

Warren County Board of Commissioners  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
Tuesday, May 13, 2025  
4:00 p.m.

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The Warren County Board of Commissioners met for their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. This meeting was held in the Warren County Community Service Building located at 48 Warren Street.

**Call Meeting to Order**

Chairman Graham called the meeting to order.

**Prayer**

Commissioner Burley led the prayer.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Roll Call:**

County Clerk, Porsha Johnson did roll call. The following were present.

- ✓ John R. Graham, Chairman
- ✓ Richard Burley, Jr., Commissioner District 1
- ✓ Allen L. Troy, Commissioner District 2

**Staff Attending:**

Michael Thigpen, Planning / Code Administrator  
Porsha Johnson, County Clerk

**Guest Attending:**

Kay deBeaugrine  
Diane Whitaker  
Pat Hambsch  
Jody Campbell  
Ron Carden  
Tammy Carden  
Bhushan Mocherla  
Don Kitchens  
Adam Heagy  
Candy Pilgrim  
Brandon Pilgrim  
Gloria Parker  
Dudley McGarity  
Stephanie McGarity  
Peggy Armstrong  
Carla Mayes

**Minutes Approval for April 2025:** Commissioner Allen Troy made a motion to approve April 2025 minutes and dispense with the reading of them. Commissioner Richard Burley, Jr., seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**Finance Report for April 2025:**

County Clerk, Porsha Johnson read the Finance Report for April 2025.

*A copy of this report will be placed in the Attachments to the 2025 Minutes.*

**Planning – Application for Text Amendment**

Chairman Graham stated that this application for a text amendment was tabled from the March 2025 meeting and then invited Michael Thigpen, Planning/Code Administrator, to provide additional information. Mr. Thigpen informed the board that Shangri-La Plantation Farms, LLC submitted an application to the Planning Board approximately two months ago requesting a text amendment to add a Planned Unit Development (PUD) as a district in Chapter 4 of the current Land Use Plan. Mr. Thigpen advised the Planning Board denied this request and the Board of Commissioners would need to decide on this request.

Mr. Jody Campbell, Attorney representing landowners of Shangri-La Plantation Farms, LLC, was introduced by Mr. Thigpen. Mr. Campbell clarified that the purpose of the proposed text amendment is to simplify a request for a zoning change. He indicated that there may have been some misunderstanding regarding the nature of the request and emphasized that the landowners are dedicated to supporting the community and its spiritual objectives.

Mr. Moscherla, a landowner of Shangri-La Plantation Farms, LLC, stated that he is originally from India, has resided in the United States for 35 years, and is currently a UGA faculty member and a U.S. citizen. He expressed appreciation for this country and described himself as a spiritual individual. He provided an example of potential uses for the property, such as a yoga retreat or a peaceful space dedicated to spiritual wellness.

Mr. Moscherla shared that he considered properties in seven other states besides Georgia and favors this location as the most sacred. He foresees utilizing approximately 40 acres of his 500-acre property for this purpose. He mentioned that only employees would reside on the property and that the overall plan includes establishing an organic farm, raising animals, and maintaining a meditation temple.

Additionally, he expressed interest in inviting Indian medical professionals to serve the community at this location. He acknowledged that formal requests must be submitted and approved through the proper channels. He concluded by thanking the Board for the opportunity to speak.

Chairman Graham asked if there were any questions from the Commissioners or the citizens.

**David McGarity**      What is the address for the property in question?

**Chairman Graham**    2264 Mithcell Road

**Clara Mayes**            How many employees would you have if approved?

**Mr. Mocherla**            Will hire only a few Warren County, GA employees

**Pat Habmsh** Could the citizens of Warren County stop by and look at the property?

**Mr. Mocherla** Yes, I will be in town next weekend, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

**Pat Hamsch** How is the property in question currently zoned?

**Chairman Graham** It's zoned Forestry Ag.

**Kay deBeaugrine** If this is approved, will it change all zones or just theirs?

**Chairman Graham** Currently, it is zoned for Forestry Ag, and it will remain because the request is to change text in the Land Use Ordinance.

**Don Kitchens** They are only wanting to use approximately 40 acres; the rest will remain.

**Scott Kelly, County Attorney** The ordinance was adopted several years ago, and I was the County Attorney at that time as well. This ordinance also helps protect the neighbors. The surrounding landowners have vested rights as well.

**Mr. Jodie** The difference is Use -vs- District and he listed counties that he is familiar with that use PUD as a district.

**Scott Kelly, County Attorney** This is an issue pertaining to the county ordinance.

Chairman Graham expressed his appreciation for the questions and responses, and then proceeded to inform the attendees that today the Warren County Board of Commissioners will need to determine whether to approve the proposed text amendment to the ordinance or not.

Commissioner Allen L. Troy made a motion not to approve the text amendment request. Commissioner Richard Burley, Jr., seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

*A copy of the application will be placed in the Attachments to the 2025 Minutes.*

#### **ACCG Finance – Resolution**

Chairman Graham informed the Board that, during last month's meeting, the Board approved the purchase of vehicles for the Sheriff's Department, Public Works, and Emergency Services. The current matter before the Board is to determine the funding source for these vehicle purchases. Chairman Graham recommended financing these purchases through the ACCG Equipment Financing Program. We have utilized this program on several previous occasions and have been very satisfied with their service. If approved, the payments will be funded through SPLOST. The possible payment terms and agreement details are outlined below.

<b>Total cost for all vehicles:</b>	<b>\$227,802.00</b>
<b>Term:</b>	<b>5-years</b>
<b>Interest Rate:</b>	<b>4.69%</b>
<b>Annual Payments:</b>	<b>\$52,226.25</b>

Commissioner Richard Burley, Jr., made a motion to approve using ACCG Equipment Financing Program and adopt the Resolution. Commissioner Allen L. Troy seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

*A copy of the application will be placed in the Attachments to the 2025 Minutes.*

### **HB223**

Chairman Graham informed the Board that HB 223 in the Georgia General Assembly is a bill focused on supporting the agricultural and timber industries in the wake of Hurricane Helene. Specifically, it aims to provide relief and assistance to those impacted by the hurricane through various tax credits and relief measures. Chair Graham indicated that he would provide additional information once he receives an update from the Tax Commissioner.

### **No Action Taken**

#### **SecureTech Systems, Inc – Courthouse Security Upgrade Wave**

Chairman Graham informed the Board that SecureTech Systems, Inc. is currently utilized at the courthouse for security purposes. He noted that the system has been in place for several years and recommends an upgrade. Chairman Graham shared that he has obtained a quote from SecureTech Systems, Inc. for the equipment, installation, and training, with a total estimated cost of \$15,085.00. If approved, the Board is considering SecureTech Security Systems, Inc. for security upgrades at the Warren County Library and the Community Service Building as well.

Commissioner Allen L. Troy made a motion to approve using SecureTech Systems, Inc / Wave. Commissioner Richard Burley, Jr. seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

*A copy of the quote will be placed in the Attachments to the 2025 Minutes.*

#### **FY25 LMIG Safety Action Plan (SAP)**

Chair Graham informed the Board about information received from the Georgia Department of Transportation regarding the FY 2025 LMIG Safety Action Plan. The program emphasizes low-cost safety enhancements that can be implemented on off-system routes to help reduce both the frequency and severity of crashes. The total project cost is \$485,000.00, with a required local match of 10%. Funds may be allocated for improvements such as signage and striping, raised pavement markers, and guardrails. Please note that applications must be submitted by June 2, 2025, as no submissions will be accepted after this deadline.

Commissioner Richard Burley, Jr., made a motion to approve moving forward with GDOT FY25 LMIG SAP. Commissioner Allen L. Troy seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

#### **Ricketson Fire Station Bids**

Chairman Graham informed the Board that we have received bids for the building of the Ricketson Fire Station. The old fire station was destroyed by Hurricane Helene. Warren County received five bids for this project and Ronnie Easler Builders came in with the lowest bid. Chairman Graham stated that, subject to approval, the Board's objective is to start this project promptly and proceed with upgrades to additional buildings as well. The bid tabulation table is shown below.

<b>Bidder:</b>	<b>Base Bid:</b>
Ronnie Easler Bidders	\$328,400.00
JM Midlo Construction	\$466,618.00
CK Grant	\$533,956.96
Two State Construction	\$639,780.00
JH Cleveland	\$653,995.00

Commissioner Allen L. Troy made a motion to approve Ronnie Easler Builders Bid. Commissioner Richard Burley, Jr. seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**Public Safety Building Parking Lot Bids**

Chairman Graham announced that Warren County received six bids for the Public Safety Building Parking Lot Project. But, after bid information was sent out, the possibly of a new building on site would change some of the paving area. Consequently, Chairman Graham indicated that the Board must decide whether to accept the current bids or to re-bid the project. If we do not re-bid, there is a huge risk that the new building and parking lot could require future modifications or rework due to potential additional improvements in the coming years.

Commissioner Allen L. Troy made a motion to reject the current PSB Parking Lot Bids and Re-bid. Commissioner Richard Burley, Jr., seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**2023 CDBG Project**

Chairman Graham announced that a representative with the Town of Camak, GA, contacted DCA regarding a complaint related to the Warren County Board of Commissioners concerning the 2023 CDBG project. He noted that this project has been in development for approximately 40 years. Chairman Graham commented that the circumstances prompting this complaint is unclear but suggests that the matter could have been addressed through different channels, for example, a quick phone call, given the working relationship between Camak and Warren County. DCA has requested additional documentation and has temporarily suspended the project pending further review. Once this issue is resolved, Warren County Board of Commissioners intends to end its sewer connection with the Town of Camak.

**No Action Taken**

**Voluntary Supplemental Insurances**

Chairman Graham informed the Board that the Warren County Insurance Agent has requested that employees have one set of supplemental insurance plans to streamline the process. Therefore, if approved, employee contributions for supplemental insurances, such as Aflac and Colonial, will no longer be deducted from payroll.

Commissioner Richard Burley, Jr. made a motion to approve the agent’s request to streamline supplemental insurances programs. Commissioner Allen L. Troy seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**Re-appointment of Library Board Members – Chranda Baker & Elizabeth “Betty” English**

Chairman Graham informed the Board that he had spoken with Ms. Chranda Baker and Ms. Betty English to inquire whether they would like to continue serving as members of the Warren

County Library Board. Both individuals expressed their willingness to remain in their positions. The appointments will be for 3 years.

Commissioner Allen L. Troy made a motion to re-appoint Chranda Baker and Elizabeth English. Commissioner Richard Burley, Jr., seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**Re-appointment of EMS Council Member – Crystal Ladousier, EMA & EMS Director**

Chairman Graham informed the Board that he and Crystal Ladousier currently serve as our representatives on the EMS Council. As Crystal's term is concluding, we need to consider either reappointing her or appointing a new representative. He has spoken with Mrs. Ladousier, who has expressed her willingness to continue serving. He inquired whether the Board has any recommendations. If there are no suggestions, he recommends reappointing Crystal Ladousier, given her roles as EMA/EMS Director and Fire Chief to a new 3-year term.

Commissioner Allen L. Troy made a motion to re-appoint Crystal Ladousier. Commissioner Richard Burley, Jr., seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**Citizens Comments**

Chairman Graham thanked all the citizens for attending the meeting and asked if anyone had any questions or concerns. Chairman Graham opened the floor.

**Dudley McGarity** – Have you had any request about solar farms along Ogeechee River Road area?

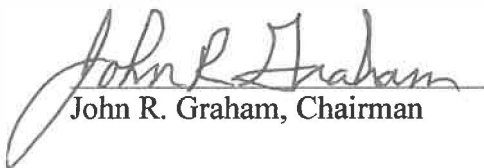
**Chairman Graham** – No, we haven't received any formal request at this time.

**Clara Mayes** – Have anyone that wants solar panels, mentioned a battery power plant?

**Chairman Graham** –Currently, no one has mentioned anything related to a battery power plant.

Credit Card bill was reviewed.

Meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

  
John R. Graham, Chairman

  
Porsha Johnson, County Clerk