

**HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 4, 2026**

STATE OF TENNESSEE) Regular Meeting

COUNTY OF HAMILTON) March 4, 2026

BE IT REMEMBERED that on this 4th day of March 2026 at 4:00 PM, a Regular Meeting of the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners was begun and held at the Courthouse in the City of Chattanooga, in the County Commission Room, when the following proceedings were held, to wit: --

Present and presiding was the Honorable Ken Smith, Chairman. Chief Deputy County Clerk Brooke Weaver called the roll of the County Commission, and the following, constituting a quorum, answered to their names: Commissioner Mike Chauncey, Commissioner Jeff Eversole, Commissioner Joe Graham, Commissioner Lee Helton, Commissioner Steve Highlander, Commissioner Warren Mackey, Commissioner Gene-o Shipley, and Chairman Ken Smith. Commissioner Chip Baker, Commissioner Greg Beck, and Commissioner David Sharpe were absent. Total present – 8. Total absent – 3.

Also in attendance were County Mayor Weston Wamp, members of his administrative staff, County Attorney Janie Varnell, and County Auditor Chris McCollough.

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Attached hereto is a copy of the Public Notice for this meeting, which was published in a local newspaper and made a matter of record of this meeting.

1:31

Commissioner Helton invited Commissioner Highlander to offer the invocation. Commissioner Helton led the pledge to the flag.

**PRESENTATION- RECOGNIZING WREATHS ACROSS CHATTANOOGA
VOLUNTEERS**

2:57

Commissioner Eversole recognized volunteers with Wreaths Across Chattanooga for their dedication to honoring veterans laid to rest at Chattanooga National Cemetery and for their efforts in organizing the annual wreath-laying event. He read a letter of appreciation into the record honoring members of the organization for their volunteer service. A copy of the letter has been filed with the Clerk's Office.

11:21

At this time, Commissioner Eversole acknowledged members of the organization in the audience for their service. A round of applause was given.

13:11

Retired U.S. Navy Captain Mickey McCamish thanked the Commission and community for their continued support of Wreaths Across Chattanooga and expressed

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appreciation for the volunteers who help organize the annual wreath-laying event honoring veterans.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ON MOTION of Commissioner Graham, seconded by Commissioner Highlander, that the minutes of the Recessed Meeting of February 11, 2026, the Agenda Preparation Session of February 11, 2026, and the Regular Meeting of February 18, 2026, be approved, treated the same as read, made a matter of record, and filed. The foregoing Motion was unanimously adopted on a Roll Call vote, with the following members of the County Commission being present and voting as follows: Commissioner Chauncey, "Aye," Commissioner Eversole, "Aye," Commissioner Graham, "Aye," Commissioner Helton, "Aye," Commissioner Highlander, "Aye," Commissioner Mackey, "Aye," Commissioner Shipley, "Aye," and Chairman Smith, "Aye." Commissioner Baker, Commissioner Beck, and Commissioner Sharpe were absent. Total present – 8. Total absent – 3. Total "Aye" votes – 8. Total "Nay" votes – 0.

14:58

At this time, Chairman Smith announced *Resolution No. 326-3* had been withdrawn and would not be read into the record.

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15:21

RESOLUTION NO. 326-4 A RESOLUTION REQUIRING ADHERENCE TO THE LONG-STANDING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY AND THE COUNTY, REQUIRING APPROVAL OF THE HAMILTON COUNTY MAYOR AND HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION PRIOR TO THE NEGOTIATION OF ANY PAYMENT-IN-LIEU-OF-TAX (PILOT) AGREEMENTS THAT AFFECT COUNTY AD VALOREM TAX REVENUES.

Commissioner Helton, Chairman of the Rules and Legislative Committee, provided details regarding Resolution No. 326-4 and stated the Rules and Legislative Committee reviewed and recommended approval.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Helton, seconded by Commissioner Highlander, to adopt Resolution No. 326-4.

16:07

Chairman Smith thanked Assessor of Property Marty Haynes for attending the meeting and wished him a happy birthday.

There were no questions from the audience.

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The foregoing Motion was unanimously adopted on a Roll Call vote, with the following members of the County Commission being present and voting as follows: Commissioner Chauncey, "Aye," Commissioner Eversole, "Aye," Commissioner Graham, "Aye," Commissioner Helton, "Aye," Commissioner Highlander, "Aye," Commissioner Mackey, "Aye," Commissioner Shipley, "Aye," and Chairman Smith, "Aye." Commissioner Baker, Commissioner Beck, and Commissioner Sharpe were absent. Total present – 8. Total absent – 3. Total "Aye" votes – 8. Total "Nay" votes – 0.

**RESOLUTION NO. 326-1 A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE AND ACCEPT
APPLICATIONS FOR NOTARY PUBLIC POSITIONS, THE BONDS AND OATHS OF
NOTARIES PREVIOUSLY ELECTED, AND THE OATHS OF DEPUTY SHERIFFS.**

ON MOTION of Commissioner Graham, seconded by Commissioner Highlander, to adopt Resolution No. 326-1.

There were no questions from the Commissioners or the audience.

The foregoing Motion was unanimously adopted on a Roll Call vote, with the following members of the County Commission being present and voting as follows: Commissioner Chauncey, "Aye," Commissioner Eversole, "Aye," Commissioner

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Graham, "Aye," Commissioner Helton, "Aye," Commissioner Highlander, "Aye," Commissioner Mackey, "Aye," Commissioner Shipley, "Aye," and Chairman Smith, "Aye." Commissioner Baker, Commissioner Beck, and Commissioner Sharpe were absent. Total present – 8. Total absent – 3. Total "Aye" votes – 8. Total "Nay" votes – 0.

RESOLUTION NO. 326-2 A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE INTENT AND WILL OF THE HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSION TO CONVEY APPROXIMATELY 1,300 ACRES PREDOMINANTLY WEST OF THE RAIL LINE OF THE MCDONALD FARM PROPERTY TO THE STATE OF TENNESSEE FOR THE PURPOSE OF CREATING A STATE PARK.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Graham, seconded by Commissioner Shipley, to adopt Resolution No. 326-2.

There were no questions from the Commissioners or the audience.

The foregoing Motion was unanimously adopted on a Roll Call vote, with the following members of the County Commission being present and voting as follows: Commissioner Chauncey, "Aye," Commissioner Eversole, "Aye," Commissioner Graham, "Aye," Commissioner Helton, "Aye," Commissioner Highlander, "Aye," Commissioner Mackey, "Aye," Commissioner Shipley, "Aye," and Chairman Smith,

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“Aye.” Commissioner Baker, Commissioner Beck, and Commissioner Sharpe were absent. Total present – 8. Total absent – 3. Total “Aye” votes – 8. Total “Nay” votes – 0.

17:57 **RESOLUTION NO. 326-5 A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY MAYOR TO EXPEND GRANT FUNDS AND TO ENTER INTO AND EXECUTE A DESIGN CONTRACT WITH MBI COMPANIES, INC. FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$105,000.00 FOR THE KITCHEN RENOVATIONS AT THE HARRISON CENTER.**

Commissioner Shipley, Chairman of the Building and Economic Development Committee, provided details regarding Resolution No. 326-5 and stated the Building and Economic Development Committee reviewed and recommended approval.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Shipley, seconded by Commissioner Highlander, to adopt Resolution No. 326-5.

There were no questions from the Commissioners or the audience.

The foregoing Motion was unanimously adopted on a Roll Call vote, with the following members of the County Commission being present and voting as follows: Commissioner Chauncey, “Aye,” Commissioner Eversole, “Aye,” Commissioner

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Graham, "Aye," Commissioner Helton, "Aye," Commissioner Highlander, "Aye," Commissioner Mackey, "Aye," Commissioner Shipley, "Aye," and Chairman Smith, "Aye." Commissioner Baker, Commissioner Beck, and Commissioner Sharpe were absent. Total present – 8. Total absent – 3. Total "Aye" votes – 8. Total "Nay" votes – 0.

RESOLUTION NO. 326-6 A RESOLUTION TO RELINQUISH HAMILTON COUNTY'S INTEREST IN A 2014 FORD EXPLORER WITH 125,339 MILES, TITLED WITH THE HAMILTON COUNTY HAZARDOUS MATERIALS TEAM, TO THE ETOWAH FIRE DEPARTMENT K9 TEAM.

Commissioner Shipley, a member of the Public Safety Committee, provided details regarding Resolution No. 326-6 and stated the Public Safety Committee reviewed and recommended approval.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Highlander, seconded by Commissioner Shipley, to adopt Resolution No. 326-6.

There were no questions from the Commissioners or the audience.

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The foregoing Motion was unanimously adopted on a Roll Call vote, with the following members of the County Commission being present and voting as follows: Commissioner Chauncey, "Aye," Commissioner Eversole, "Aye," Commissioner Graham, "Aye," Commissioner Helton, "Aye," Commissioner Highlander, "Aye," Commissioner Mackey, "Aye," Commissioner Shipley, "Aye," and Chairman Smith, "Aye." Commissioner Baker, Commissioner Beck, and Commissioner Sharpe were absent. Total present – 8. Total absent – 3. Total "Aye" votes – 8. Total "Nay" votes – 0.

**RESOLUTION NO. 326-7 A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE FISCAL YEAR 2026
GENERAL FUND REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES BUDGET FOR THE HAMILTON
COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT BY \$5,600 TO ACCEPT
FUNDING FROM THE STATE FIRE COMMISSION TO BE USED TO PAY
EDUCATION TRAINING SUPPLEMENTS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$800.00 EACH FOR 7
ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES.**

Commissioner Shipley, a member of the Public Safety Committee, provided details regarding Resolution No. 326-7 and stated the Public Safety Committee reviewed and recommended approval.

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ON MOTION of Commissioner Highlander, seconded by Commissioner Helton, to adopt Resolution No. 326-7.

There were no questions from the Commissioners or the audience.

The foregoing Motion was unanimously adopted on a Roll Call vote, with the following members of the County Commission being present and voting as follows: Commissioner Chauncey, "Aye," Commissioner Eversole, "Aye," Commissioner Graham, "Aye," Commissioner Helton, "Aye," Commissioner Highlander, "Aye," Commissioner Mackey, "Aye," Commissioner Shipley, "Aye," and Chairman Smith, "Aye." Commissioner Baker, Commissioner Beck, and Commissioner Sharpe were absent. Total present – 8. Total absent – 3. Total "Aye" votes – 8. Total "Nay" votes – 0.

RESOLUTION NO. 326-8 A RESOLUTION APPROVING SECURITY REPAIRS AND UPGRADES AT THE HAMILTON COUNTY JUVENILE COURT DETENTION CENTER, AMOUNTING TO \$99,182.60 FROM JOHNSON CONTROLS, UTILIZING SOURCEWELL PURCHASING COOPERATIVE FOR THE HAMILTON COUNTY JUVENILE COURT DETENTION CENTER, AND AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY MAYOR TO SIGN ANY CONTRACTS NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THIS RESOLUTION.

20:16

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Commissioner Shipley, a member of the Public Safety Committee, provided details regarding Resolution No. 326-8 and stated the Public Safety Committee reviewed and recommended approval.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Graham, seconded by Commissioner Helton, to adopt Resolution No. 326-8.

There were no questions from the Commissioners or the audience.

The foregoing Motion was unanimously adopted on a Roll Call vote, with the following members of the County Commission being present and voting as follows: Commissioner Chauncey, "Aye," Commissioner Eversole, "Aye," Commissioner Graham, "Aye," Commissioner Helton, "Aye," Commissioner Highlander, "Aye," Commissioner Mackey, "Aye," Commissioner Shipley, "Aye," and Chairman Smith, "Aye." Commissioner Baker, Commissioner Beck, and Commissioner Sharpe were absent. Total present – 8. Total absent – 3. Total "Aye" votes – 8. Total "Nay" votes – 0.

RESOLUTION NO. 326-9 A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE VIDEO SECURITY AND RETENTION PROJECT AT THE HAMILTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, AMOUNTING TO \$249,996.97 FROM JOHNSON CONTROLS, UTILIZING SOURCEWELL PURCHASING COOPERATIVE FOR THE HAMILTON COUNTY

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**SHERIFF'S OFFICE, AND AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY MAYOR TO SIGN ANY
CONTRACTS NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THIS RESOLUTION.**

Commissioner Shipley, a member of the Public Safety Committee, provided details regarding Resolution No. 326-9 and stated the Public Safety Committee reviewed and recommended approval.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Shipley, seconded by Commissioner Graham, to adopt Resolution No. 326-9.

There were no questions from the Commissioners or the audience.

The foregoing Motion was unanimously adopted on a Roll Call vote, with the following members of the County Commission being present and voting as follows: Commissioner Chauncey, "Aye," Commissioner Eversole, "Aye," Commissioner Graham, "Aye," Commissioner Helton, "Aye," Commissioner Highlander, "Aye," Commissioner Mackey, "Aye," Commissioner Shipley, "Aye," and Chairman Smith, "Aye." Commissioner Baker, Commissioner Beck, and Commissioner Sharpe were absent. Total present – 8. Total absent – 3. Total "Aye" votes – 8. Total "Nay" votes – 0.

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22:10

RESOLUTION NO. 326-10 A RESOLUTION TO APPLY FOR A BETTER UTILIZING INVESTMENTS TO LEVERAGE DEVELOPMENT (BUILD) GRANT FROM THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (USDOT) IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$719,400.00, REQUIRING A MATCH OF 20 PERCENT (\$143,880.00) OF THE TOTAL ASK, AND AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY MAYOR TO SIGN ANY CONTRACTS NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THIS RESOLUTION.

Commissioner Highlander, Chairman of the Public Works and Zoning Committee, provided details regarding Resolution No. 326-10 and stated the Public Works and Zoning Committee reviewed and recommended approval.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Highlander, seconded by Commissioner Helton, to adopt Resolution No. 326-10.

There were no questions from the Commissioners or the audience.

The foregoing Motion was unanimously adopted on a Roll Call vote, with the following members of the County Commission being present and voting as follows: Commissioner Chauncey, "Aye," Commissioner Eversole, "Aye," Commissioner Graham, "Aye," Commissioner Helton, "Aye," Commissioner Highlander, "Aye," Commissioner Mackey, "Aye," Commissioner Shipley, "Aye," and Chairman Smith,

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“Aye.” Commissioner Baker, Commissioner Beck, and Commissioner Sharpe were absent. Total present – 8. Total absent – 3. Total “Aye” votes – 8. Total “Nay” votes – 0.

22:58 **RESOLUTION NO. 326-11 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY MAYOR TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$392,000 THROUGH THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC PARKS GRANTS PROGRAM (2026), AS ADMINISTERED BY THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION, FOR THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE CAUSEWAY TRAIL AT CHESTER FROST PARK, WITH A TOTAL PROJECT COST OF \$490,000 AND A REQUIRED TWENTY PERCENT (20%) COUNTY MATCH.**

Commissioner Eversole, Chairman of the Finance and Budget Committee, provided details regarding Resolution No. 326-11 and stated the Finance and Budget Committee reviewed and recommended approval.

ON MOTION of Commissioner Eversole, seconded by Commissioner Highlander, to adopt Resolution No. 326-11.

There were no questions from the Commissioners or the audience.

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The foregoing Motion was unanimously adopted on a Roll Call vote, with the following members of the County Commission being present and voting as follows: Commissioner Chauncey, "Aye," Commissioner Eversole, "Aye," Commissioner Graham, "Aye," Commissioner Helton, "Aye," Commissioner Highlander, "Aye," Commissioner Mackey, "Aye," Commissioner Shipley, "Aye," and Chairman Smith, "Aye." Commissioner Baker, Commissioner Beck, and Commissioner Sharpe were absent. Total present – 8. Total absent – 3. Total "Aye" votes – 8. Total "Nay" votes – 0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Smith asked for announcements from members of the Commission.

23:56

Commissioner Mackey commended the volunteer spirit of Hamilton County residents and expressed appreciation for community programs such as Read 20 and Wreaths Across Chattanooga.

24:30

Commissioner Highlander encouraged residents to contact their state legislators and express their views regarding legislation currently under consideration by the Tennessee General Assembly.

24:42

Commissioner Eversole referenced the budget hearing held prior to the Commission meeting and noted departments have been asked to address requested

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investments, maintained expenditures, and operational transitions. He stated the next budget hearing will be held on March 11, 2026, at 3:00 PM with presentations from the Assessor of Property, Trustee, Election Commission, and the Partnership for Families, Children, and Adults.

26:36

Commissioner Graham encouraged residents to volunteer at local recreation centers as spring sports seasons begin, noting volunteers are needed to assist with field maintenance, concessions, and general operations.

28:26

Mayor Wamp thanked the Commission for supporting *Resolution No. 326-2* and recognized Tennessee Governor Bill Lee and Tennessee Senator Bo Watson for their leadership in advancing the Roaring Creek State Park project at McDonald Farm.

30:50

In response to Mayor Wamp, Commissioner Highlander referenced the State's economic impact estimates and emphasized the project's anticipated financial benefit to the County.

31:56

Commissioner Shipley thanked Sale Creek residents and other community members who advocated for the preservation of the McDonald Farm property.

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DELEGATIONS

Chairman Smith asked for delegations on matters other than zoning.

33:05

Jennifer Duvall and Mason Eslinger, members of the McDonald Farm Advisory Committee, thanked the Commissioners for supporting *Resolution No. 326-2* and expressed appreciation to County and State officials for their efforts in advancing the proposed Roaring Creek State Park at McDonald Farm.

35:51

Brian Fuller, residing at 3510 Windmill Way, spoke about a fence setback restriction affecting his property in the Magnolia Farms community. He asked the Commission to consider directing the appropriate county department to review the restriction's legality and enforceability.

39:56

Blake Wright, residing at 313 Westside Drive, Jessica Alexander, residing at 733 Battery Place, Jess Bonham, residing in District 4, and Renika Williams, residing in Hamilton County, expressed concerns regarding the Sheriff's Office's participation in the federal 287(g) immigration enforcement program. They urged the Commissioners to reconsider the County's involvement in the agreement.

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45:38

Katie Campassi, residing in District 6, encouraged the Commissioners to consider permanently moving the Commission meetings to an evening time to allow for greater public participation.

There being no further business, Chairman Smith declared the meeting in recess until Wednesday, March 11, 2026, at 4:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

William F. (Bill) Knowles, County Clerk

Approved:

03-18-26 W.F.K

Date Clerk's Initials