



August 7, 2025,

Commissioners Meeting Minutes

6:45PM

Chairman Kenneth Petty officially opened the Board of Commissioners meeting on August 7, 2025, which was followed by the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

Mr. David Hambrick engaged with Chairman Kenneth Petty and Commissioner Justin Staten regarding the ongoing discussion from the previous month's meeting about the county's potential takeover of the water board. He sought to understand their rationale behind believing that such a transition would be beneficial for the community.

Chairman Kenneth Petty expressed the necessity of taking control, emphasizing that the water supply is vital for the school and the offices present. He raised concerns that if the water supply were to diminish, the county would ultimately bear the responsibility. While there was a consensus that the county should not incur additional costs, it was noted that legal counsel had been consulted on the matter.

Commissioner Justin Staten noted that many constituents are unaware of the implications if the water system were to dissolve. He highlighted the importance of this infrastructure, stating that it is crucial for the county's long-term benefit. Commissioner Staten acknowledged that the process would take time and assured that the county would pursue grants to help cover the costs associated with the water system.

Mr. Hambrick raised concerns before the commission regarding the timeline for updating the codes. He specifically inquired whether the hiring of a code enforcement officer would coincide with the revision of these codes. The commission responded by assuring him that all codes would indeed be updated once the officer is in place.

In addition to Mr. Hambrick, several other constituents shared their views on the topics of code enforcement and animal control. Their feedback highlighted the community's interest in ensuring that regulations are effectively enforced.

Mr. Dan Davis also spoke to the commission, pointing out specific instances of code violations. He referenced a property located at the corner of SR 129 and Permenter Road, as an example of non-compliance with existing codes.

Commissioner's Meeting

The board meeting commenced at 7:00 PM on August 7, 2025.

All members were present, and the agenda was set for discussion. The meeting proceeded with the first item on the agenda.

Chairman Kenneth Petty called for a motion to approve the agenda for the Board meeting scheduled on August 7, 2025. Commissioner Justin Staten proposed the motion, which was subsequently seconded by Commissioner Bobby Walker. The motion was approved unanimously, with a vote of 5-0.

Chairman Kenneth Petty called for a motion to approve the minutes from the Board meeting held on July 11, 2024. Vice-Chairman Bobbi Pohlman Rodgers proposed the motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Bobby Walker. The motion was unanimously approved with a vote of 5-0.

Old Business

Chairman Kenneth Petty has decided to table the HB 223 Trees Act due to some unclear wording. This proposed law would enable local governments to waive timber tax collections for the fourth quarter of 2024 and throughout 2025, provided they pass a resolution to that effect. The decision to table the act reflects a cautious approach to ensure that all aspects are thoroughly understood before moving forward. This careful consideration aims to prevent any potential issues that could arise from ambiguous language in the legislation.

Chairman Kenneth Petty called for a motion to appoint Mr. Jimmy Tucker to the board of elections. Commissioner Bobby Walker proposed the motion, which was seconded by Vice-Chairman Bobbi Pohlman Rodgers. The motion was approved unanimously, with a vote of 5-0.

Chairman Kenneth Petty tabled the animal control ordinance until further decisions regarding the codes can be made. This ordinance includes the existing regulations, and the proposed amendments suggested by Vice-Chairman Rodgers from several years ago. The delay allows for a thorough review and consideration of the necessary changes before moving forward with the ordinance.

New Business

Chairman Kenneth Petty called for a motion to amend the 2024 budget resolution. Commissioner Bobby Walker proposed the motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Justin Staten. The motion was approved unanimously with a vote of 5-0.

The 2024 Budget resolution has been updated with new figures.

- Projected property tax revenue was \$1,964,194; actual revenue was \$2,197,162, resulting in a surplus of \$232,968.

- Sales tax projections were \$194,000, with actual revenue of \$257,206, yielding a positive variance of \$63,206.

- Insurance premiums were projected at \$300,000; actual revenue reached \$323,709, leading to a surplus of \$23,709.

- Franchise fees were expected to be \$208,000, but actual revenue was \$254,991, resulting in a positive difference of \$46,991.

- Other taxes fell short, with a projection of \$22,000 and actual revenue of \$6,566, creating a deficit of \$15,434.

- License and permit revenue was projected at \$34,500, but actual revenue was \$29,596, resulting in a deficit of \$4,904.

- Intergovernmental revenue exceeded expectations, with a projection of \$104,171 and actual revenue of \$465,767, leading to a surplus of \$361,596.

- Charges for services were projected at \$352,859, but actual revenue was only \$115,902, resulting in a deficit of \$236,957.

- Fines and forfeiture exceeded expectations, with actual revenue of \$142,828 against a projection of \$125,230, yielding a positive variance of \$17,598.

- Interest income fell short of projections, bringing in \$6,095 compared to the anticipated \$6,934, resulting in a deficit of \$839.

- Other revenues also underperformed, with actual collections of \$21,229 against a projection of \$24,300, leading to a deficit of \$3,071.

- The governing body's expenditures were projected at \$52,307, but actual spending was \$46,857, resulting in a positive variance of \$5,450.

- Executive expenditure exceeded projections, with actual spending of \$106,563 against a budget of \$99,260, resulting in a negative variance of \$7,303.

- Election costs significantly surpassed projections, with actual expenses of \$93,887 compared to the projected \$31,250, leading to a negative variance of \$62,637.
- The roads and bridges budget were projected at \$503,541, but actual spending reached \$706,245, resulting in a negative variance of \$202,704.
- The magistrate court budget was projected at \$159,454, but actual spending reached \$164,815, resulting in a negative variance of \$5,361.
- For the public defender, the projected expenditure was \$41,351, while the actual amount spent was \$41,998, leading to a negative difference of \$647.
- The sheriff's office had a budget projection of \$604,322, but actual spending totaled \$633,083, resulting in a negative variance of \$28,761.
- The champs' program was projected to cost \$50,307, but actual expenses were \$56,908, leading to a negative variance of \$6,601.
- The coroner's budget was set at \$14,588, but actual spending was \$17,938, resulting in a negative difference of \$3,350.
- Roads and bridges had a projected budget of \$503,541, but actual costs soared to \$706,245, resulting in a negative variance of \$202,704.
- The senior citizen center was projected to spend \$50,592, but actual expenses were \$51,845, leading to a negative variance of \$1,253.
- Recreation expenditures were projected at \$21,185, but actual spending reached \$25,811, resulting in a negative difference of \$4,626.
- Overall, multiple departments exceeded their budget projections, leading to significant negative variances.
- Careful monitoring of future budgets is essential to mitigate overspending across various departments.

Chairman Kenneth Petty inquired if there was any additional new business to discuss.

Commissioner Justin Staten addressed the constituents and called for a hand vote regarding the county's potential takeover of the Water Authority and code enforcement. He emphasized that this initiative would require a careful process and time to implement effectively. Most of all citizens that was present indicated a desire for the Commissioners to proceed with both.

Chairman Kenneth Petty announced that Echols County has been designated as a "Qualified Local Government" by the Department of Community Affairs.

Sheriff Randy Courson spoke with County Manager Alan Levesque regarding the merging of his budget. Levesque clarified that specific budget items, including gasoline, have not been combined.

At 7:43 PM, Chairman Kenneth Petty requested a motion to enter executive session. Commissioner Bobby Walker made the motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Justin Staten. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 5-0.

At 7:59 PM, Chairman Kenneth Petty called for a motion to exit the executive session. Vice-Chairman Bobbi Pohlman Rodgers proposed the motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Bobby Walker. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 5-0.

Personnel matters were reviewed during the executive session, but no decisions were made at this time.

At 8:00 PM, Chairman Kenneth Petty called for a motion to adjourn the board meeting held on August 7, 2025. Commissioner Bobby Walker proposed the motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Justin Staten. The motion was approved unanimously with a vote of 5-0.

Attendees: Chairman Kenneth Petty, Vice-Chairman Bobbi Pohlman Rodgers, Commissioner Justin Staten, Commissioner Bobby Walker, Commissioner Stanley Corbett, County Manager Alan Levesque, County Clerk Shona Carter, Kevin Tomlinson, Chuck and Jamie Jones, Sheriff Randy Courson, Carl Rodgers, Dan Davis, Charlene Davis, Jeffery Patterson, Evelyn Howell, Tyler Carter, Larry Fender, Chris Vann, Katie Vann, Rick Jeans, Tracey Green, Wally Rewis, Tersea Rewis, Bobby Vann, Elaine Vann, Crystal Simpson, Kevin Simpson Natasha Dixon, Jessica Hunter, Caitlin Hunter, Ben Corbitt, Angie Corbett, Jimmy Tucker, Dee Staten, Corey Davis and others whose names are illegible.



Kenneth Petty, Chairman



Shona Carter, County Clerk

