



## ELECTED OFFICIALS COMMITTEE

### MINUTES

Held Virtually via Teams

February 20, 2026

2:00 P.M.

#### STAFF PRESENT:

Mike Burnes, *Committee Chair, Board of Commissioners*  
Jamie McCord, *County Manager*  
Judge Jack Niedrach, *Superior Court*  
Judge Billy Sparks, *Superior Court*  
Judge Kay Ann King, *Superior Court*  
Gene Proctor, *Coroner*  
Mary Hardin Thornton, *Superior Court Clerk*  
Judge Gene Richardson, *Chief Magistrate Judge*  
Erin Elrod, *Community Services Division Director*  
Lauren Chumbler, *County Clerk*

#### NOT PRESENT:

Leigh Patterson, *District Attorney*  
Judge Steve Bennett, *Juvenile Court Judge*  
Judge Steve Burkhalter, *Probate Court*  
Dave Roberson, *Sheriff*  
Kevin Payne, *Tax Commissioner*

#### I. Call to Order

Commissioner Burnes called the meeting to order at 2:03 pm.

#### II. Public Participation

#### III. Review of the Minutes

- i. Approve minutes from the November 1, 2024 Elected Officials Committee meeting.

The minutes were approved by common consent.

#### IV. Clerk of Superior Court

Clerk of Superior Court Mary Hardin Thornton stated she's been working with Amy Burns and the Sheriff's Department on updating the emergency evacuation procedures for her office and the building. Ms. Thornton stated they've started a new partnership with Jockey for backpacks for adoptions and she is also working on the case count that is due in March.

V. Superior Court

Judge Niedrach stated he hasn't heard any complaints regarding the historic courthouse exterior renovations so far and the courthouse held a mock trial over the weekend for high school students from Atlanta. Judge Niedrach also discussed the security checkpoint and changes that might need to be made when the courthouse is renovated. He also mentioned how more people are using AI for court documents, which has potential issues. Mr. McCord stated the county is aware of security and thinking about it for future renovations. Judge Sparks stated they receive steady correspondence from inmates at the jail regarding medical needs and they do their best to try and accommodate those needs.

VI. Juvenile Court

Not present.

VII. Probate Court

Not present.

VIII. District Attorney's Office

Not present.

IX. Sheriff's Office

Not present.

X. Magistrate Court

Judge Gene Richardson stated they have added more court sessions due to first appearances and COAM cases. Judge Richardson informed the committee that there is a proposed bill (HB 792) that would increase magistrate court claims to \$30,000.00. He stated they recently completed their case count from 2025 and so far in January they have mediated over 60 cases.

XI. Tax Commissioner's Office

Not present.

XII. Coroner's Office

Coroner Gene Proctor stated he talked to SkyLink regarding internet services. Stated they would have to be on the business plan, but that should hopefully solve the internet problem.

XIII. Chair's Report

XIV. Chief of Staff's Report

XV. Manager's Report

Mr. McCord stated LEC bids for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor go out March 13<sup>th</sup>, while the county continues to work on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor test fit. Stated there is a lot of proposed legislation regarding property tax and sales tax that would have significant effects. Mr. McCord also gave an update on the mental health co responder program that would hopefully be starting this year.

XVI. Other Business

XVII. Adjourn

With nothing else to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:40 pm.

*\*\*Next meeting, May 1, 2026*