

Thomas County Board of Commissioners  
Historic Courthouse, Board Chambers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
225 North Broad St  
February 10, 2026

The Thomas County Board of Commissioners met on the above date in a regular scheduled 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 <b>Absent</b>	Moses Gross, District 2
Kenneth E. Hickey, District 3	Wiley Grady, District 6
Phillip V. Brown, District 7 <b>Absent</b>	Zippy Vonier, District 8

Staff Present: County Manager Michael Stephenson, County Clerk Tracy Dukes, Sheriff Tim Watkins.

Others Present: VFW Post 4995 Commander Eddie Brown, Sr

News/Media Present: Jill Holloway, Thomasville Times Enterprise

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

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Grady who made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2026, Board of Commissioners meeting. Commissioner Vonier seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Hickey, Gross, and Vonier voting aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Baggett who made a motion to approve the agenda of the February 10, 2026, Board of Commissioners Meeting. Commissioner Hickey seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Hickey, Gross, and Vonier voting aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commander Eddie Brown, Sr. who on behalf of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 4995 presented E-911, Fire and Law Enforcement awards to Chasity Phillips (not present), Maresha Kelly (not present) and Tracy Long. Every year the VFW presents awards to individuals in Public Service to protect life and property and who exemplifies personal courage. They are also recognized by their colleagues as individuals who are dedicated and consistently demonstrate excellence in their duties and profession. Chairman NeSmith expressed his congratulations to all of the recipients and thanked the members of the VFW for their service.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Hickey who made a motion to approve the Property Tax Budget Amendment 26-2-2. Commissioner Baggett seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Hickey, Gross, and Vonier voting aye. The motion passed unanimously.

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**2026 BUDGET AMENDMENT 26-2-2  
GENERAL FUND (100)  
February 10, 2026**

Account	Description	Original 2026 Budget	Amended Budget	Difference
<b>Revenues</b>				
100-31-1100	Real Property-Current Year	13,000,000	7,600,000	-5,400,000
100-31-3300	FLOST/PTRLOST	0	5,400,000	5,400,000
	<b>Total</b>			<b>0</b>

**Net Increase to Revenues**

\$0

**Reports:**

Chairman NeSmith recognized County Manager Michael Stephenson, who provided an update on the proposed homestead tax exemption. Mr. Stephenson stated that the legislation is projected to take approximately five years to be enacted. Once implemented, the exemption would eliminate property taxes on homestead properties and is estimated to result in an approximate 30% reduction to the General Fund, which would necessitate cuts to county operations. Mr. Stephenson prepared calculations reflecting the potential impact on Thomas County and submitted them to ACCG and the legislative delegation for review and feedback. The Board will be updated upon receipt of that feedback.

The History Center asked the Board for a letter of support supporting an application for a grant to fund exterior preservation work on the Metcalfe Courthouse, a historical structure now located on the Thomasville History Center’s campus. Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Gross who made a motion to for Chairman NeSmith to sign the letter of support. Commissioner Hickey seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Hickey, Gross, and Vonier voting aye. The motion passed unanimously.

**Committees:**

**Purchasing:** Commissioner Vonier made a motion to ratify the purchase of seven (7) replacement Sheriff’s Office pursuit vehicles from Cass Burch for a total price of 303,009. Commissioner Baggett seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Hickey, Gross, and Vonier voting aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Vonier made a motion to ratify the purchase of seven (7) upfitting equipment packages with three (3) vehicles not receiving Motorola Radios and four (4) vehicles receiving Motorola Radios for a total price of \$164,656.66 from sole source vendor Night Hawk Specialty Vehicles LLC. Commissioner Hickey seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Hickey, Gross, and Vonier voting aye. The motion passed unanimously.

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Commissioner Vonier made a motion to ratify budget amendment 26-2-3 Vehicle SPLOST 2023. Commissioner Hickey seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Hickey, Gross, and Vonier voting aye. The motion passed unanimously.

**2026 BUDGET AMENDMENT 26-2-3  
2023 SPLOST CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND (331)  
February 10, 2026**

Account	Description	Original 2026 Budget	Amended Budget	Difference
<b>Expenses</b>				
331-3300-54-2200-000	Public Safety Equipment	2,728,000	2,260,333	-467,667
331-3300-54-2200-030	2026/SO-7 Pursuit Vehicles/Equip	0	467,667	467,667
	<b>Total</b>			<b>0</b>
<b>Net Increase to Expenses</b>				<b>\$0</b>

Commissioner Vonier made a motion to ratify the 2025 Final Budget Amendment 26-2-1. Commissioner Hickey seconded the motion. . The motion was approved unanimously with Chairman NeSmith and Commissioners Baggett, Grady, Hickey, Gross, and Vonier voting aye. The motion passed unanimously.

<b>2025 BUDGET AMENDMENT 26-2-1 - 2025 End of Year</b>			
<b>February 10, 2026</b>			
		<b>Increase/Revenues</b>	<b>Increase/Expenses</b>
<b>GENERAL FUND (100)</b>			
<b>Revenues</b>			
	FEMA-Reimb Hurricane Debby	381,317	
	GEMA-Reimb Hurricane Helene	825,357	
<b>Expenses</b>			
<b>Department</b>			
	Elections		45,000
	Commissioner's Office		35,000
	Administrative Services		40,000
	Information Services		3,000
	Facilities Management		197,000
	Building Custodial		12,000
	Court Reporters		3,500
	Clerk of Court		16,000

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Judicial Center Services		33,000
District Attorney		4,000
State Court		28,000
Juvenile Court		11,000
Public Defender		22,700
Sheriff's Office		265,000
Courthouse Security		15,000
Jail		135,000
Animal Services		26,000
Coroner		2,000
Sanitation		200,000
Health Department		500
Libraries-Insurance Claim-Water Damage		17,000
Hurricane Exp-Debby & Helene		237,000
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>		<b>1,347,700</b>
Rainy Day Account		(141,026)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,206,674</b>	<b>1,206,674</b>
<b>UNINCORPORATED FUND (200)</b>		
	<b>Increase/Revenues</b>	<b>Increase/Expenses</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Planning & Inspections		(3,000)
Code Enforcement		3,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>E-911 Fund (215)</b>		
	<b>Increase/Revenues</b>	<b>Increase/Expenses</b>
<b>Revenues</b>		
Carryover of Funds	20,000	
<b>Expenses</b>		
E-911		54,309
Rainy Day Account		(34,309)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>

<b>EMERGENCY SERVICES FUND (273)</b>		
	<b>Increase/Revenues</b>	<b>Increase/Expenses</b>
<b>Revenues</b>		
Carryover of Funds	289,048	
<b>Expenses</b>		
<b>Department</b>		
EMS		(225,000)
Emergency Rescue		585,000
ES Administration		167,000
Rainy Day Account		(237,952)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>289,048</b>	<b>289,048</b>
<b>FIRE DISTRICT 1, 2 &amp; 3 (274)</b>		
	<b>Increase/Revenues</b>	<b>Increase/Expenses</b>
<b>Revenues</b>		
Carryover of Funds	280,000	
<b>Expenses</b>		
Fire District 1, 2 & 3		280,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>280,000</b>	<b>280,000</b>
<b>FLOST/PTRLOST (336)</b>		
	<b>Increase/Revenues</b>	<b>Increase/Expenses</b>
<b>Revenues</b>		
<b>FLOST/PTRLOST TAX</b>	<b>5,000,000</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>		
Transfer In FLOST funds-Thomas Co		4,804,500
City of Barwick		11,500
City of Boston		66,000
City of Coolidge		34,000
City of Meigs		39,500

Town of Ochlocknee			16,000
City of Pavo			28,500
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5,000,000</b>	<b>5,000,000</b>
<b>Airport Fund (785)</b>			
		<b>Increase/Revenues</b>	<b>Increase/Expenses</b>
<b>Revenues</b>			
Other Airport Income		45,000	
<b>Expenses</b>			
Airport-Site Improvements & Maintenance			45,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>45,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>

Commissioner NeSmith recognized Commissioner Grady who stated there is a Emergency Services Meeting February 17, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Baggett who stated there is a Public Property Meeting on February 11, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.

Chairman NeSmith recognized Commissioner Hickey who stated there is a Public Works Meeting on February 18, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.

With there being no further business, Chairman NeSmith adjourned the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

  
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 Mark NeSmith, Chairman

ATTEST:

  
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 Tracy Dukes, County Clerk