



Baker County Board of Commissioners



Regular Meeting
September 1st, 2026
07:30 P.M.

Connie C. Hobbs – Chairperson
Matt Bryan – Commissioner

Vann Irvin – Vice Chairman
Chris Moore – Commissioner

Tommy Rentz, Commissioner

Minutes

The Baker County Board of Commissioners met on the above date with Commissioners Vann Irvin, Tommy Rentz, Matt Bryan, Chris Moore, and Connie Hobbs in attendance. County Manager, Marie Howard, was also in attendance.

Chair Hobbs called the meeting to order.

Chair Hobbs led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Moore delivered the invocation.

Chair Hobbs presented the agenda and requested the agenda be amended with the addition of Authorizing Resolution 2026-0901 for 5311 Transportation Funds. Commissioner Moore made a motion of adopt the agenda with the amendment. Commissioner Irvin seconded the motion. Commissioners Irvin, Bryan, Rentz, Moore, and Hobbs voted to approve the motion. Motion carried.

Chair Hobbs presented the minutes of August 4th, 2026, Regular Meeting. Commissioner Rentz made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Commissioner Bryan seconded the motion. Commissioners Irvin, Moore, Bryan, Rentz, and Hobbs voted to approve the motion. Motion carried.

Speaker Requests:

- Chris Cross, Chief Ranger for the Baker-Mitchell Forestry Unit – Ranger Cross provided a copy of the 2026 Fiscal Year Annual Report for Baker County. He reported Baker County has 219,700 acres of land, 53.8% of which is forest land for a total of 123,891 acres. Ranger Cross stated they responded to 15 fires, the average size fire was 17.12 acres which is below the state average of 18.83 acres and issued 699 permits. Ichuaway Fire Department and Newton-Baker Volunteer Fire and Rescue were commended for their response to fires throughout the county. The Baker-Mitchell Forestry Unit completed a total of 289 hours of safety training during the 2026 fiscal year.
- B. J. Heard – rescinded his request to address the Commission
- Kenneth Deese – Encouraged citizens to participate, either physically or financially, in the Baker County Community Initiative clean-up drives in Newton. He extended an



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invitation to everyone to attend the ribbon cutting for the new Ag Center at the Baker County School on September 23, 2026, at 9:00 A.M. If anyone would like to purchase a \$100 brick paver with a name engraved for the walkway at the school it would be greatly appreciated.

- Casey Beane – rescinded her request to address the Commission.

On behalf of the Baker County Board of Commissioners, Chair Hobbs presented Lemonte Allen, Baker County Road Department, with a Certificate of Commendation for his life-saving actions to a Baker County citizen in distress on August 12, 2026. Mr. Allen has been a faithful and dedicated employee of the Baker County Road Department for over twenty years.

Chair Hobbs reported a pre-construction meeting was held with the County Engineer, Brent Davis, and Reeves Construction on August 25, 2026. Work will likely begin on Josuli Road on September 8, 2026, but no later than September 28, 2026, and should take approximately two weeks to complete.

Commissioners were informed that a road project would need to be identified to apply for the 2027 LMIG in the amount of \$413,956.27. Chair Hobbs stated she had consulted with Road Superintendent Harry Brown, and it was suggested Willow Nook Road be submitted as the project. Commissioner Rentz made a motion to submit Willow Nook Road as the 2027 LMIG project. Motion seconded by Commissioner Moore. Commissioners Irvin, Rentz, Bryan, Moore, and Hobbs all voted to approve the motion. Motion carried.

The Permit application review process for Telecommunications/Antennas and Solar Farms was discussed. Chair Hobbs reported that County Engineer Brent Davis submitted a written proposal in the amount of \$1,000.00 per permit processed for telecommunications and solar farms. Commissioners were advised Chair Hobbs was in discussion with a neighboring county to manage the permitting for poultry houses. Chair Hobbs reported the permitting costs would be assessed to the applicant, which would not require any additional expense to the County. Commissioner Rentz made a motion to engage the services of Brent Davis for the telecommunications tower and solar farm permits and continue negotiations with the neighboring county for poultry farms permitting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Bryan. Commissioners Irvin, Rentz, Bryan, Moore, and Hobbs all voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried



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Chair Hobbs reported the five-year history would be published in the Enterprise-Journal, the county legal organ, on Wednesday, September 2, 2026. There is no proposed millage rate increase for 2026, and a Called meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 11, 2026, at 12:00 P.M. at the Baker County Commission Office to set the 2026 millage rate.

Chair Hobbs presented Authorizing Resolution 2026-0901 which would allow Southwest Georgia Regional Commission to apply for rural transit 5311 transit funds through the Georgia Department of Transportation on behalf of Baker County and other Counties/Cities in the Southwest Georgia region. Commissioner Bryan made a motion to approve the Resolution. Commissioner Irvin seconded the motion. Commissioners Irvin, Rentz, Bryan, Moore, and Hobbs all approved the motion. Motion carried.

County Manager, Ms. Howard, provided the following updates:

- Ms. Trudy Coker is working temporarily in the absence of county clerk, Ms. Penny Eure.

Being no further business, Commissioner Moore made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Rentz seconded the motion. Commissioners Irvin, Rentz, Bryan, Moore, and Hobbs all voted in favor of the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Attest Maria Howard Clerk

Connie C. Hobbs Chairman
Chris Moore
Matt Bryan
Vann Irvin

