

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE WILCOX COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD ON APRIL 7<sup>th</sup>, 2026 AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE COMMISSIONERS MEETING ROOM IN THE WILCOX COUNTY COURTHOUSE.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Hon. Jamie Handley, Chairman; Hon. Clay Reid, Vice Chairman, Hon. Jowan Johnson, Commissioner; Hon. Kerney Hair, Commissioner; and Hon. Mel Powell; Commissioner,

OTHERS PRESENT: Michael Pomirko, County Manager; Toni Sawyer, County Attorney; Charles Futch, EMS Director, Jeff Wessel, Wilcox Co. Sheriff; Janice Brown, Coroner; Larry Brown, Deputy Coroner; Man Ferguson, Rochelle City Councilman; Scott Keene, Citizens; and Lucas Allison, Cordele Dispatch.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Handley called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

INVOCATION: Commissioner Jowan Johnson gave the invocation.

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

PRIOR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES: Vice Chairman Clay Reid made a motion to approve the prior monthly meeting minutes. The motion was second by Commissioner Kerney Hair with a unanimous vote.

GUEST WITH PUBLIC COMMENTS: No Public Comments.

## NEW BUSINESS

### 1. Intergovernmental Agreement – Abbeville Fire Suppression Automatic Mutual Aid

Chairman Jamie Handley opened discussion regarding the intergovernmental agreement for automatic mutual aid with Abbeville Fire Suppression. County Attorney Toni Sawyer informed the Board that she and County Manager Michael Pomirko had discussed the agreement and identified concerns with certain wording. She is currently revising the document to clarify any potential misunderstandings and expects to present an updated version for Board consideration.

**Action:** Item tabled pending receipt of the revised agreement for final vote.

### 2. Solar Ordinance Amendment

Chairman Handley introduced discussion regarding an amendment to the previously adopted solar ordinance. County Attorney Sawyer apologized for missing the prior workshop and stated that County Manager Pomirko had briefed her on the Board's concerns related to language governing large-scale Solar Energy System (SES) projects.

Following discussion, the Board agreed that both setback and buffer requirements for large-scale SES projects should be amended from **1,000 feet to 100 feet** to eliminate confusion and ensure consistency in the ordinance language.

**Action:**

- Motion by Commissioner Jowan Johnson to authorize the County Attorney to revise the ordinance to reflect 100-foot setbacks and buffers.
- Second by Commissioner Kerney Hair.
- Vote: Unanimous approval.

### 3. FY2027 Budget Request – Eighth Judicial District

Chairman Handley presented the FY2027 budget request for the Eighth Judicial District in the amount of **\$78,851.00**, representing a **decrease of \$3,089.00** from FY2026.

County Manager Pomirko explained that the Board typically adopts this budget annually due to the circuit's July 1 through June 30 fiscal year. He noted that prior state legislation had helped offset costs in the previous year. A new expenditure included in the FY2027 request is the S&L Integrated and Central Voice annual maintenance contract.

**Action:**

- Motion by Commissioner Jowan Johnson to approve the FY2027 budget request.
- Second by Commissioner Mel Powell.
- Vote: Unanimous approval.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. Bid Tabulation – RFP 26-A002 (Wilcox County Jail Complex/Sheriff's Office)**

Chairman Handley opened discussion on the bid tabulation for architectural services. County Manager Pomirko requested the Board select one of the top three ranked firms to proceed. The firms and scores were:

- Studio 8 – 85.00
- CRA Architects – 84.60
- Jericho Design – 84.40

Pomirko recommended Studio 8 based on the highest evaluation score.

#### **Action:**

- Motion by Commissioner Jowan Johnson to approve Studio 8 of Valdosta, Georgia.
- Second by Commissioner Kerney Hair.
- Vote: Unanimous approval.

### **2. Budget Amendments – First Half FY2026**

Chairman Handley opened discussion regarding budget amendments across several funds, including the General Fund (100), T-SPLOST (300), and SPLOST (315). County Manager Pomirko provided an overview of adjustments to address prior obligations and current project needs.

#### **Action:**

- Motion by Vice Chairman Clay Reid to approve the budget amendments.
- Second by Commissioner Mel Powell.
- Vote: Unanimous approval.

### **3. EMS Ambulance M-1 Engine Replacement**

Chairman Handley opened discussion regarding replacement of the ambulance engine for M-1. County Manager Pomirko recommended purchasing a new engine with warranty coverage. EMS Director Charles Futch presented quotes from two vendors, both including a two-year unlimited mileage warranty with required maintenance intervals:

- Stephens Brothers: \$26,921.83
- Brannen Motor: \$36,800.00

#### **Action:**

- Motion by Commissioner Mel Powell to approve Stephens Brothers for the engine replacement.
- Second by Commissioner Jowan Johnson.
- Vote: Unanimous approval.

## **DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

- **Sheriff Jeff Wessel:** Reported hiring two new employees and sending them for mandated training; provided general operational updates.
- **Coroner Janice Brown:** Reported that operations are proceeding without issue.
- **EMS Director Charles Futch:** No report.

## **COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT – Michael Pomirko**

- Legislative update regarding SB33.
- State Route 159 project scheduled to begin in April.
- LRA funding awarded; further discussion to follow at an upcoming workshop.
- Cemetery Road TIA project is underway and nearing completion.
- Upcoming road project bids include Barentine Road, Copeland Road, Fellows Road, and McBryant Road.

## **SHERIFF'S REQUEST – VEHICLE PURCHASE**

Sheriff Jeff Wessel requested consideration for the purchase of two used vehicles from Crisp County to address immediate fleet needs for new personnel:

- 2015 Dodge Durango (151,000 miles)
- 2017 Dodge Ram Pickup (171,000 miles)
- Total cost: \$23,000

County Manager Pomirko advised that midyear budget constraints limit the ability to add vehicle purchases and emphasized the need for a long-term fleet replacement plan. Discussion included current fleet mileage, expected lifespan of the vehicles, and funding limitations within the General Fund.

**Action:**

- Motion by Commissioner Kerney Hair to approve the purchase using General Fund resources within the Sheriff's budget.
- Second by Commissioner Jowan Johnson.
- Vote: Unanimous approval.

*Note: No motion was made to formally amend the agenda to include this item.*

**COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

County Attorney Toni Sawyer advised that she had a matter for Executive Session.

**COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

Chairman Handley reported being contacted by NextEra regarding a future discussion on the solar ordinance.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion to Enter Executive Session:**

- Motion by Commissioner Mel Powell
- Second by Commissioner Jowan Johnson
- Vote: Unanimous
- Time Entered: 8:02 p.m.

**Purpose:**

- Legal consultation
- Personnel matters
- Property negotiations

**Exit Executive Session:**

- Motion by Commissioner Jowan Johnson
- Second by Vice Chairman Clay Reid
- Vote: Unanimous
- Time Exited: 8:25 p.m.

**Action Following Executive Session:**


- Motion by Vice Chairman Clay Reid to join the Six Remnant opioid settlement.
- Second by Commissioner Jowan Johnson.
- Vote: Unanimous approval.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Mel Powell made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Clay Reid and carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

 \_\_\_\_\_ Jamie Handley, Chairman

 \_\_\_\_\_ Michael Pomirko, County Manager