

Thomas County Board of Commissioners
Historic Courthouse, Board Chambers, 3rd Floor
225 North Broad St
January 20, 2026

The Thomas County Board of Commissioners met on the above date in a special called meeting at 9:00 a.m. at the Historic Courthouse, Commission Chambers, with the following board members present:

Mark NeSmith, District 4, Chairman	Donnie Baggett, Vice-Chair, District 5
Rev. Jeremy G. Rich, District 1	Moses Gross, District 2
Kenneth E. Hickey, District 3	Wiley Grady, District 6
Phillip V. Brown, District 7	Zippy Vonier, District 8

Staff Present: County Manager Mike Stephenson, County Attorney Bruce Warren, County Clerk Tracy Dukes, Public Works Director Jay Knight, Planning Director Ken Gay, Purchasing Agent/Deputy Clerk Nisha Thurman

Others Present: Twink Monahan

News/Media Present: Jill Holloway, Thomasville Times Enterprise, Stacey Inez, WCTV

Chairman Nesmith called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Planning Director Ken Gay, who discussed the current lack of ordinances regulating data center development, including the absence of standards related to size and operational requirements. Ken stated that there are three primary considerations when evaluating data centers: site, sound, and setbacks. The discussion also addressed the need for backup generators in the event of power outages and the associated noise impacts, as well as ongoing operational noise generated by data centers. In addition, Ken noted the significant electricity, and water demands required for data center operations.

The Commissioners also discussed the increase in data center development, particularly due to growing demand related to artificial intelligence and technology usage. It was noted that Thomas County does not currently have sufficient information or regulatory controls in place to adequately evaluate and manage such developments. The Commissioners discussed the need to gather additional information and data, seek community input, and develop appropriate regulations to ensure future data center development aligns with the best interests of the community.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion that a 12-month moratorium, on the permitting of data centers and related information technology facilities, be instituted in Thomas County to prepare amendments to the Thomas County Code of Ordinances; for setting standards, specifications, and requirements consistent with County, State, and Federal Law and regulations related to said land uses. The Thomas County Board of Commissioners reserves the right to extend this moratorium prior to its expiration, by

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resolution or other official action of the Board. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, Gross, Vonier and Rich voting aye.

Chairman NeSmith made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Brown, Grady, Hickey, Gross, Vonier and Rich voting aye.

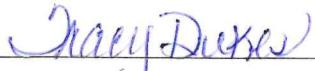
The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 a.m.



Mark NeSmith

Mark NeSmith, Chairman

ATTEST:



Tracy Dukes, County Clerk