

Charlton County Board of Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
Commissioners Conference Room
68 Kingsland Drive, Suite B
Folkston, Georgia 31537
Thursday, September 18th, 2025
6:00 PM

9/18/2025 - Minutes

Call to Order

Present was Chairwoman Alphya Benefield, Commissioner James Everett, Commissioner Drew Jones, Commissioner Luke Gowen, County Attorney John Adams, County Administrator Glenn Hull, and County Clerk Madeline Nettles.

Absent was Commissioner Jesse Crews.

The meeting was called to order at 6:09 PM.

Invocation and Pledge to the Flag

Chairwoman Benefield led the invocation.

Adoption of the Agenda

Commissioner Everett motioned to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Gowen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of the Minutes

1. Motion to Approve the August 21st, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Jones motioned to adopt the minutes. Commissioner Everett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

County Clerk Nettles discussed the current procedure for adopting the minutes from executive sessions. The board expressed their desire to revert back to the previous method of adoption with each board member approving the executive session minutes by signature.

Presentations

1. Presentation of Life Saving Awards and Special Recognition for those Involved with the Incident at Davis Airfield, presented by the Franklin Family

County Administrator Hull introduced the new EMA Director, Tiffany Yearwood.

County Administrator Hull welcomed the Franklin Family to the floor and read a prepared speech about the incident at Davis Airfield and the people who assisted.

The Franklin Family, assisted by County Administrator Hull, presented the awards and Certificates of Recognition.

Public Hearings

Petitions

Purchasing Items

1. Motion to Authorize Hose and Ladder Testing to be Conducted by S.E.M.S. in the amount of \$5,149.50

This item is for the annual hose and ladder testing required by ISO and the state. The testing will be conducted on all hoses and ladders on all engines.

Commissioner Jones motioned to authorize the testing be conducted. Commissioner Gowen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Grants and SPLOST Projects

Agreements

1. Motion to Authorize County Administrator Hull to Execute an Agreement with the Okefenokee Chamber of Commerce for Promotion of Tourism in Charlton County

Melodey Martindale, Executive Director of the Okefenokee Chamber of Commerce was present to answer questions. Several members from the Chamber Board.

Mrs. Martindale presented a cost breakdown on what the \$12,000 requested from the county would be allocated for. Mrs. Martindale discussed the agreement deliverables, the Chamber's upcoming events, and services the Chamber will be providing to the community.

Chairwoman Benefield addressed the Chamber's Board members, thanking them directly for getting the organization back into compliance and serving the community. Chairwoman Benefield invited them to attend future commission meetings.

Commissioner Gowen motioned to authorize County Administrator Hull to execute an agreement with the Okefenokee Chamber of Commerce for promotion of tourism in Charlton County. Commissioner Everett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Motion to Authorize County Administrator Hull to Execute an Agreement with the Charlton County Band Boosters and Sowing Seeds Outside the Wall for Recreation Concession Services

County Administrator Hull discussed the agreement with the Charlton County Band Boosters and Sowing Seeds Outside the Wall. Leighann Kitchens, with the Band Boosters, and Elaine Bailey, with Sowing Seeds, and Joel Shivar, Director of Parks and Recreation, were present as well.

Director Shivar talked about the needs of the Recreational Department for assistance with operating the concession services during sports events. Both non-profits are directly involved with the youth in Charlton County currently and use this opportunity to further connect with the community.

Mrs. Kitchens and Mrs. Bailey both shared remarks about their organizations' feelings towards the partnership.

Chairwoman Benefield asked for a motion to table the item until County Attorney Adams and County Administrator Hull receive all documents required for legal purposes, as instructed by County Attorney Adams.

Commissioner Jones motioned to table. Commissioner Everett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ordinances

Resolutions

Miscellaneous

1. Motion to Approve the August 2025 Financial Report

Commissioner Gowen motioned to approve the August 2025 financial report. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Discuss Proposal from Heart 2 Heart Humane Society

Allen Kubinski, President of Heart 2 Heart Humane Society, presented the proposal to the board.

Heart 2 Heart is requesting a yearly lease of the old Unison Building for animal care services.

Mr. Kubinski discussed the effect Heart 2 Heart has had on the community since March 2025, their events, and their volunteers. Heart 2 Heart feels that a permanent location would assist in their ability to expand services in the county. Mr. Kubinski discussed the proposed phases of instituting a permanent location, as well as the relationships and partnerships they have formed with other organizations and the role that those other organizations would play in the proposed phases.

Chairwoman Benefield stated the county was not interested in renting the facility out, as it is not a safe building as it currently stands. Chairwoman Benefield stated that county has unfinished real estate business with the property, which is the reason the county is unwilling to move forward with any proposed renovations or agreements for the building. Chairwoman Benefield discussed the alternative ways the county could possibly support the program instead.

County Administrator Hull shared his concerns about the proposal and discussed potential alternatives that the trust attorney has approved as well. County Administrator Hull recommended that the board denies the proposal and allow him to work directly with Heart 2 Heart to find alternative solutions.

Mr. Kubinski briefly discussed Heart 2 Heart's alternative plan to move forward with the animal wellness center without the county support.

County Attorney's Action Items

Public Comments

Gary Tippins of the Board of Assessors asked for an updated on the scheduling of the joint meeting with the Board of Commissioners and Board of Assessors. County Clerk Nettles talked about the efforts to scheduled and agreed to get with Laurie Thomas, Chief Appraiser, to finalize a date.

County Administrator Comments

Commissioners Jones thanked the Georgia Forestry department, the EMS department, the Fire department, and the Sheriff's department for their involvement with the Davis Field incident.

Chairwoman Benefield everyone for their support, presence, and prayers. Chairwoman Benefield talked about the loss of several community members recently.

Chairwoman Benefield thanked the staff and expressed that she wants them to be encouraged.

Chairwoman Benefield stated as follows:

"The Board of Charlton County Commissioners have heard the voice of the general public, and we apologize for not having heard you earlier. We apologize for not having responded as we may have if we had known what we should have done, but we missed some important information, and we are gathering our faculties as diligently as we can. We are going to be a better board to serve the general public intentionally. For all of you who have spoken with me and all of you who have spoken with any of the gentlemen, we thank you for your comments. You are truly important to us. We will answer you. You have no problem talking to us. You have no problem stopping us. You have no problem getting our attention. We are your servants. We are pleased to serve you because we are chosen by God through you. We care. We heard you, and we answered. Thank you, sir. Thank you, ma'am. Thank you, leaders. Thank you, citizens. Thank you, other servants of Charlton County. God bless each of you. Thank you. Have a good evening. "

Commissioners' Comments

Next Meeting:

1. Station Four (4) Georgia Bend Groundbreaking Ceremony on September 19th, 2025, at 11:00 AM
2. Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting on October 2nd, 2025 at 6:00 PM in the St. George Community Room

Adjourn

Commissioner Everett motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:22 PM.

Alphya Benefield, Chairman

Madeline Nettles, County Clerk