Opportunity Awaits

Grady County Board of Commissioners

Ray Prince District 2	LaFaye Copeland, Chair District 4	Yancey Maxwell District 1
Sam Kines, Vice-Chair District 3	Celeste Tyler County Administrator	Phillip Drew District 5

September 15, 2026, Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Present at the meeting were commissioners, Ray Prince, Yancey Maxwell, Sam Kines, and LaFaye Copeland. Commissioner Phillip Drew was unable to attend. Staff were Celeste Tyler, John White, Holly Murkerson, and Attorney Gabe Ridley.

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman LaFaye Copeland at 6:00 p.m. The Invocation was given by Mr. Maxwell, followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Motion by Mr. Kines, second by Mr. Prince to approve the agenda after removing Personnel from Executive Session. The motion was approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ashley Westergaard, 2135 Open Pond Rd, Whigham

Mrs. Westergaard wants her family motocross track grandfathered in under the new ordinance. Based on her comments, the track was completed before the ordinance was changed on September 1, 2026.

Michael Cook, 184 Carr St

Mr. Cook wanted to know if the encroachment on Gainey Cemetery from a private motocross track will be addressed.

Brandon Joyner, 740 Knight Rd

Stated motocross tracks are still being built.

PUBLIC HEARING ON SOLAR PANEL FARM ORDINANCE:

Kelley Cassels, 825 Boydville Rd Whigham

Boydville Community is an historic community and that the solar farm discussion should have been done in the open.

Sharon Spaleaka, 729 Boydville Rd Whigham

Mrs. Speleaka asked the following questions:

How will this effect property values?

How will this effect the historical value of the Boydville Community?

What about the natural habitats that will be effected by the solar farm?

How will the glinting glare from the panels be abated?

She would like the setbacks to be much greater than what is purposed.

Ted Collins, 693 Old 179 South

No one helped pay for his land when he was purchasing it so why should anyone tell him what he can do with his land.

Josh Bell, 188 W Broad Ave Whigham

Mr. Bell state he feels as if Silicon Ranch will be good neighbors and make Grady County a better place.

David Dove, 600 Peachtree St Atlanta, GA Silicon Ranch

Mr. Dove stated that Silicon Ranch has a goal of making Grady County a better place. Mr. Dove stated he had a few suggestions for the proposed Solar Ordinance Changes.

Mike Moss, 935 Piney Grove Rd

Mr. Moss stated Grady County can have beautiful subdivisions or be an industrial park.

With no further comments, Chairperson Copeland closed the public hearing.

PRESENTATIONS

None

UPCOMING EVENTS

1. Board of Commissioners Meeting, Tuesday, October 6, 2026, 9:00 AM.

CONSENT ITEMS (ONE MOTION)

Motion by Mr. Kines, second by Mr. Prince to approve:

The regular meeting minutes from September 1, 2026 Regular Meeting, and the Public Works/Public Properties Minutes from September 9, 2026.

Approval of the Birdsong Nature Center Event Permit for Special Alcohol Event on October 10, 2026.

Approval of the Angela Everson Plat.

The motion was approved.

FORMAL ACTIONS

FA09-11-26 Motion by Mr. Prince, second by Mr. Maxwell to approve the changes to the Solar Farm Ordinance. The motion was approved.

Mrs. Tyler addressed some of the issues mentioned in the Public Hearing prior to the vote on FA09-11-26. Mrs. Tyler stated that Grady County has no zoning, so we must regulate with ordinances. Silicon Ranch did not have to reach out to all the community leaders. They could have just applied for the permits and started the project. Mrs. Tyler stated that the proposed ordinance was compiled with information received from public comments and information provided from experts. Mrs. Tyler asked Mr. David Dove if he would like to respond to questions from the commissioners.

Mr. Dove stated that Silicon Ranch would like some minor changes to the proposed ordinance. He stated that they would like a waiver which states "unless a written waiver is obtained from the adjacent landowner pursuant to Section 5.2 below.

Change section 3.4 to read "The facility shall be fully screened from adjoining property that is residentially or commercially developed. The vegetation installed shall be a minimum of 8 feet in height and to obtain substantial opacity within 5 years. They also asked that natural preexisting vegetation be allowed to be used."

Section 3.7 "Sound barriers shall be installed around all inverter and transformer units for noise mitigation, as reasonably necessary to avoid noise nuisance from all property lines."

Mr. Kines stated that a sound barrier can be from several different sources and decommissioning the site is a very big concern to the commissioners.

Mr. Prince asked if they had an estimate of what it would cost to decommission and clean up the site and they did not have the estimate.

Mr. Kines reminded that the ordinance is not for Silicon Ranch but for all Solar Farms that may be planned for the county.

Mr. Dove with Silicon Ranch talked about decommissioning and stated that Silicon Ranch contracts with a company that recycles the panels into other electrical components.

Mr. Kines discussed protecting wildlife and Mr. Dove stated they have a plan for that, and their solar farms often help reintroduce species to the area.

After this discussion, the board passed the ordinance after adding to the statement to allow natural vegetation left at the site to be used as a buffer.

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Administrator Matters

Mrs. Tyler stated that they have just submitted the Comprehensive Plan to Southwest Georgia Regional Commission so they can submit it to the Department of Community Affairs for approval.

Commissioner Matters

Mr. Kines stated that someone had broken into Mr. Deegan's property and stole equipment from his shops.

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District 2

LaFaye Copeland, Chair
District 4

Yancey Maxwell
District 1

Sam Kines, Vice-Chair
District 3

Celeste Tyler
County Administrator

Phillip Drew
District 5

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Mr. Prince, second by Mr. Maxwell to enter Executive Session to discuss litigation at 8:07 pm. The motion was approved.

Motion by Mr. Kines, second by Mr. Maxwell to exit Executive Session at 8:26 pm. The motion was approved.

REPORTS

1. Attorney's Report – None
2. Tired Creek Lake 08-26
3. Roads and Bridges 08-26
4. Permits 08-26
5. Plat Activity 08-26
6. Plats 08-26
7. Animal Control 08-26
8. Extension Service 8-26

Adjournment- Motion by Mr. Prince, second by Mr. Kines to adjourn. The motion was approved.

RESOLUTIONS AND AGENDAS

I. Executive Duties

1. Call to Order - 6:00 PM

2. Invocation/Pledge

3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Public Comments
5. PUBLIC HEARING: Changes to the Solar Farm Ordinance

II. Presentations

III. Upcoming Events

1. Board of Commissioners' Meeting, Tuesday, October 6, 2026, 9:00 AM.

IV. Consent Items –(One motion)

Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes from September 1, 2026, and the Public Works/Public Properties Committee Meeting Minutes from September 9, 2026

Approval of the Birdsong Nature Center Event Permit for Special Alcohol Event on October 10, 2026.

Approval of the Angela Everson Plat.

V. Formal Actions

FA09-11-26 Approve or Disapprove the changes to the Solar Farm Ordinance.

VI. New and Unfinished Business

1. Administrator Matters

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District 2

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2. Commissioner Matters

VII. Executive Session
1. Personnel and Litigation

VIII. Reports
1. Attorney's Report
2. Tired Creek Lake 08-26
3. Roads and Bridges 08-26
4. Permits 08-26
5. Plat Activity 08-26
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IX. Adjournment

ATTEST:

_____
John White, County Clerk

_____
LaFaye Copeland, Chair

_____
Sam Kines, Vice Chair

_____
Phillip Drew, Commissioner

_____
Yancey Maxwell, Commissioner

_____
Ray Prince, Commissioner