately \$24,000.00, while an additional quote from Stephens Brothers exceeded \$30,000.00.

Commissioner Mel Powell recommended that Mr. Futch contact Mr. Fred Hall to explore additional options regarding the engine replacement or alternative solutions.

Adjournment

Commissioner Jowan Johnson motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Kerney Hair seconded the motion that carried unanimously. 8:00pm

CHAIRMAN, JAMIE HANDLEY

COUNTY MANAGER, MICHAEL POMIRKO