

Monroe County Board of Commissioners

Minutes of May 19, 2026

Regular Meeting

9:00 A.M.

Present:

Alan Gibbs, Chairman

John Ambrose, Vice-Chairman

Lamarcus Davis, District 1

Eddie Rowland, District 2

Al Turner, District 4

Staff:

Lorri Byrd, County Manager

Jessica Haygood, County Attorney

Janet Abbott, County Clerk

Richard Dumas, Public Information Officer

Kim Stokes, Public Works Director

Welcome

Chairman Gibbs welcomed everyone in attendance.

Prayer

Pastor Cody Fountain led the invocation.

Pledge

Chairman Gibbs led the pledge.

Roll Call

County Clerk Janet Abbott called roll.

Call to Order

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

Proclamation for Harold Boone

Chairman Alan Gibbs, on behalf of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners, proclaimed May 23, 2026, as “Harold Boone Appreciation Day” in honor of the late firefighter Harold Boone for his dedicated service to Monroe County Emergency Services and the Macon-Bibb Fire Department. The proclamation recognized Boone’s mentorship, meritorious service, and lifelong commitment to fire service, as well as Dr. Margie Bryant’s continued efforts to honor his memory through annual fundraising races benefiting Boone’s family and granddaughter’s college education. Copies of the resolution were presented to Dr. Bryant on behalf of Mr. Boone’s wife, Sharon Boone.

New Business

Approve Agenda

Chairman Gibbs presented the agenda for approval with the addition of land use plan and impact fees as Item J.

Commissioner Davis motioned to approve the agenda with said changes.

Commissioner Turner seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.

Minutes-May 5, 2026, Regular Meeting

Chairman Gibbs presented the minutes of the May 5, 2026, Regular Meeting for approval.

Commissioner Davis motioned to approve the minutes of May 5, 2026, meeting with the normal 30 days for changes.

Commissioner Turner seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.

Cherish Taylor-Graduate Signing on with Monroe County

Monroe County has had a great opportunity to partner with the Board of Education in their trade/work program. Cherish Taylor has worked part-time with the Public Works Department since February 2026 which was the last semester of her senior year. She is currently working at Monroe County Landfill.

Public Works Director Kim Stokes recognized Cherish Taylor and along with County Clerk/Human Resource Director Janet Abbott signed her as a full-time employee with Monroe County.

Fire/EMS/Paramedic 4 Employees Recognition for Outstanding Service

Monroe County Fire/EMS received an email on May 8, 2026, from a citizen complimenting the C-Shift for the wonderful experience she had with four Monroe County EMS responders. The four employees are Austin Barnett, Margaret Johnson, Joe Laimana and Gavin Parker.

The employees were in class and were not able to attend the meeting, therefore, Chairman Gibbs presented a token of appreciation to Chief Jackson on behalf of the employees emphasizing the importance of their service.

Monroe County Hospital Board Appointment

The Monroe County Hospital Board is requesting a new board appointee. At their last board meeting the Hospital Authority Board removed Dennis Kent from the board due to not meeting the attendance requirements. The Hospital Authority is recommending either India G. Crumpton or Casey Fleckenstein, Monroe County Hospital CEO.

Chairman Gibbs motioned to appoint India Crompton to the Monroe County Hospital Board. Commissioner Ambrose seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.

City of Culloden Recreation

On March 17, 2026, Jimmy Pierson came before the Board asking for assistance with the Culloden Recreation Park. The amount of the request that has been mentioned in discussions is around \$40,000.

Mr. Jimmy Pearson reported that the City of Culloden has invested approximately \$59,000 in the Culloden recreation park using SPLOST and general fund dollars, along with significant in-kind labor by himself, Margie Bryant, and others. He stated that the park now includes a new tennis court, a relatively new pickleball court, a softball field, that is graded and irrigated but still needs bases installed, and a basketball court already being used by residents from Monroe and surrounding counties. Mr. Pierson stated that the City of Culloden has obtained one quote of approximately \$80,000 for new playground equipment. He explained that all existing children's playground equipment had to be removed because it was outdated and unsafe, leaving no equipment for kids at present. Mr. Pearson noted that while the recreation property is owned by the County, the City maintains the grounds (grass cutting, fence and vegetation maintenance) and is requesting County assistance—discussed at about \$40,000—to help fund new playground equipment and complete the park improvements.

County Manager Lorri Byrd stated the funding is available in contingency.

Commissioner Turner motioned to approve the request from the City of Culloden for \$40,000 for recreation park maintenance with funding to come from Contingency.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.

Strickland Loop Road Landfill 5-year update

Triple Point Engineering has submitted a proposal for the upcoming requirement to Monroe County's Landfill 5-year permit update. The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) requires periodic updates to permitted landfill facilities to reflect current site conditions, operation practices, and regulatory requirements.

Public Works Director Kim Stokes reported that it is time to complete the required five-year update of the Strickland Loop Road Landfill design and operations plan. The last update was completed in July 2021 and approved by EPD in 2022. To maintain regulatory compliance, the County must perform this update every five years. The scope includes an updated topographical survey, design and operation plan update, project management and coordination with Croy Engineering and a geotechnical evaluation to be completed by December 31, 2026. Mr. Stokes estimated the total cost at approximately \$100,000–\$105,000, noting that the expense is already budgeted in the landfill fund and will have no additional financial impact.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve and fund the mandated five-year landfill update with funding to come from the 2026 Solid Waste Fund Budget.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.

Davis Plumbing Proposal for Crush Contract

Public Works Director Kim Stokes submitted a proposal from Davis Plumbing on processing and recycling concrete materials located at the landfill. The total for the proposal is \$123,250.00 with funds to come from TSPLOST.

Mr. Stokes reported that the County has been stockpiling concrete and asphalt debris from county construction projects at the Landfill with the goal of recycling it. He stated there are approximately 14,080 tons of material to be processed (about 1,280 tons already stockpiled above ground and 12,800 tons that were previously buried and will be excavated and moved to the crushing area). Mr. Stokes presented a proposal from DPC Services (Davis Plumbing Company) to excavate, process, and crush this material on site at the landfill at a rate of \$8.75 per ton, noting that comparable graded aggregate base currently costs the County \$21.50 per ton. He explained that processing the full quantity would yield an estimated savings of approximately

\$179,500 compared to purchasing new aggregate, while also reclaiming landfill airspace. Mr. Stokes recommended funding the work through the TSPLOST program, with the crushed concrete to be treated as a TSPLOST-owned asset and “sold back” over time to the Road Department as it is used on road and shoulder projects.

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to approve the Davis Plumbing Company / DPC proposal to crush and recycle the concrete at the landfill.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Purchase Smooth Drum Base Compactor TSPLOST

Public Works Director Kim Stokes and Fleet Maintenance Manager Jody Swords are requesting approval for the purchase of a smooth drum base compactor. Mr. Stokes stated currently the road department rents the equipment on an as needed basis. The addition of this to the fleet will be to utilize on grading projects and on unimproved road maintenance. The funding will come from TSPLOST.

Single Vibrating Drum Compactor							
Dealer	Make	Model	Price	HP	Drum Width	Delivery	Comments
Yancey	Cat	CS11 GC	\$ 99,500	123	84"	Available	Used 2022, 413 Hrs; 12 Month/1000 Hr Warranty
NED	Sakai	SV544	\$ 140,750	130	84"	Available	3Year/3,000 Hr Bumper - Bumper Warranty
TEC	Hamm	HC100iG	\$ 148,435	115	84"	Available	60 Month/2,000 Hr Warranty
Yancey	Cat	CS10GC	\$ 151,475	123	84"	Available	48 Month/2,000 Hr Warranty
Rey War	Dynapac	CA2500D	\$ 164,500	135	84"	Available	2 Year

Mr. Stokes and Mr. Swords’ recommendation is to purchase the used Caterpillar Single Drum Vibratory Roller in the amount of \$99,500.00 from Yancey with funding to come from TSPLOST.

Commissioner Rowland motioned to approve the purchase of the used Caterpillar Single Drum Vibratory Roller in the amount of \$99,500 from Yancey.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Land use Impact Fees

Commissioner Rowland led the discussion stating no money is being spent at this time, this is for long-range planning. Commissioner Rowland stated the Board is simply asking two companies to give proposals and assist with developing a Land Use Plan and implementing Impact Fees.

- Explained the progression:
 1. Land use plan – “where do we want stuff?” (business, residential, roads, public safety, recreation, rural preservation, etc.).

2. Comprehensive plan – overall vision and priorities for growth, quality of life, and economic development.
 3. Service delivery strategy – who provides which services and who pays, as mandated by Georgia DCA, tied to grant eligibility.
- Emphasized:
 - Growth is unavoidable, so it must be managed.
 - Goals: protect quality of life, private property rights, encourage economic development, and keep as much cost as possible off current residents and businesses.
 - Stated two essential tools:
 - A sound, consistent land use plan as the foundation for the comprehensive plan and service delivery.
 - Impact fees to offset growth-related capital costs (not operations).
 - Noted:
 - The State has created laws to promote coordination and consistency between local governments.
 - A better plan will give more certainty about where, when, and how development happens, and how costs are met.
 - On land use/comprehensive plan:
 - Recommended inviting GMC to present a formal proposal and price to do the comprehensive plan including a land use plan.
 - Mentioned GMC already introduced itself at a prior meeting and no better alternatives had been identified.
 - On impact fees:
 - Recalled that about three years ago the Board moved toward impact fees, but public pushback caused it to be tabled.
 - Said there is now renewed interest from the public and commissioners.
 - Stressed impact fees:
 - Are growth-related only (capital, not operating).
 - Can help maintain services and support a goal of virtually eliminating property tax by 2032.

- Proposed asking Bill Ross & Associates (who did the earlier study) to bring an updated proposal.
- Noted costs for such studies are up about 50%, prior work is outdated, and the study cost is reimbursable from collected impact fees once implemented.

Chairman Gibbs:

- Agreed on the importance of a professional land use plan, noting current decisions will shape the next 20 years.
- Reported he had researched alternatives:
 - Found a few firms out of state (Chicago, New York).
 - GMC was the only local, qualified option with a clear background.
- Supported bringing in a professional to guide decisions, but emphasized:
 - The final plan still belongs to the Board, which can modify recommendations.
 - Example: if a consultant recommends certain uses in Juliette that don't fit local expectations, the Board can adjust.

Commissioner Ambrose:

- Expressed skepticism about the effectiveness of a new comprehensive plan if the Board continues granting many variances:
 - Argued that if the Board keeps saying “yes” to variances that contradict the map, “that comprehensive plan is blown out of the map.”
- Questioned why the Middle Georgia Regional Commission (MGRC) could not do this work:
 - Noted the County already pays MGRC annually.
 - Stated MGRC helped with prior plans and has extensive experience.
- Warned against commissioners “tweaking” the plan heavily once a consultant prepares it:
 - Said he does not want commissioners giving early direction like “this ought to be that” while the plan is being formed.
 - Believes if they're paying a professional, the board should step back and let them produce a concrete plan first, then consider it.

Commissioner Davis:

- Criticized the current comprehensive plan as often being “rubber stamped”:

- Recently reviewed a report and found that half the listed items had been canceled or were no longer being done.
- Argued the County needs:
 - Accountability to actually follow the comprehensive plan.
 - Not just using it to stay in DCA compliance for grants.
- Emphasized:
 - Remaining in DCA compliance is critical—cited a known county that lost access to grant funding and is now struggling financially.
 - Recent grants Monroe County has received were possible because of DCA compliance.
- Strongly supported bringing in a third-party, unbiased consultant:
 - To remove perceptions that commissioners are designing the plan for themselves.
 - To provide a defensible framework when turning down rezoning or variance requests.
 - So county attorneys have something solid to use in court if land use decisions are challenged.
- Stressed the plan should be professional and independent, but the Board must then stand behind it.

Commissioner Turner:

- Asked for clarification:
 - If they hire GMC, must the Board follow exactly what GMC recommends?
- Restated that as commissioners, their job is to:
 - Look out for the safety, welfare, and health of the community.
 - Listen to ideas that improve citizens' lives and then vote according to what citizens want and what the law allows.

Following an extensive discussion, Chairman Gibbs motioned to invite GMC to present a proposal and cost estimate to prepare a comprehensive plan including an updated land use plan for Monroe County; and invite Ross & Associates (Bill Ross) to present a proposal and cost estimate to implement an impact fee program for the County.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Public Comment

Rob Law-Lassiter Road

- Use of public comments in minutes
 - Noted that typically “half, if not 90%” of public comments end up written into the minutes.
 - Pointed out that, now that minutes are more accessible, it is easier for the public to see what was said and what (if anything) is done about it.
- Recommendation for follow-through
 - Recommended that public comments be translated into an action plan, rather than simply recorded.
 - Suggested:
 - Some items may be things the Board decides not to do.
 - Others should be placed on a future task or follow-up list.
 - Emphasized that tracking them as actions would be “really helpful” to the public.
- Comprehensive plan as strategic plan
 - Thanked Commissioner Rowland for pushing the comprehensive plan and related work.
 - Urged the Board to view the comprehensive plan as the County’s strategic plan, similar to how a large business operates.
 - Said that for every decision, the Board’s first question should be:
 - “What does the comprehensive strategic plan say?”
 - Recommended using the plan as a driver for county decisions, not just a compliance document.
- Positive feedback
 - Described the move toward a stronger comprehensive plan as “really good news”.
 - Concluded by thanking the Board for moving in this direction: “And thank you.”

Commissioner’s Comments

Commissioner Lamarcus Davis – District 1

- Appreciation and meeting quality
 - Thanked everyone for attending and stated it was one of the better meetings in a long time, with a lot accomplished.

- Unity and tone in the county
 - Referenced Pastor Cody Fountain’s opening prayer and message.
 - Urged citizens and officials to “work together” and trust one another.
 - Expressed concern about division in Monroe County stating “that hasn’t always been the case.”
 - Stated his prayer is that the county comes back together as “one Monroe”, not divided groups.
 - Emphasized commissioners are here to serve all people, not just friends or specific groups.
- Support for youth and workforce programs
 - Praised the partnership between Public Works and the school system in helping the young lady (Cherish Taylor) move from school to full-time employment.
 - Expressed hope for more such programs (including office and additional Public Works opportunities).
 - Said any investment in youth is a “great thing.”
- Election day reminder
 - Reminded the public that it is Election Day.
 - Clarified that early voting is over and voters must go to their assigned precincts.
 - Noted polls are open until 7:00 p.m., and if a voter is in line by 6:59 p.m., they will still be allowed to vote.
 - Encouraged everyone to go vote and wished all a great day.

Commissioner Eddie Rowland – District 2

- Difficulty of public office
 - Observed that it is very tough in today’s climate to serve in any political job.
 - Noted that elected officials are “browbeaten the whole time” while trying to do the job they were hired to do.
- View of representative government
 - Explained his view of representative government:
 - Citizens hire commissioners to make decisions.
 - Citizens should be able to “go home and enjoy your life”, trusting the elected officials to decide on their behalf.

- At the end of the term, voters decide whether to “hire me again.”
- Election day emphasis
 - Stressed that today is a very important day because it is Election Day.
 - Urged citizens to participate and vote.

Commissioner John Ambrose – District 3

- Stated that once a comprehensive land use plan is adopted, it will only be effective if the Board consistently follows it and avoids granting variances that undermine the plan.

Commissioner Al Turner – District 4

- Role as commissioner
 - Reiterated that his duty as a commissioner is to look out for the safety, welfare, and health of Monroe County residents.
 - Emphasized that his plan is to listen to ideas that improve citizens’ lives and then vote according to what citizens want and what he believes is best for the community.
 - Election day and civic duty
 - Strongly encouraged everyone to exercise their right to vote.
 - Reminded citizens that many men and women died securing that right.
 - Asked voters to honor that sacrifice by going to the polls if they had not already voted.
- Gratitude
 - Thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and wished all a blessed day.

Chairman Alan Gibbs

- Recognition of youth and staff
 - Expressed pleasure at the recognitions given during the meeting.
 - Praised the school board and school staff who helped students gain real-world, applicable skills.
 - Specifically commended Kim Stokes for doing a fantastic job saving money, jokingly asking him “what are you going to do next week” because he keeps improving.

- Support for local workforce development
 - Said he loves seeing students educated locally, gaining practical skills, and then staying in the county to work.
 - Wants to continue doing signing-day style recognitions for such workforce placements, to showcase that in the county.
- Land use plan and impact fees perspective
 - Explained that when he first took office, he did not yet understand what was legal or the full significance of the land use map.
 - Has since learned how important the land use plan is in giving county attorneys “teeth”:
 - When the Board denies certain uses, attorneys can point to the adopted plan and defend decisions more effectively in court.
 - Clarified that the goal is not to “explode the county” with industrial development:
 - He personally wants Monroe County to remain as rural as possible.
 - He recognizes they must still allow some industry and feels this, and prior Boards have done a good job locating it appropriately.
 - On impact fees:
 - Admitted he is “on both sides of the fence”:
 - Likes the idea that new arrivals help pay for the cost of growth.
 - Is concerned about existing residents building another house and having to pay impact fees.
 - Said he is interested in hearing more from the consultants.
 - Noted preliminary numbers suggest impact fees could help push the millage rate down to levels not seen since the 1980s.
- Faith, prayer, and fallibility
 - Appreciated the opening prayer, saying that in Sunday school he often asks people to pray for him.
 - Asked that citizens continue praying for the whole Board.
 - Stressed that no politician is going to “bat 1,000”:
 - They will not be perfect or get every decision right.
 - Even good decisions may not meet everyone’s personal expectations.

- Emphasized that the Board is trying and is acting on the best information they have.
- Love of the job and confidence in the Board
 - Said plainly that he loves the job of chairman, even if that sounds strange to some.
 - Described service on the Board as a great experience that has opened his eyes to how things truly work on the “inside.”
 - Stated with confidence that this Board is for Monroe County and is doing what it believes are the best choices for the county.

Executive Session

There was no executive session.

Action from Executive Session

There was no executive session.

Adjourn

Commissioner Davis motioned to adjourn at 10:09 a.m.

Commissioner Turner seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.

Respectively Submitted by:

Janet Abbott, County Clerk