**MINUTES OF THE CRISP COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**
**REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2025**

## OPENING CEREMONIES

Chairman James Dowdy, III, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in Room 305 of the Crisp County Government Center with Commissioners James Nance, Sam Farrow, Larry Felton and Mark Crenshaw in attendance. Others present were Interim County Administrator Mickey Dunnavant, County Attorney Rick Lawson, Finance Director Sherrie Leverett and County Clerk Monica Irwin. Reverend Gary Leutzinger gave the invocation and Interim County Administrator Mickey Dunnavant led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America. Chairman Dowdy welcomed all in attendance.

## ADOPTION OF AGENDA

**Motion was made by Commissioner Crenshaw to adopt the September 9, 2025 Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Felton, motion carried unanimously.**

## APPROVE MINUTES

**Motion was made by Commissioner Felton to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of August 12, 2025 seconded by Commissioner Nance, motion carried unanimously.**

## SHERIFF REPORT

Sheriff Hancock stated, 460 papers was received last month due to court. Man hours operated during court was 259 hours. Citation numbers are slightly up, 610 citations written, contacts made was 544 actually issued citations with 2 being DUI, 5 being drug arrests, and 20 accidents being worked. Sheriff Hancock stated, he has a meeting this Thursday with the U.S. Marshalls Service to announce the new increase for the housing rate of federal inmates. Right now, the jail is at full capacity as a result of bringing inmates in for court dates awaiting sentencing or hearings. This includes housing for Cordele Police Department, Rochelle, Wilcox, and other various counties. Another source of revenue for the jail has been decreased due to the Federal Government and FCC cutting phone rates being charged to inmates on jail phones and tablets. Booked inmates and released inmates average about 7 inmates per day. 70 inmates transported last month totaling 141 transport hours; most time on the road is transporting mental health people housed in the jail. Mental Health Facilities are at bed capacity leaving the housing of these people inside the county jail. These are not criminals but sick individuals not able to receive the medical attention they need, putting Crisp County Sheriff Deputies at risk for threats and altercations with these individuals inside the facility and during transports. Mr. Hancock also stated, the Sheriff Office is short 4 employees from being fully staffed but overall the men and women are doing a great job serving the community and I am proud to be leading them. Sheriff Hancock stated, the Grand Jury recently toured the jail and mentioned in their report the lighting in the jail needed to be replaced. Sheriff Hancock stated, the issue is being addressed and he is currently looking at a company to replace the lighting in the most economical way possible. Any light fixtures installed in the facility have to be tamper resistant/tamper proof which can be challenging to replace at an economical price. The older the jail gets the more repairs because of the age of the jail. Interim County Administrator, Mickey Dunnavant, stated, the transport issue has been addressed. There is state law that requires the county to arrange for the transport of someone with mental illness. This is still a work in progress but the

Sheriff and I have been working to address this. The problem is no beds available so there is nowhere to transport within the law that requires mental patients be transported within 72 hours to a facility. Interim County Administrator, Mickey Dunnavant, requested the Sheriff explain the incident that occurred over the weekend at the Crisp County Sports Complex. Sheriff Hancock stated, 6:10 pm Saturday deputies were dispatched to the Sports Complex on 8th Avenue in reference to a fight. It started as a disagreement between the Umpire, Coach, and a Parent about a call made by the Umpire. This escalated into a pushing match resulting in a punch from the Coach to the Umpire. All parties were removed from the Complex and taken to the Crisp County Sheriff's Office. It is an ongoing investigation but two arrests were made Saturday night and both have bonded out of jail. The individuals and the ball team have been banned from the Crisp County Sports Complex.

**GEORGIA FORESTRY COMMISSION**

Justin Brown, Chief Ranger, stated, he has 20 years of service with the Georgia Forestry Commission. Crisp County has three active Rangers that utilize two response centers: Roger Pollock, James Shingler, and Joey Stone. Current equipment is three tractors/plow units and two quick response/pick-up type 7 engines. A total of 559 permits have been issued thus far for 2025; consisting of agriculture, silviculture, and land clearing permits. Mr. Brown stated, burning assistance was given to 17 landowners totaling 946 acres and firebreaks totaling 104.7 hours consisting of 40 landowners; 23 with fire plow for 66.3 hours and 17 with harrow for 38.4 hours. So far, this year's wildfires total 17 fires burning a total of 35.28 acres. The average fire size was 2.08 acres, which is down from the 5 year average of 2.17 acres. Mr. Brown also stated, the Forestry Commission conducted 7 programs this year consisting of Smokey Bear, fire prevention, prescribed fire and meetings with County and City Officials. Mr. Brown stated, for landowners who need assistance in burning, his email is djbrown@gfc.state.ga.us and his phone number is 478-488-0351.

**DECISION HEARING**

Interim County Administrator, Mickey Dunnavant, stated, the decision hearing for Mrs. Judy Dowdy's business located at 1143 East 8th Avenue. Last month, Mrs. Dowdy requested a rezoning of her property from Office Institutional to Neighborhood Commercial. Planning and Zoning has not received any objections to the rezoning request. Mr. Dunnavant read the Standards for Rezoning. **Commissioner Farrow made the motion to adopt the Findings of Fact as presented and to approve the request to rezone Parcel 032 002, also known as 1143 East 8th Avenue, belonging to Judy C. Dowdy from Office Institutional to Neighborhood Commercial, seconded by Commissioner Crenshaw, motion carried unanimously.**

**ORDINANCE 2025-014**

Interim County Administrator, Mickey Dunnavant, stated, the Ordinance is to amend the zoning map and the land use regulations of the unincorporated area of Crisp County. Mr. Dunnavant read the Ordinance stating, Parcel 032 002 consisting of 0.58 +/- acres of land in land lot 8, district 11, also known as 1143 East 8th Avenue, belonging to Judy C. Dowdy, shall be recognized from Office Institutional to Neighborhood Commercial to allow for the operations of Judy's Small World. **Motion was made by Commissioner Felton to adopt the Ordinance allowing for the rezoning of Parcel 032 002 from Office Institutional to Neighborhood Commercial, operating as Judy's Small World, seconded by Commissioner Crenshaw, motion carried unanimously.**

## NEW BUSINESS

Interim County Administrator, Mickey Dunnavant, advised the Commissioners of several items under new business needing their consideration:

## RESOLUTION 2025-012

Interim County Administrator, Mickey Dunnavant, stated, Resolution 2025-012 is a Resolution to establish a Second Board of Equalization. This Board allows the Superior Court to hear appeals from the public concerning property taxes. The first Board consists of three regular members and three alternate members, in case of an absent regular member. The second Board will consist of the same. As of now, there are only two alternates on the first Board and the Clerk of Court is currently seeking another alternate to serve on this Board. Mr. Dunnavant stated, this is an extremely important to Board to serve on in our County. The Board of Equalization does hear tax payer's appeals on property values and exemptions. This independent Board hears evidence from both the taxpayer and the tax assessors' office and makes an independent decision based on the facts presented. After hearing both sides, the Board will render a decision on the value of the property or the exemption. Mr. Dunnavant also stated, there is some criteria for being a board member. A person must be qualified to serve as a Grand Juror, be a high school graduate, own real property in Crisp County, and is not a member of the Governing Authority of the County, Municipality, or Consolidated Government, nor a member of the Board of Education nor a member or employee of the County Board of Tax Assessors. Applications are presented to the Grand Jury for consideration and if appointed, serve a term of three years. Within the first year, the board member must complete a 40 hour training course. The following two years, the board member must complete an 8 hour continuing education course. This is not a voluntary Board, members are paid $65 per day for Hearings, $50 per day for classroom training, and $25 per 8 hour course of online continuing education. Meetings are held Monday through Thursday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Mr. Dunnavant read the Resolution. **Motion was made by Commissioner Nance to adopt the Resolution to establish a Second Board of Equalization, seconded by Commissioner Farrow, motion carried unanimously.**

## RESOLUTION 2025-013

Interim County Administrator, Mickey Dunnavant, stated, Resolution 2025-013 is a Resolution to opt-out of mobile home decal requirement. The Mobil Home Decal Resolution refers to Senate Bill 193 that was passed in 2021-2022 Regular Session of the Georgia General Assembly. This Bill allows the option of the Governing body of the County to opt out of the requirement to issue mobile home decals as evidence of a mobile home permit. Opting out of the decals will reduce the work load resulting in saving time and money for the County. However, this action does not have any effect on the County's permit procedure for relocating new homes. The property owner is still responsible every year for ad valorem taxes. Mr. Dunnavant read the Resolution. **Motion was made by Commissioner Nance to adopt the Resolution to opt-out of requiring mobile home decals, seconded by Commissioner Farrow, motion carried unanimously.**

## RESOLUTION 2025-015

Interim County Administrator, Mickey Dunnavant, stated Resolution 2025-015 is a Resolution authorizing the application for the 2027 funding for the 5311 Transportation Program. This is not a

contract just an authorization for Mrs. Leverett to complete the application for funding with Georgia Department of Transportation. Mr. Dunnavant read the Resolution. **Motion was made by Commissioner Felton to adopt the Resolution to authorize the 2027 application of the 5311 Transportation Program, seconded by Commissioner Farrow, motion carried unanimously.**

**FINANCE REPORT**

Finance Director, Sherrie Leverett, stated, Included in the financial report section of your packet today is preliminary report for the first two months of FY 26. The first page includes the report of revenues and expenditures for the County's General & three major Special Revenue Funds. Combined, these funds are reporting YTD net shortfall of about -8% which equates to a -$2.3 million. The Water Fund also ended the two-month period in a negative position of -$29,509. Water consumption billed for the month was 9.2 million gallons to 1542 customers and the USDA Bonds are current at $998,493. As of this report, the Landfill is showing an accrued YTD net income of $48,710. Total tonnage for the month came in at 4,959.82. 30% of that was delivered under the commercial waste contract, 7% under the City of Cordele's residential contract and 5% under the County's curbside contract. The GEFA Loan is current at $316,176. The General and special revenue funds combined ended the month with $14.2 million; The proprietary funds at $12.4 million and the SPLOST & TSLOST funds at $18.1 million. SPLOST Issue Reports: The only update for the 2017 SPLOST Issue is that expenditures have now reached $21.6 million. Distribution #19 under the 2023 Issue came in at $566,185, 12% above twelve months ago, bringing issue to date collections up to $9.3 million. Expenditures & encumbrances came at $5.2 million. Projects benefiting from our Special Local Option Sales Tax penny during the month of August were the Airport, Public Works, County Roads, Solid Waste, Recreation, CCSO, County Buildings and the cities of Arabi and Cordele for a total amount expended of $1,213,496. L.O.S.T distributions: This month's distribution of $277,430 based on retail sales for the month of July also came in 12% over this same period last year. TSPLOST Fund: The August distribution brings total revenues up to $2.9 million. $9.4 million in local road projects have been expended or programmed combining TSPLOST with additional sources of funding coming from LMIG, GDOT & SPLOST. CDBG Revolving Loan Fund monthly report, which includes the balance and status of all our CDBG Revolving Loan Fund Accounts. Total outstanding balance for the five remaining loans was $1.9 million at the end of August. The last report included is the revenue by fund and expenditures by department report. The summary report shows the expended percentage of appropriations for each individual department and the total for each fund. Following two months into the new fiscal year everyone should be at or below 17%. As of this report, overall, the General and Special Revenue Funds combined are right on target at 17%, The Water Fund is over at 22% and the Landfill Fund came in under at 13%.

**ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

Interim County Administrator, Mickey Dunnavant, stated, he is still awaiting response from Georgia Department of Transportation regarding Amboy Road repairs submission made by Public Works Director, Carl Gamble. Mr. Dunnavant stated, he attended Georgia's Joint Agriculture Committee meeting held in Perry, Georgia at the Fairgrounds where he, Chairman Goodman, Chairman Dickey, and Senator Summers spoke at length about additional LMIG funding for road repairs. Also, Mr. Dunnavant along with Inspector, Jimmie Mumphery, attended the Georgia Associations of Zoning Administrators Conference in Rome, Georgia, where Data Centers was the number one topic. Mr. Dunnavant and Mr. Mumphery also met with Josh Jones who issues certificates for septic systems in our region. As of now, regardless of the home size, the state requires a 1000 gallon septic tank for 1-4 bedrooms, no exceptions. Mr. Dunnavant stated, I have good news, Helena Industries donated Grain Bin Rescue

Equipment to Crisp County Fire & Rescue. This can be used for rescue operations for commercial and agriculture bins. Mr. Dunnavant stated, himself and Maintenance Director, Toby Coleman, have been working with the USDA Lease Contract Officer to make the necessary changes to floor plans so FSA Representatives and Crisp County Elections Office are able to move into the USDA/FSA building. Mr. Dunnavant also attended several meetings last month.

**Motion was made by Commissioner Felton to go into Executive Session at 10:50 am for Personnel, seconded by Commissioner Nance, motion carried unanimously.**

**Motion was made by Commissioner Felton to come out of Executive Session at 11:08 am, seconded by Commissioner Farrow, motion carried unanimously.**

## APPOINTMENT OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

**Motion was made by Commissioner Nance to appoint Interim County Administrator, Mickey Dunnavant, to the position of County Administrator per the terms of the Contract, substitute the execution of the Agreement with the terms and conditions contained therein, seconded by Commissioner Felton, motion carried unanimously.**

## ANIMAL SERVICES BOARD

**Motion was made by Commissioner Felton to re-appoint Haley McCall and Andrea Wade to serve as members of the Crisp County Animal Services Board, seconded by Commissioner Nance, motion carried unanimously.**

## ADJOURN MEETING

**By common consent, Commissioners adjourned the meeting at 11:12 am.**

**James R Dowdy, III, Chairman**

**Mickey Dunnavant, Interim County Administrator**