

**Oconee County Board of Commissioners Meeting
Administrative Building Commission Chambers
March 3, 2026 – 6:00 p.m.
Minutes**

Members Present:

Chairman John Daniell
Commissioner Mark Thomas
Commissioner Chuck Horton
Commissioner Amrey Harden
Commissioner Mark Saxon

Staff Present:

Daniel Haygood, County Attorney
Justin Kirouac, County Administrator
Holly Stephenson, County Clerk
Diane Baggett, Communications Director
Sarah Baird, Communications Assistant
Melissa Braswell, Finance Director
Kari Giddens, Assistant Finance Director
Donna Norton, Budget Officer
Guy Herring, Planning and Code Enforcement Director
Ethan Perry, Planner

Call to Order: 6:00 p.m.

Chairman John Daniell called the meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Commissioner Amrey Harden led the Pledge after a moment of silence.

Approval of Agenda:

Chairman Daniell requested Item 5, Zoning case 6 be moved to the first zoning case.

ACTION:

Motion:	Chuck Horton made a motion to approve the March 3, 2026 Agenda with the change.
Second:	Mark Saxon
Voted in Favor of Motion:	Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon
Voted Against Motion:	None
Final Action:	Motion Passed.

Statements and Remarks from Citizens:

None.

Statements and Remarks from Commissioners:

Chairman Daniell announced that SPLOST 2027 will be voted on the May 19, 2026 ballot with full details on the website.

On March 11, 2026, the Waste and Recycling sites will open at 1pm for employees to train on CPR and Stop the Bleed.

The Keep Oconee County Beautiful Commission received the 2025 Governor's Circle award.

A Town Hall Meeting will be held on March 26 at 6pm at the Administrative Building with a focus on emergency medical services.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes of February 3, 2026 Regular Meeting and February 10, 2026 Town Hall Meeting:

ACTION:

Motion: Mark Saxon made a motion to approve the February 3, 2026 Regular Meeting and the February 10, 2026 Town Hall Meeting minutes.

Second: Chuck Horton

Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon

Voted Against Motion: None

Final Action: **Motion Passed.**

Special Use P25-0228:

Applicants:	Beall and Company
Owners:	Oconee Medical Properties, LLC
Location:	1691 Jimmy Daniel Road
Acreage:	±5.014
Zoning:	AG (Agricultural District)
Request:	Special Use Approval for "Construction Contractors, Builders and Developers, with outdoor storage".

Presented by: Guy Herring, Planning & Code Enforcement Director

Discussion: Mr. Herring briefed the Board regarding the request for the property, which is currently zoned AG (Agricultural District) in the Regional Center Character Area. The applicant and owner is requesting a Special Use Approval for a construction contractor's office/showroom/warehouse building with outdoor storage. The Planning Commission and Staff recommend approval of the request with ten conditions.

The Public Hearing was opened.

Gavin Griffeth, owner, spoke in favor of the request for his business. The reason for the request is to add a gated storage area to store minimal excess building materials with as little tree removal on the site as possible.

Ken Beall, Beall and Company, LLC, applicant, explained modifications made to the original plan to include placing the building in the center of the property, increasing the rear buffering, minimal tree removal on the site, moving septic drain fields to the front of the building, and additional buffering at Silver Leaf Drive.

Jon Mills, 1050 Colorado Bend, spoke in favor of the revised proposal after being opposed to the original plan. He stated the proposed plan will have little impact on the neighborhood with increased buffering.

There were no further comments in favor of the request.

Oscar Gertsch, 1021 Bob White Court, Treasurer of Silver Leaf Homeowners Association, spoke in opposition, stating this use is not allowable based on the zoning laws for the location. He added the neighborhood's concerns for traffic safety, noise, and lighting.

Bob Hayes, 1201 Colorado Bend, spoke in opposition to the request based on UDC wording for AG zoned property. He requested an impact study be completed for the area.

Shami Jones, 1120 Colorado Bend, spoke in opposition to the request. She questioned the deceleration lane into the neighborhood being shared with a commercial property.

Jim Jones, 1120 Colorado Bend, spoke in opposition to this project being non-compatible next to a residential neighborhood.

David Bell, 1151 Arizona Bend, spoke in opposition to the Special Use for a commercial warehouse next to a residential neighborhood.

Wanda Hayes, 1201 Colorado Bend, spoke in opposition to the project, stating safety concerns.

Harold Thompson, 1100 Silver Leaf Road, spoke in opposition to the Special Use.

There were no further comments against the request.

Rebuttal:

Ken Beall, Beall and Company, LLC, applicant, stated that an impact analysis completed and submitted that did meet all necessary criteria.

Scott Behr, Jimmy Daniel Road, spoke in favor of the request.

The Public Hearing was closed.

Commissioner Horton expressed concerns over neighborhood protection and questioned OIP zoning as opposed to a Special Use in AG zoning.

Mr. Herring responded that UDC does allow this Special Use under Table 2.1.

Mr. Beall added that the owner did not ask for the zoning classification to change as it would broaden what was allowed on the property beyond that the owner is proposing to do.

Commissioner Horton asked about usage changes if the property was sold.

Mr. Herring stated any new owner must honor the Special Use.

Commissioner Thomas asked Mr. Herring to address the deceleration lane and whether this Special Use is allowable by code.

Mr. Herring responded that the deceleration lane would be extended and this Special Use is allowable by Table 2.1 of the UDC.

Commissioner Thomas continued the discussion about the Special Use as opposed to OIP zoning. He also asked about exterior lighting.

Mr. Herring stated any proposed lighting would be restricted and focused downward.

Commissioner Thomas asked whether the impact analysis was submitted.

Mr. Herring advised it was submitted.

Commissioner Thomas asked if the design would allow for tractor trailer or flatbed deliveries.

Mr. Herring responded that the design has not yet been submitted, just conceptual.

Mr. Beall stated the design has curbing which would prohibit tractor trailer access.

Discussions continued regarding the Special Use request and OIP zoning. OIP would allow an office building, but no warehouse or outdoor storage.

ACTION:

Motion: Chuck Horton made a motion to deny Special Use No. P25-0228 for Oconee Medical Properties, LLC; ±5.014 acres; 1691 Jimmy Daniel Road.

Second: Amrey Harden

Voted in Favor of Motion: Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon

Voted Against Motion: Mark Thomas

Final Action: **Motion Passed 3-1 to deny Special Use #P25-0228.**

(See documentation in Ordinance and Resolutions Book No. 26.)

Rezone No. P25-0224:

Applicants:	Beall and Company, LLC
Owners:	Living Faith Fellowship, Inc
Location:	8780 Macon Highway
Acreage:	±8.18
Zoning:	OIP (Office Institutional Professional District)
Request:	R-1 (Single Family Residential District)

Presented by: Guy Herring, Planning & Code Enforcement Director

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Discussion: Mr. Herring briefed the Board regarding the request for the property, which is currently zoned OIP (Office Business Park District) in the Community Village Character Area. The applicant and owner request a rezone of R-1 (Single Family Residential District) to create a 1.51-acre lot. The remaining area for the OIP zoned church property will be ±6.67 acres. Staff and the Planning Commission recommend approval of the request with two conditions.

Special Use No. P25-0288:

Applicants:	Beall and Company, LLC
Owners:	Living Faith Fellowship, Inc
Location:	8780 Macon Highway
Acreage:	±8.18
Zoning:	OIP (Office Institutional Professional District)
Request:	Special Use Permit to remove 1.51 acres from permit #P20-0155 to create a separate R-1 zoned parcel that has a single-family dwelling.

Presented by: Guy Herring, Planning & Code Enforcement Director
Discussion: Mr. Herring briefed the Board regarding the request for the property, which is currently zoned OIP (Office Business Park District) in the Community Village Character Area. The applicant and owner request a Special Use Permit modification for permit #P20-0155 to remove 1.51 acres from the permit area to create a separate R-1 zoned parcel that has an existing single-family dwelling. The remaining area for the Special Use Permit for the Community-Scale Church will be ±6.67 acres. Staff and the Planning Commission recommend approval of the request with two conditions.

The Public Hearing was opened.

Ken Beall, Beall and Company, LLC, applicant, requested approval of the rezone and special use to allow the church to sell its pastorium as a single-family home. There are no changes to any church facilities other than the home.

There were no further comments in favor of the request.

Kevin Mixon, 1061 Ivywood Drive, spoke in opposition as there will be an OIP strip between two residential lots next to his house.

*There were no further comments against the request.
The Public Hearing was closed.*

Commissioner Harden asked Mr. Herring to explain the property referred to by Mr. Mixon. Mr. Herring stated the property is already zoned OIP and nothing is changing with zoning.

ACTION:

Motion: Mark Saxon made a motion to approve Rezone No. P25-0224 for Living Faith Fellowship, Inc; OIP to R-1; ±1.51 acres; 8780 Macon Highway with two conditions.
Second: Amrey Harden
Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon
Voted Against Motion: None
Final Action: **Motion Passed to approve Rezone #P25-0224 with two conditions.**
(See documentation in Ordinance and Resolutions Book No. 26.)

ACTION:

Motion: Mark Saxon made a motion to approve Special Use No. P25-0288 for Living Faith Fellowship, Inc; Modify the conditions of an existing special use approval P20-0155; ±8.18 acres; 8780 Macon Highway with two conditions.

Second: Mark Thomas
Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon
Voted Against Motion: None
Final Action: **Motion Passed to approve Special Use #P25-0288 with two conditions.**
(See documentation in Ordinance and Resolutions Book No. 26.)

Special Use P25-0305:

Applicants:	Andrew and Katlyn Fields
Owners:	Andrew and Katlyn Fields
Location:	1202 Marshall-Wilkes Road
Acreage:	±5.0
Zoning:	AG (Agricultural District)
Request:	Special Use Approval for Manufactured Home as a second and temporary residence.

Presented by: Guy Herring, Planning & Code Enforcement Director
Discussion: Mr. Herring briefed the Board regarding the request for the property, which is currently zoned AG (Agricultural District) in the Agricultural Preservation Character Area. The applicants/owners request a Special Use Approval to add a manufactured home as a second dwelling on a property that has an existing site-built single-family home. Staff and the Planning Commission recommend approval of the request with two conditions.

The Public Hearing was opened.

Andrew Fields, applicant, requests approval of the Special Use to move his mother-in-law onto his property as she approaches retirement.

There were no further comments in favor of the request and no comments against the request.
The Public Hearing was closed.

ACTION:

Motion: Mark Thomas made a motion to approve Special Use No. P25-0305 for Andrew and Katlyn Fields; allow a Manufactured Home as a second and temporary residence; ±5.0 acres; 1202 Marshall-Wilkes Road with two conditions.
Second: Chuck Horton
Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon
Voted Against Motion: None
Final Action: **Motion Passed to approve Special Use #P25-0305 with two conditions.**
(See documentation in Ordinance and Resolutions Book No. 26.)

Variance No. P25-0301:

Applicants:	Christopher C. Evans
Owners:	Hartfield Holdings, LLC
Location:	Hog Mountain Road and Stonebridge Parkway
Acreage:	±2.0
Zoning:	B-1 (General Business District)
Request:	Special exception variance to allow a flat roof instead of the required gable or hip style roof.

Presented by: Guy Herring, Planning & Code Enforcement Director
Discussion: Mr. Herring briefed the Board regarding the request for the property, which is currently zoned B-1 (General Business District) in the Civic Center Character Area. The applicant and owner request a special exception variance from UDC Section 205.09.c.3.a (special provision

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applicable to the B-1 zoning district) to allow a flat roof instead of the required gable or hip style roof with a minimum roof pitch of 6 in 12 or steeper. Staff recommends denial of the request. However, if the Board chooses to grant the request, Staff recommends three conditions.

The Public Hearing was opened.

Zack Lester, owner, requested approval for Athens Micro to construct a new building. They feel a pitched roof would be too tall for the area. He explained that any neighbor's concerns would be addressed.

Chris Evans, architect and applicant, spoke for the request citing other buildings and approvals on Hog Mountain Road for flat rooves. He shared a presentation explaining the reasoning and design.

*There were no further comments in favor of the request and no comments against the request.
The Public Hearing was closed.*

Commissioner Harden asked about a neighbor concern of AC units and their noise. He confirmed with Mr. Herring this was being addressed and could be conditioned.
Commissioner Harden asked about buffering and a drainage easement.
Mr. Herring responded buffering and upkeep of the old drainage easement will be addressed.
Commissioner Harden asked Chairman Daniell about traffic radar detection.
Chairman Daniell and County Administrator Kirouac stated that radar signs go up tomorrow.
Commissioner Thomas stated the positioning of walls with the AC units on the roof would mitigate sound.

ACTION:

Motion: Mark Thomas made a motion to approve Variance No. P25-0301 for Hartfield Holdings, LLC; Request to allow a flat roof on a commercial building; ±2.0 acres; Stonebridge Parkway with three conditions.
Second: Amrey Harden
Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon
Voted Against Motion: None
Final Action: **Motion Passed to approve Variance #P25-0301 with three conditions.**
(See documentation in Ordinance and Resolutions Book No. 26.)

Variance No. P25-0303:

Applicants:	Tommy Partridge
Owners:	Thomas Partridge, Nancy Partridge, James Partridge and Laura Partridge
Location:	1981 Barber Creek Road
Acreage:	±2.58
Zoning:	AG (Agricultural District)
Request:	Special exception variance to place a guest house in the front yard rather than the rear or side yards.

Presented by: Guy Herring, Planning & Code Enforcement Director
Discussion: Mr. Herring briefed the Board regarding the request for the property, which is currently zoned AG (Agricultural District) in the Suburban Neighborhood Character Area. The applicants/owners request a special exception variance from UDC Article 3, Section 351.02.c to place a guest house in the front yard rather than the rear or side yard. Staff recommends approval of the request with one condition.

The Public Hearing was opened.

Tommy Partridge, applicant, requested approval of the variance to build a new home and move his in-laws onto his property with them.

*There were no further comments in favor of the request and no comments against the request.
The Public Hearing was closed.*

ACTION:

Motion: Mark Saxon made a motion to approve Variance No. P25-0303 for Thomas Partridge, Nancy Partridge, James Partridge, and Laura Partridge; Request to allow a guest house in the front yard; ±2.58 acres; 1981 Barber Creek Road with one condition.

Second: Chuck Horton

Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon

Voted Against Motion: None

Final Action: **Motion Passed to approve Variance #P25-0303 with one condition.**
(See documentation in Ordinance and Resolutions Book No. 26.)

2nd Quarter FY26 Financial Update:

Presented by: Melissa Braswell, Finance Director

Discussion: Finance Director Melissa Braswell presented the financial update for the 2nd quarter of FY26, which is through December 31, 2025.

- General Fund revenues and expenditures as compared to budget
- LOST, SPLOST and TSPLOST distributions as compared to prior fiscal year
- Capital and SPLOST budgeted expenditures update
- Water Resource Department revenues and expenses as compared to budget

Discuss and Consider GDOT Utility Aid MOU for SR53/Rays Church/Malcom Bridge Road:

Presented by: Justin Kirouuac, County Administrator

Discussion: Oconee County water infrastructure is required to be relocated for construction of the roundabout at SR53/Rays Church/Malcom Bridge Road for an estimated cost of \$375,805. GDOT has agreed to assist with the cost, but an MOU is required to receive the estimated aid of 25% or \$93,951.25 from GDOT. The recommendation is for approval of the MOU.

The Public Comment Period was opened and there was no Public Comment.

ACTION:

Motion: Mark Saxon made a motion to approve the GDOT Utility Aid MOU for SR53/Rays Church/Malcom Bridge Road.

Second: Chuck Horton

Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon

Voted Against Motion: None

Final Action: **Motion Passed.**

Discuss and Consider an MOU with the Oconee County Sheriff's Office for Alcohol Background Checks:

Presented by: Guy Herring, Planning and Code Enforcement Director

Discussion: An MOU with the Sheriff's Office for alcohol background checks is required by the GBI. The County Attorney and the Sheriff's Office have agreed to this MOU. The recommendation is for approval and to authorize the Chairman to execute the MOU.

The Public Comment Period was opened and there was no Public Comment.

County Attorney Daniel Haygood stated there is already an agreement in place, but the GBI needs the agreement in a different format.

ACTION:

Motion: Chuck Horton made a motion to approve the MOU with the Oconee County Sheriff's Office for alcohol background checks.
Second: Mark Saxon
Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon
Voted Against Motion: None
Final Action: **Motion Passed.**

Executive Session:

Motion: Mark Thomas made a motion to adjourn into Executive Session to discuss land acquisition and personnel.
Second: Mark Saxon
Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon
Voted Against Motion: None
Action/Motion: **Motion Passed.**
Adjourn into Executive Session: 7:44 p.m.

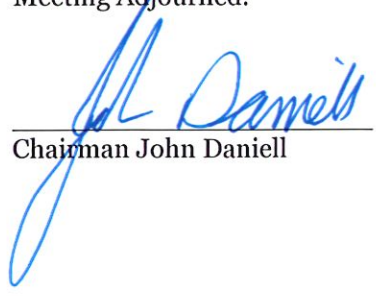
No action was taken in Executive Session.
Executive Session Adjourned: 8:12 p.m.

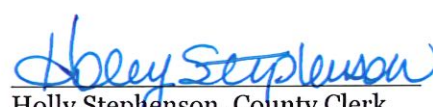
Regular Session:

Motion: Chuck Horton made a motion to adjourn back into Regular Session.
Second: Amrey Harden
Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon
Voted Against Motion: None
Action/Motion: **Motion Passed.**
Adjourned into Regular Session: 8:13 p.m.

Adjourned:

Motion: Mark Saxon made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Second: Mark Thomas
Voted in Favor of Motion: Mark Thomas, Chuck Horton, Amrey Harden, Mark Saxon
Voted Against Motion: None
Action/Motion: **Motion Passed.**
Meeting Adjourned: 8:13 p.m.


Chairman John Daniell


Holly Stephenson, County Clerk

4-7-26
Date