



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WWDA Board of Directors
October 7, 2026
9:00 AM
2855 Forest Drive, Waycross, GA 31503

Board Members Present

Daniel Morris
James Willis
Brian Jackson

Board Members Absent:

Stephen Burse
Kim Bennett-Callahan
Rusty Hall

Staff Members Present

Jason Rubenbauer
Frances Golder

Guests Present:

Hillary Stringfellow
Jami-Marie Storey
Taylor Hereford
Middie Vaughn

Board Members Present Remotely:

Dr. Michael-Angelo James
Dan Good

- **Call to Order**

Daniel Morris called the October 7, 2026, to order at 9:04 A.M.

- **Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance**

Daniel Morris provided the invocation and led the board with the pledge of allegiance.

- **Approval of Agenda**

James Willis motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Dan Good seconded the motion. All members present voted aye, and the motion passed unanimously.

- **Approval of Minutes**

- **Regular Meeting September 2, 2026**

Michael-Angelo James motioned to approve the September 2, 2026, meeting minutes as presented. Brian Jackson seconded the motion. All members present voted aye, and the motion passed unanimously.

- **Approval of Financial Reports**

- **July 31, 2026**

Mr. Rubenbauer presented the financial report for July, since July's report was unavailable



in time for the last meeting. With no questions or concerns, Michael-Angelo James motioned to approve the financial reports as presented. Brian Jackson seconded the motion. All members present voted aye, and the motion passed unanimously.

- **August 31, 2026**

Mr. Rubenbauer presented the August financial reports, advising the Board that the Authority remains in good standing. Certain expenditures exceeded expectations due to repairs and maintenance. Jason also pointed out that the reports are only for First Southern Bank, but the accounts at PrimeSouth have been opened and are in use effective October 1, 2026. With no questions or concerns, Michael-Angelo James motioned to approve the financial reports as presented. Dan Good seconded the motion. All members present voted aye, and the motion passed unanimously.

- **Community Reports**

- **Waycross-Ware County Chamber of Commerce- Jami-Marie Storey-** Ms Storey informed the board that it is the busy time of year. This month's Rise and Shine event will be at the Waycross Family Justice Center at 7:45 am on October 13. The Business after Hours event will probably need to be rescheduled due to the Pumpkinfest event so that remains TBD. The 5th Annual "Tee Up for Business" is October 16.
- **Downtown Waycross Development Authority- None Present**
- **Waycross Convention & Visitors Bureau- None Present**
- **Coastal Pines Technical College- None Present**
- **South Georgia State College – Taylor Hereford-**Mr. Hereford reported that the SGSC golf tournament is tentatively scheduled for April 2027. Early sponsorships are being sought to support renovations to the library, which will house the Okefenokee Swamp Park archives donated to South Georgia State College by the park. He emphasized the importance of preserving and housing these materials following the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge's designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- **Ware County Board of Education- None Present**

- **Old Business**

- **Bring back to the table: Nominations from the Board to fill County Seat 1 which expires December 31, 2026, and is currently held by Dan Good. Mr. Good is eligible to serve one more regular term and has requested it to be considered. No additional applications have been received for this position.**

Following advertisement of the County Seat 1 vacancy, no additional applications were



received. Michael-Angelo James motioned to recommend that the Ware County Commission reappoint Dan Good to County Seat 1 for an additional regular term. Brian Jackson seconded the motion. Mr. Good abstained from the vote, and all other members present voted in favor. The motion passed.

- **Bring back to the table: Nominations from the Board to fill City Seat 1 which expires December 31, 2026, and is currently held by Rusty Hall. Mr. Hall is eligible to serve one more regular term and has requested it to be considered. No additional applications have been received for this position.**

Following advertisement of the City Seat 1 vacancy, no additional applications were received. James Willis motioned to recommend that the Waycross City Commission reappoint Rusty Hall to City Seat 1 for an additional regular term. Michael-Angelo James seconded the motion. Mr. Hall was not present at the meeting, and all members present voted in favor. The motion passed.

- **Review the final Housing Study results and the “Table of Recommendations”.**

The final Housing Study results and Table of Recommendations were discussed under New Business in conjunction with Resolution 2026.10.07.01

- **Presentation, discussion, and request for revised approval of a quitclaim deed to the City of Waycross for interconnectivity between the city water system and the Airport Industrial Park Water System.** The Board reviewed the proposed quitclaim deed to the City of Waycross for interconnectivity between the city water system and the Airport Industrial Park water system. The previous month’s approval authorized an easement rather than a transfer of property ownership; however, the paperwork returned by the City for signature provided for conveyance of the property. James Willis motioned to deny conveyance of the 0.228-acre parcel while reaffirming approval of an easement over the property. Brian Jackson seconded the motion. Michael-Angelo James abstained, and all other members present voted in favor. The motion passed.

- **New Business**

- **Presentation, discussion, and adoption of Resolution 2026.10.07.01 Adopt the Waycross and Ware County Housing Study as presented by the Georgia Conservancy report and recommendations.** The Board reviewed and discussed Resolution 2026.10.07.01 to adopt the Waycross and Ware County Housing Study and the report and recommendations presented by the Georgia Conservancy. Members highlighted the finding that approximately 1 in 4 houses in the city and 1 in 5 houses in the county are uninhabitable. Chairman Daniel Morris emphasized that the study should be publicly available, easily accessible on the Authority’s website, and provided by email upon request. He thanked Jason Rubenbauer for his work with the Georgia Conservancy to complete the study, the first conducted in more than 20 years. James Willis motioned to adopt the resolution and accept the study as presented. Brian Jackson seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor, and the motion passed.



- **Presentation, discussion, and formal adoption of the banking partner for public funds.**

The Board reviewed the available banking institutions and associated fees gathered by the Banking & Investment Committee to select a banking partner for the Authority's public funds. Michael-Angelo James motioned to formally select PrimeSouth Bank and transfer the Authority's funds to that institution. James Willis seconded the motion. Chairman Daniel Morris abstained, and all other members present voted in favor. The motion passed.

- **Presentation, discussion, and request for approval of the hotel agreement for the 2027 Eggs & Issues Legislative Opening Session**

The Board discussed the hotel agreement for the 2027 Eggs & Issues Legislative Opening Session, scheduled for January 13, 2027, at the Georgia World Congress Center. Jason Rubenbauer proposed reserving 20 rooms at REVERB for board members and community partners, based on the previous year's attendance of 20. Entering into an agreement now would secure substantially lower rates and help ensure room availability. REVERB's rates are significantly lower than those of other nearby hotels, and the event venue is within a short walk. Rooms would be offered to community partners, with each participating organization responsible for reimbursing the Authority for the cost of its reserved rooms. James Willis motioned to approve the hotel agreement and reserve 20 rooms. Brian Jackson seconded the motion. All members present voted aye, and the motion passed unanimously.

- **Presentation, discussion, and request for approval of the purchase of tables for Waycross and Ware County's representation at the 2027 Eggs & Issues Legislative Opening Session.**

The Board discussed purchasing tables for Waycross and Ware County's representation at the 2027 Eggs & Issues Legislative Opening Session. Jason Rubenbauer recommended purchasing two tables, seating 10 people each, at the early bird rate of \$2,200 per table, for a total of \$4,400. Early bird pricing ends October 16, 2026, after which the cost increases to \$2,450 per table. James Willis motioned to approve the purchase of two tables at the early bird rate. Brian Jackson seconded the motion. All members present voted aye, and the motion passed unanimously.

- **Presentation, discussion, and request for approval of the partnership with Grow Southeast Georgia for the Legislative Reception, January 12, 2027, in an amount not to exceed \$7,500.00.**

The Board discussed partnering with Grow Southeast Georgia for the Legislative Reception on January 12, 2027, at Max Lager's, preceding the Eggs & Issues Legislative Opening Session. Jason Rubenbauer explained that the Authority previously partnered with Douglas-Coffee County. The reception will provide an opportunity to engage elected officials in individual conversations about community priorities and strengthen relationships. Plans



include signage and accommodations for attendees, with sponsorships sought to help offset costs. Michael-Angelo James motioned to approve the reception in an amount not to exceed \$7,500. Brian Jackson seconded the motion. All members present voted aye, and the motion passed unanimously.

- **President's Report—Jason Rubenbauer-**

Jason Rubenbauer reported that a 10-foot hole had developed on the property behind Enviva due to a City drainage issue. A 50-foot right-of-way required clearing to allow equipment access for repairs. Because SEC, the contractor performing land clearing in the Industrial Park, already had equipment mobilized in the area, he directed the company to clear the lot. He noted that the remaining land clearing would not be completed by the October 15 deadline due to heavy rainfall and muddy conditions. Mr. Rubenbauer expressed satisfaction with SEC's attentiveness and professionalism in carrying out the work.

- **Attorney's Items**

- **Hillary Stringfellow—Gilbert, Harrell, Sumerford & Martin, P.C. –** No report at this time

- **Chairman's Report—Daniel Morris–** No report at this time

- **Executive Session**

- **For discussion of land/lease and acquisition matters pursuant to O.C.G.A. 50-14-3(b)(1)(B)**
- **For discussion of personnel matters pursuant to O.C.G.A. 50-14-3(b)(2)**

With no more business to be discussed in regular session James Willis motioned to enter Executive Session. Brian Jackson seconded the motion. All members present voted aye, and the motion passed unanimously. The board entered executive session at 9:35 A.M.

With no more business to discuss in executive session Michael-Angelo James motioned to return to regular session. Brian Jackson seconded the motion. All members present voted aye, and the motion passed unanimously. The board returned to regular session at 10:05 A.M.

- **Adjournment**

With no more business to discuss, Michael-Angelo James motioned to adjourn. James Willis seconded the motion. All members present voted aye, and the motion passed unanimously. Daniel Morris adjourned the October 7, 2026, meeting at 10:05 A.M.