



GORDON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

January 6, 2026

Judicial Building Assembly Room

Work Session - 5:00 PM

Regular Session - 6:00 PM

PRESENT: Commissioners M.L. “Bud” Owens, Chair, Kevin Cunningham, Vice-Chair, Chad Steward, Randy Abernathy, and Kurt Sutherland; County Administrator Jim Ledbetter, County Clerk Hollis Barton, Assistant Administrator Keith King, County Attorney Chris Jackson; Ritchie Harris, Robert Paris, Tony Ross, Andrea Bramlett, Angie Gillman, Kim Chavez, Joel Hall, Dustin Wilbanks, Grant Walraven, Blake Silvers, Brandi Owczarz, Brent Jones

WORK SESSION

Mr. Ledbetter gave an overview of the agenda. Mr. Ledbetter then introduced Code Enforcement Director Kim Chavez and welcomed Joel Hall.

REGULAR SESSION

- I. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance** - Vice-Chair Cunningham; Commissioner Steward
- II. Call To Order** - Chair Owens called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.
- III. Approval of the Agenda** - Commissioner Steward made a motion to approve the agenda with the removal of item III, the motion carried 5-0.
- IV. Approval of Minutes** - Commissioner Sutherland made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Abernathy. The motion carried 5-0.
 - 1. Adopt minutes of Work, Executive, and Regular Session of December 16, 2025.**
- V. Special Presentation**
 - 1. Auditor Presentation of FY2025 Audit** - Christopher McKellar with Mauldin and Jenkins presented the FY2025 Audit to the Commission.
- VI. Special Recognition**
 - 1. January Employees Years of Service** - Commissioner Abernathy recognized the employees with service dates in January, Commissioner Sutherland drew William Kuhlman as the recipient of the additional vacation day.

Hollis Barton, *County Clerk, 3 years*
Jaylen Lay, *District Attorney's Office, 4 years*
Angie Gillman, *E911, 26 years*
Gary Dobson, *E911, 16 years*
Zevan Gilbert, *Fire & Rescue, 25 years*
Matthew Lessis, *Fire & Rescue, 5 years*
Louis Bingiel, *Fire & Rescue, 3 years*
James Dalton, *Fire & Rescue, 3 years*
Trevor Henderson, *Fire & Rescue, 3 years*
Atticus Peppers, *Fire & Rescue, 3 years*
Cameron Carlson, *Fire & Rescue, 2 years*
David Lindsay, *Fire & Rescue, 2 years*
Matthew Parrott, *Fire & Rescue, 2 years*
Galen Stephens, *Fire & Rescue, 2 years*
Don Holley, *Human Resources, 14 years*
Andy Humphrys, *IT, 6 years*
Karen Marroquin, *Juvenile Court, 3 years*
Erin Prine, *Magistrate Court, 9 years*
Sonya Edwards, *Probate Court, 21 years*
Grace Carter, *Probate Court, 2 years*
Lloyd Gibbs, *Public Works, 3 years*
Craig Sparks, *Parks & Recreation, 13 years*
William Kuhlman, *Sheriff's Office, 28 years*
Tera Wilson, *Sheriff's Office, 25 years*
Tracy Manis, *Sheriff's Office, 20 years*
Robert Paris, *Sheriff's Office, 17 years*
Pat Bedford, *Sheriff's Office, 17 years*
Corey Childers, *Sheriff's Office, 13 years*
Theresa Swaim, *Sheriff's Office, 9 years*
Michael Lackey, *Sheriff's Office, 9 years*
Garrett Saylor, *Sheriff's Office, 6 years*
Benjamin Bray, *Sheriff's Office, 3 years*
Ann Payne, *Tax Commissioner's Office, 49 years*

VII. Administrator's Report

Mr. Ledbetter presented the report to the Commission.

VIII. Commissioner's Report

1. Vice-Chair Cunningham

Stated he had no report and expressed his appreciation for the Board and the team at the County.

2. Commissioner Steward

Stated he recently went on the radio and attended a meeting with Finance.

3. Chair Owens

No report.

4. Commissioner Abernathy

Stated he attended the Quality of Life Committee meeting on 12/18.

5. Commissioner Sutherland

Stated he had several phone calls and attended the Public Works luncheon.

IX. First Reading

X. Public Hearing

Chair Owens asked Mr. Ledbetter to go over the procedures of the Public Hearing. Mr. Ledbetter gave an overview of the procedures including roll call and stated the applicant or their representative is allowed the opportunity to address the Commission if they choose first and rebuttal if necessary.

Chair Owens then asked for a motion to enter into the public hearing. Commissioner Sutherland made a motion to enter into public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Abernathy. The motion carried 5-0.

- 1. Application RZ-2025-35 requesting rezoning from General Commercial (C-G) to Heavy Industrial (I-2) located at Hwy 41 and Miller Ferry Road, Adairsville, GA 30103; Gordon County Tax Parcel 048 005. The Planning Staff recommends approval. The Planning Commission voted 4-0 to approve. - Mr. Ledbetter presented the item to the Commission.**

Jeff Onstatt, Houston TX, Representative of the Applicant: Addressed the Commission giving a brief overview of the intent of the application on behalf of HCI DP Land Acquisition LLC. Stated they are asking for the rezoning to be approved, but not asking for it to not go into full effect until the land has been purchased upon transfer of title.

Mr. Ledbetter inquired about the owner and clarification on what the Board would be approving. Mr. Onstatt stated it was currently in a trust and he is working with Harley Yancey. Mr. Ledbetter asked if the acquisition would be by their company or its designee. Mr. Onstatt stated it would most likely be a new joint venture with a similar name. Mr. Jackson stated while the circumstances were unusual to not know the exact entity. Mr. Onstatt stated for a timing perspective, they anticipate an outside closing date sometime in November, and they are awaiting a few final items including approved jurisdictional determination from the Corp of Engineers and once that is in hand they will be able to complete their final designs and move forward with forming of the LLC that will be the ultimate owner of this property. Stated he estimated this to occur within ninety (90) to 120 days of the outside closing date. Mr. Ledbetter suggested the zoning go into effect with a letter from HCI addressed to Gordon County with official notice of the confirmation of transfer of ownership out of the trust.

Chair Owens inquired on the need of I-2 zoning in terms of industrial use. Mr. Onstatt stated it was due to potential heavier manufacturing regarding interest of manufacturers who are targeting this region.

Chair Owens asked if the Board had any questions. Mr. Jackson stated it could be approved with various conditions and presented scenarios to the Board, with the only concern being the uncertainty of the buyer. Mr. Ledbetter stated he thought the letter of notification of the triggering event. Mr. Jackson stated there could be several reasons upon not immediately approving the rezoning before the purchase, such as the buyer not being certain the rezoning would be approved prior to purchasing the property. Mr. Jackson agreed with Mr. Ledbetter that the letter would be an appropriate means to handle this circumstance.

Chair Owens stated he wanted to ensure we would be protecting the community in the future, such as a hazardous industry coming in and purchasing the property. Mr. Jackson stated there could be conditions with the approval or limitation if the Board chooses. Commissioner Abernathy asked Mr. Onstatt if this was a typical circumstance for their company. Mr. Onstatt stated it was not, that this was a stipulation from the Yancey family as part of the property on the possibility that the closing did not come to fruition. Commissioner Abernathy asked if there were measures in place regarding different types of manufacturing such as a battery plant. Mr. Ledbetter stated the County would refer to the ordinance during that process. Mr. Jackson then stated that if the Board preferred to include any stipulations within the I-2 zoning, they would need to implement those at this time.

Vice-Chair Cunningham expressed concerns approving the I-2 rezoning without a certain plan. Mr. Ledbetter stated that while he understood the concern, unless the Board specified conditions within the I-2 zoning, there would not be certainty once the type of use was approved. Chair Owens asked if there was a way to add a condition to ensure the citizens were protected in the future. Mr. Jackson stated he believed the Board could condition in any way that was reasonable and could ask the applicant if they had any hesitation with any proposed conditions. Mr. Ledbetter then suggested language for conditions based on comments from the Board. Mr. Onstatt asked the Board to consider flexibility with the site plan itself, stating they estimated it to be 1.6 million sq. feet, however, those could change over the next several months the leasing agent could have a tenant with a redesign. Mr. Jackson then stated that the motion would then need to be consistent with Mr. Ledbetter's statement of the presentation and not the site plan.

Commissioner Abernathy made a motion to enter the schematic design into the record, seconded by Commissioner Steward. The motion carried 5-0.

Chair Owens then asked for a motion. Commissioner Sutherland made a motion to approve contingent upon a bonafide sale from the owner to HCI DP Land Acquisition LLC or its successors and so long as the property be used for purposes of manufacturing or warehousing consistent with the I-2 designation and presentation made by the applicant, seconded by Commissioner Abernathy. The motion carried 4-1, with Vice-Chair Cunningham being the nay vote.

Chair Owens then asked for a motion to close the public hearing. Vice-Chair Cunningham made a motion to close, seconded by Commissioner Sutherland. The motion carried 5-0.

XI. Unfinished Business

XII. New Business

- 1. Consideration of request from Juvenile Court to accept funds from CJCC CHINS Grant in the amount of \$80,000. This item comes at no cost to the County and will require the creation of a revenue account (100-331354) with a budget in the amount of \$80,000.** - Chair Owens presented the item to the Commission. Vice-Chair Cunningham made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Steward. The motion carried 5-0.
- 2. Consideration of request from Sheriff's Office to deem certain items as surplus to be listed on GovDeals.** - Chair Owens presented the item to the Commission. Commissioner Abernathy made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Sutherland. The motion carried 5-0.
- 3. Consideration of request from IT to approve renewal agreement with Crowe LLP in the annual amount of \$34,000. This will be budgeted using GL Account 411-531604 subject to final legal review.** - Chair Owens presented the item to the Commission. Vice-Chair Cunningham made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Steward. The motion carried 5-0.
- 4. Consideration of request from Sheriff's Office to purchase two (2) 2026 Ford Explorers from Prater Ford in the amount of \$83,453.23 each. This will require a budget increase in the amount of \$166,907 to GL Account 420-542200.** - Chair Owens presented the item to the Commission. Commissioner Sutherland made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Steward. The motion carried 5-0.

XIII. Adjourn

Commissioner Sutherland made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Abernathy. The motion carried 5-0.