

Monroe County Board of Commissioners
Minutes of June 17, 2025
Regular Meeting
9:00 am

Present:

Alan Gibbs, Chairman
John Ambrose, Vice-Chairman
Lamarcus Davis, District 1--Absent
Eddie Rowland, District 2
Al Turner, District 4

Staff:

Jim Hedges, County Manager
Ben Vaughn, County Attorney
Kelsey Fortner, Community Development Manager
Richard Dumas, Public Information Officer

Welcome

Chairman Gibbs welcomed everyone in attendance.

Prayer

Chairman Gibbs gives the prayer.

Pledge

Everyone

Roll Call

Kelsey Fortner, all present except for Commissioner Davis.

Call to Order

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

New Business

Approve Agenda

Chairman Gibbs presented the agenda. Commissioner Ambrose made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of item G for subdivision discussion. Second, Commissioner Turner, approved 4-0.

Approve Minutes—June 3, 2025, Regular Meeting

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve the minutes with the normal 30 days for changes. Commissioner Turner seconded the motion, and the motion carried 4-0.

Board of Elections Appointments

Commissioner Rowland stated the Election Supervisor would like to keep the two up for reappointment. Those appointees are Jimmy Zellner and Mary Chambliss. Commissioner Ambrose made a motion to approve seconded by Commissioner Rowland and approved 4-0.

County Roth 457(b) Amendment

The County Manager Jim Hedges read that 457(b) was adopted in 2013 and not mandatory but some employees could sign up and have money saved through the program. The employee could not withdraw from this unless they proved a hardship. However, with an amendment and no cost to the county, the employee can withdraw their funds without proving a hardship. Commissioner Ambrose made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Turner and approved 4-0.

ACCG-IRMA Property & Liability Renewal

The County Manager Jim Hedges spoke about the time frame from July 2025 to July of 2026, rates have increased. The county has added fire stations to the insurance, lawsuits have occurred, vehicle accidents and Hurricane Helene. With the increase they have no other options and must pay for it. Commissioner Ambrose stated the county needs to sell property we don't use. Commissioner Ambrose made a motion to approve second for discussion by Commissioner Rowland. Commissioner Rowland stated to the public that due to inflation they must do this, and Senator Kenndy's work will be impactful. Approved 4-0.

Alcohol License—Dipak Patel

Kelsey Fortner, Community Development Manager, presented the application for a new gas station on HWY 42 North 985/980 to acquire a beer and wine license. All requirements have been met and need board approval. Commissioner Ambrose made a motion to approve seconded by Commissioner Turner and approved 4-0.

Item G added—Subdivision Moratorium extension

Chairman Gibbs stated that the moratorium needs to be extended due to this process needing more time. Commissioner Ambrose in agreement stated that the board has not had time to get together for a public workshop. Commissioner Ambrose would like to extend it to January 1, 2026, for both major and minor subdivisions. Attorney Ben Vaughn explained that by including

minor subdivisions you're prohibiting all plats from being signed. Example: 1,000 acres split in half is considered a minor subdivision. Commissioner Ambrose made a motion to extend the moratorium with major subdivisions to January 1, 2026, seconded by Commissioner Rowland for discussion and approved 3-1 with Rowland against. Commissioner Rowland stated he put two years into this UDO.

Public Comments:

Matthew Talmadge, 2537 Dames Ferry Road, Forsyth, Ga 31029 spoke about the tax assessors. ATTACHED

Commissioner's Comments:

Commissioner Rowland stated that Joyce White and the Development Authority are doing a great job. The Development Authority has brought a lot of business into the county in the last five years. He also stated that the Tax Assessors is governed by the Department of Revenue. He stated that Facebook should be ashamed of themselves, and he compliments veterans.

Commissioner Ambrose stated that he is tired of the Development Authority giving tax abatements. He stated that today is election date and encourages all to vote. Commissioner Ambrose stated to the public for all to be patient with the road department as they are doing their best cutting grass. He said he appreciates the board and would like Jim Hedges, County Manager, to reconsider retirement.

Commissioner Turner states that the Development Authority should not offer tax abatements. Chairman Gibbs stated he too is against tax abatements. He stated he can see both sides but doesn't like tax breaks.

In addition, Commissioner Ambrose stated that Commissioner Davis has worked hard with the state to help Buc-ee's with the road improvements on Rumble Road. Chairman Gibbs stated Commissioner Davis has traveled a lot and made a lot of contacts. Chairman Gibbs said that Sheriff Freeman was here today and appreciates the work the Sheriff's Office is doing along with EMS, who responded to a fire within 90 seconds and is doing a great job.

Executive Session:(Legal) 9:40 pm

Commissioner Ambrose made a motion to move into the Executive Session for legal, seconded by Commissioner Turner and approved 4-0.

Action from Executive Session: 10:27 am

Attorney Ben Vaughn stated they spoke about two litigations, and no action was taken.

Meeting adjourned: Commissioner Ambrose made a motion to adjourn seconded by Commissioner Turner and approved 4-0. **Time 10:28 am.**