

MINUTES
Bleckley County Commissioner Meeting
Bleckley County JC Building
Thursday, May 21, 2026

PRESENT: Commissioner Mike Davis, Ronnie Smith, Randy Thompson, Melissa W. Barker, Magistrate Judge Rob Grimsley, Lisa Eisele, Ken Land, Camryn Bishop, Matt Kelley, Sheriff Daniel Cape, Representative Danny Mathis, John Roland, Candace Summerall, Brian Arnold, Cheryl Ates, Danny Smith, Caroline Weathersby, Angela Redding, Freida Dykes

Randy Thompson opened in prayer.

Commissioner Davis led the Pledge of Allegiance and welcomed all to the meeting.

All attendees received the following:

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There were no questions or concerns. Minutes were approved.

Topics discussed by Commissioner Davis

The Community Mental Health Center agreement was signed for the period July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027.

The Oconee Circuit budget request was received for the Superior and Juvenile Courts.

A Memorial Day Program will be held at the Courthouse on Monday, May 25, 2026, at 10:00 A.M. Michael Jones, a retired Air Force veteran, will serve as the keynote speaker.

The celebration for Mrs. Carolyn Kitchens was held last week.

The Scruggs Company won the bid for the 2026 LMIG. A 2026 LRA bid opening is scheduled soon, and another grant may be received for more road work.

Topics discussed in today's meeting

Sheriff Cape stated the annual firearm recertification is today for the deputies. Regarding the May 20th Dodge County trial held at the Bleckley County Courthouse for two weeks, with extra security and deputies, this will be at no cost to Bleckley County. The trial will be held again in August due to a mistrial; there will be a new jury, and, as before, Bleckley County will incur no costs for the trial. The CHAMPS graduation was held this past Monday. This class is taught by the SROs to every fifth-grade student. The year ended with all the students receiving a t-shirt, certificate, prizes, and a cookout. Sheriff Cape also discussed issues regarding mental health in the jails. These individuals are usually incompetent to stand trial in our judicial system, and the current wait time for them to be accepted into a facility is 400 days.

Representative Danny Mathis reiterated what the Sheriff talked about regarding mental health in the jails. This is a problem, and he is currently working on a plan to help Bleckley use the facility in Dodge County. A facility is being built in Atlanta that will hold approximately 300 patients. The hospitals, and the sheriff's offices have to deal with these issues and he will continue to seek resources to assist with these concerns.

John Roland stated the Bleckley Memorial Hospital employee banquet was held this week. He is exploring the possibility of establishing an outpatient chemotherapy service at the local hospital in collaboration with the City of Hope to reduce patient travel.

Cheryl Ates stated that the election office reported 3,001 voters in the recent primary, with a runoff scheduled for June 16, 2026. There will be no Saturday voting. Deadline to request absentee ballots by mail is June 5, 2026. Early voting dates are June 8, 2026, through June 12, 2026. Election day will be held on June 16, 2026, at the JC Barn.

Chief Kelley went over the April Fire Report. There was a total of 91 calls. A Firefighter one class is in progress. The Firefighter Two class had 18 in the class and 13 firefighters passed. There are currently 52 volunteer fire fighters.

Ronnie Smith stated his department is busy cutting grass, motor grading, and continuing to scrape the roads. A road project is tentatively going to start on June 1, 2026.

Brian Arnold stated he will be working on a Resolution authorizing the sale of alcohol with a meal, which passed in last week's election. He will also revise the county's Open Records Act policy.

Melissa Barker went over the many activities offered through the Chamber of Commerce. The main focus is to bring back the Pumpkin Festival on October 17th.

Randy Thompson updated everyone on the activities, including basketball and baseball camps to be held at the college. There is a grant writing class that will be offered to the community for anyone interested.

Ken Land stated that the Downtown Family Fun Day was a great event. He is working with DCA to get funding for the downtown area. We also have some private investors interested in investing in downtown.

Camryn Bishop went over the Building Report. 17 permits were issued in April.

Angela Redding said at the City Council meeting that awards were presented to the winners of a coloring contest from the Downtown Family Fun Day. Three newly elected officials attended the newly elected official training, and the council updated/approved the customer service policy.

Lisa Eisele said the City of Cochran received the 2025 CDBG last week, and 10 homes will be reconstructed.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned

Mike Davis, Commissioner

Date

Freida Dykes

10:39 a.m.