

PUTNAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



117 Putnam Drive, Suite A ♦ Eatonton, GA 31024

Minutes

Friday, June 5, 2026 ♦ 10:00 AM

Putnam County Administration Building – Room 203

The Putnam County Board of Commissioners met on Friday, June 5, 2026 at approximately 10:00 AM in the Putnam County Administration Building, 117 Putnam Drive, Room 203, Eatonton, Georgia.

PRESENT

Vice-Chairman/Commissioner Tom McElhenney
Commissioner Richard Garrett
Commissioner Steve Hersey
Commissioner Jeff Wooten

ABSENT

Chairman Bill Sharp

STAFF PRESENT

County Attorney Adam Nelson
Interim County Manager Byron Lombard
County Clerk Lynn Butterworth
Deputy County Clerk Mercy Fluker

Opening

1. Welcome - Call to Order

Vice-Chairman McElhenney called the meeting to order at approximately 10:03 a.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda.

Motion made by Commissioner Garrett, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Garrett, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

3. Invocation

Jonathon Dawson, Lakepoint Community Church, gave the Invocation.

4. Pledge of Allegiance (staff)

County Manager Lombard led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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5. Special Presentation - Men's Health Month Proclamation

The commissioners presented the proclamation honoring Men's Health Month.

(Copy of proclamation made a part of the minutes on minute book page _____.)

Regular Business Meeting

6. Public Comments

No one signed in to speak.

7. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Minutes - May 19, 2026 MGRC Called Meeting (staff-CC)

b. Approval of Minutes - May 19, 2026 Regular Meeting (staff-CC)

c. Approval of Minutes - May 19, 2026 Executive Session (staff-CC)

d. Approval of 2026 Alcohol License(s) (staff-CC)

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Commissioner Hersey, Seconded by Commissioner Garrett.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Garrett, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

(Copy of alcohol license made a part of the minutes on minute book page _____.)

8. Discussion and possible action regarding the 2026 Alcohol License for Welcome to the Lake LLC dba Lake House Tap (staff-CC)

Ms. Courtney Garner, Manager for Lake House Tap, signed in to answer any questions.

County Manager Lombard explained the item and provided the commissioners with options for how to proceed.

Sheriff Sills explained that the business was cited for selling alcohol without a license and the arraignment is currently scheduled for July.

County Attorney Nelson confirmed that if they are found guilty, they can no longer hold an alcohol license in Putnam County.

Motion to table the Alcoholic Beverage License Application submitted by Welcome to the Lake LLC dba Lake House Tap pending the outcome of the outstanding citations.

Motion made by Commissioner Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner Garrett.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Garrett, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

9. Discussion and possible action regarding the 2026 Alcohol License for Longshoals Package LLC (staff-CC)

Mr. Kamil Ali commented in support of the application.

Sheriff Sills explained the citations and advised the commissioners to table this license as well.

Motion to table the Alcoholic Beverage License Application submitted by Longshoals Package LLC pending the outcome of the outstanding citations.

Motion made by Commissioner Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner Garrett.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Garrett, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

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10. Update regarding the non-project specific recommendations made by the Putnam County Planning & Development Director (Lisa Jackson) on p128 of the Board Packet for the Board of Commissioners meeting on February 17, 2026 (as instructed at the March 6, 2026 Regular meeting) (RG)

Commissioner Garrett explained the background of this item.

County Attorney Nelson and Planning and Development Director Lisa Jackson explained the steps taken by staff so far and recommended the commissioners meet individually or in pairs with Planning and Development staff before the changes are added to an agenda.

Motion to authorize staff to schedule a work session to discuss the question of a new commercial designation on arterial roads.

Motion made by Commissioner Garrett, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Garrett, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

11. Authorization for Chairman to sign Intergovernmental Lighting Agreement between Georgia Department of Transportation and Putnam County (staff-CM)

County Manager Lombard explained the agreement.

Motion to authorize Chairman to sign the Intergovernmental Lighting Agreement between Georgia Department of Transportation and Putnam County.

Motion made by Commissioner Garrett, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Garrett, Commissioner Wooten

Voting Nay: Commissioner Hersey

(Copy of agreement made a part of the minutes on minute book pages _____ to _____.)

12. Authorization for staff to schedule a Public Hearing on proposed changes to the Putnam County Code of Ordinances - Chapter 53 (Energy Creation, Energy Storage, and Digital Infrastructure) (staff-CA)

Ms. Jerri Nowlan commented in opposition of data centers.

Mr. Dale Bills commented on data centers and thanked the board for being proactive.

Ms. Sandra Decker advised that she has a background in tech and discussed AI requirements of data centers.

Motion to authorize staff to schedule a Public Hearing on proposed changes to the Putnam County Code of Ordinances – Chapter 53 (Energy Creation, Energy Storage, and Digital Infrastructure).

Motion made by Commissioner Garrett, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.

Amended motion to authorize staff to schedule a Public Hearing on proposed changes to the Putnam County Code of Ordinances – Chapter 53 (Energy Creation, Energy Storage, and Digital Infrastructure) and to schedule a work session before the public hearing.

Motion made by Commissioner Garrett, Seconded by Commissioner Wooten.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Garrett, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

(Copy of proposed changed made a part of the minutes on minute book pages _____ to _____.)

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Reports/Announcements

13. County Manager Report

County Manager Lombard reported that his first solo week has been good but rapid fire; he has compiled a list of items to discuss and requested consideration of scheduling an entire day work session; some items are time-sensitive.

14. County Attorney Report

County Attorney Nelson advised that the staff has received a request from Putnam County Stone to withdraw their rezoning application for a proposed quarry.

15. Commissioner Announcements

Commissioner McElhenney: encouraged everyone to attend the upcoming Dairy Festival.

Commissioner Garrett: commented on the success of the Voices & Votes Exhibit and congratulated the Georgia Writer's Museum for winning the distinction of being the first location in Georgia to host the exhibit; reminded everyone that the commissioners approved a drone show on July 3rd after dark at the Poole Recreation Center, thanked the County Manager for working with the recreation staff and the sheriff, and asked everyone to contact him with any ideas; expressed appreciation to County Manager Lombard for getting to work quickly, he's enjoyed working together so far.

Commissioner Hersey: encouraged attendance to the Dairy Festival tomorrow, weather forecast is for a reasonable weather day.

Commissioner Wooten: commented that it usually rains the night before the Dairy Festival, creating horrible humidity; wished everyone a good safe weekend.

Chairman Sharp: none

Closing

16. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner Wooten, Seconded by Commissioner Hersey.

Voting Yea: Commissioner McElhenney, Commissioner Garrett, Commissioner Hersey, Commissioner Wooten

Meeting adjourned at approximately 11:21 a.m.

ATTEST:

Lynn Butterworth
County Clerk

B. W. "Bill" Sharp
Chairman

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