

MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP MEETING MARCH 17, 2026 @ 5:15 PM 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
Jowan Johnson	Commissioner
Kerney Hair	Commissioner
Mel Powell	Commissioner
Michael Pomirko	County Manager
Jeff Wessel	Sheriff
Bruce Green	Mayor City of Abbeville
Lucas Allison	Cordele Dispatch

Call to Order

Chairman Jamie Handley called the meeting to order at **5:15 p.m.**

Invocation: Commissioner Mel Powell

Pledge of Allegiance: All present

1. Mary Evelyn Warren Building (ADA Ramp)

Chairman Jamie Handley called the meeting to order and introduced the first item regarding the new polling location within the City of Abbeville at the Mary Evelyn Warren Building and the need for an ADA-compliant ramp.

County Manager Michael Pomirko reported that in December 2025, the City of Abbeville Council approved relocating the polling site from the Joy Theater to the Mary Evelyn Warren Building. This request originated from the Election Supervisor and the Wilcox County Election Board and required a public hearing with proper advertisement in the Cordele Dispatch. Following completion of all required procedures.

Additionally, the City Council approved a quote from D.B.A. Stephens Construction in the amount of \$4,850.00 for construction of an ADA ramp and related facility improvements. A second quote was received from House to Home Renovation for \$2,650.00.

Mr. Pomirko stated that the City requested financial assistance from the County toward the ramp installation, noting time constraints due to the upcoming election. The board of commissioners proposed a revised contribution request of \$1,325.00, representing half the cost of the lower bid. Mr. Bruce Greene indicated he would consult with the City Council and report back.

Further discussion addressed communication issues surrounding the polling location change and strategies to improve coordination in the future. Mr. Pomirko outlined procedural improvements to prevent similar situations. He also noted that any one-time County contribution would be contingent upon consultation with the County Attorney to determine the appropriate legal framework for funding improvements to property owned by another governmental entity.

2. Communication Room (W.N. Newt Hudson Agriculture Center)

Mr. Pomirko provided an update on the communication room currently housing repeater and communication systems. A quote of \$2,460.00 was received from Jimmy Wright to expand the room.

The proposed project includes creating an exterior-only access point for security and safety purposes, while repurposing the existing interior door for use in a storage area within the facility. The expansion will provide additional space for communication equipment and agricultural storage, supporting future growth and operational needs.

3. EMS Ambulance M-1 (Engine Replacement Quote)

Mr. Pomirko presented quotes from Brannen Motor Company and Stephens Brothers regarding the replacement of the engine in EMS Ambulance M-1. He noted that Mr. Charles Futch obtained the quotes and is expected to attend the April meeting for further discussion.

Based on preliminary review, Mr. Pomirko recommended full engine replacement to ensure warranty coverage and long-term reliability. He also noted that once retired from EMS use, the ambulance chassis could be repurposed by the Road Department for use as a spray truck.

4. Budget Amendments – FY2026 (First Half Cleanup)

Mr. Pomirko presented proposed budget amendments for FY2026, aimed at reconciling prior board actions and addressing adjustments, particularly within the Fire Department budget due to construction and related expenditures.

He stated the intent is to finalize first-half adjustments now and evaluate the need for additional amendments later in the fiscal year, potentially in August or September.

5. Cost Analysis – Wilcox County Jail (Studio 8, CRA Architects, Jericho)

Mr. Pomirko presented a comprehensive cost analysis regarding the potential construction of a new county jail facility. The analysis included projected construction costs, operating expenses, financing considerations, and the role of SPLOST funding.

He reviewed cost variations among design firms, emphasizing that both cost percentage and experience are important considerations. Conceptual comparisons were presented between facilities involving minor renovations with additions and those requiring major renovations.

Mr. Pomirko also discussed Georgia House Bill 1116 and its implications, noting that County budget increases are capped at 3% annually, which would not accommodate projected operational and debt service costs for a new jail.

He recommended selecting a finalist design firm at the April meeting and proceeding with site evaluations and conceptual drawings. He further proposed utilizing the new legislation to present a referendum to voters regarding a potential property tax increase to fund the project.

The Board expressed support for this approach and agreed to evaluate two potential sites:

- Property behind the current Sheriff's Office
- Property near the Government Center and adjacent land

Mr. Pomirko noted ongoing developments may impact final decisions.

6. Government Center Siding

Mr. Pomirko presented a quote for replacement of vinyl siding at the Government Center, citing its deteriorated condition.

The Board agreed to defer action until receiving input from the architect, particularly in light of potential future use or redevelopment of the facility.

7. Department Name Change – Road Department to Public Works

Mr. Pomirko discussed the possibility of renaming the Wilcox County Road Department to the Wilcox County Public Works Department to better reflect the expanding scope of services and operational complexity.

He noted that such a change would require formal adoption through a resolution. The Board acknowledged that restructuring could support future departmental growth and diversification of services.

8. Solar Ordinance Update

Commissioner Kerney Hair and Vice Chairman Clay Reid reported receiving feedback from residents regarding the County's solar ordinance, specifically concerns about setback requirements.

They also identified a typo error within the ordinance. The intended standard for large-scale Solar Energy Systems (SES) is a 100-foot setback, rather than the currently stated 1,000-foot setback.

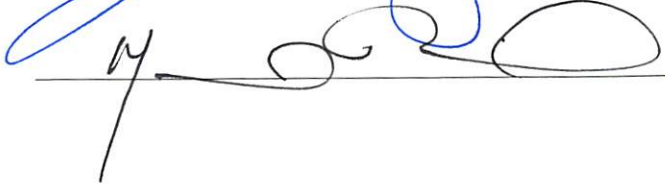
Mr. Pomirko stated he would coordinate with the County Attorney to correct the inconsistency and present a revised ordinance at the next meeting.

Adjournment

Vice Chairman Clay Reid made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Jowan Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.



CHAIRMAN, JAMIE HANDLEY



COUNTY MANAGER, MICHAEL POMIRKO