HEARD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WORK SESSION
September 15, 2026 – 4:30 P.M.

The Heard County Board of Commissioners held a work session on September 15, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. in the Commission Chamber of the Heard County Administration Building. In attendance at the meeting were Chairman Tracy McCormick, District 1 Commissioner Curtis Mock, District 2 Commissioner James Perry, District 3 Commissioner Iris Harris, District 4 Commissioner Larry Hammond, and District 5 Commissioner David Walls.

Chairman McCormick called the meeting to order to discuss county business, review technology and operational initiatives, and discuss future ordinance revisions and planning efforts. Commissioner Harris delivered the invocation.

Brad Smith of the IT Department presented information regarding new federal accessibility requirements under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. He explained that county and local government websites must be brought into compliance by April 26, 2027, to improve accessibility for individuals with visual and hearing impairments.

Mr. Smith reported that the county's current websites are static in design and not optimized for accessibility or mobile devices. The IT Department has begun evaluating website modernization options that would improve accessibility, usability, public engagement, and departmental efficiency. Several software vendors are being evaluated, including CivicPlus, GovStack, Revize, and Ramtech. CivicPlus was identified as the preferred option due to its broad suite of government management tools and integrated services.

Discussion centered on the benefits of a redesigned county website, including a mobile-first design, online permitting and licensing, secure payment processing, online employment applications, emergency notifications, social media archiving, meeting management, live streaming, recreation reservations, code enforcement reporting, and infrastructure asset management.

Commissioners discussed how the system could improve communication with the public by providing updates on road projects, paving schedules, maintenance activities, and other county services. Questions were also raised regarding management of county social media accounts, standardization of departmental social media pages, and archival requirements for public records compliance.

Mr. Smith advised that additional pricing information and implementation details would be presented to the Board at a future meeting.

Commissioners discussed options for making convenience center permits easier for residents to obtain. Suggestions included allowing residents to apply online or utilizing future website enhancements that would allow permit applications, identity verification, and payments to be completed electronically.

The discussion emphasized improving convenience and expanding online services available to county residents.

The Chairman reported that additional grant funding had been approved for the purchase of an outdoor cardboard baler. The original grant funding had been based on an indoor unit; however, approval was received to provide the additional funding necessary for an outdoor model. Required documentation had been submitted to complete the grant process.

Commissioner Perry provided an update regarding the county's upcoming tire collection event scheduled for October 24. County officials reported that approval for the event had largely been finalized and that two trailers had been requested to support tire collection efforts.

Officials estimated the event could accommodate approximately 2,000 tires if both trailers become available. Discussion also included continuing concerns about illegal tire dumping throughout the county and efforts to collect discarded tires from roadsides and other problem areas.

Commissioners encouraged citizens to report illegal dumping activity and provide vehicle identification information whenever possible. Additional discussion included potential assistance from inmate work crews to support tire collection efforts.

The Board discussed plans to work with an ordinance consultant from the Rome area to review and update county ordinances. The consultant is expected to attend a future meeting to assist with evaluating ordinances that were previously drafted but never completed.

The goal of the project is to ensure county ordinances are updated to reflect current local, state, and federal requirements and to provide recommendations for future revisions.

Commissioners discussed current fuel costs and their impact on county operations. Questions were raised regarding diesel and gasoline expenditures and whether operational adjustments may become necessary if fuel costs continue to rise.

The Chairman reported that departments are being encouraged to park county equipment in secure locations whenever possible due to previous incidents involving fuel theft and vandalism. Equipment placement strategies are being utilized to reduce risk and protect county assets.

Board members discussed the ongoing drought conditions affecting the area. While the lack of rainfall has created concerns regarding water availability, officials noted that the dry weather has also reduced washouts, bridge damage, and other road-related repair costs associated with heavy rain events. Commissioners expressed hope for additional rainfall while avoiding severe weather impacts.

The Chairman reported that no additional information related to data center development had been received since the previous work session. Commissioner Harris advised that she had been contacted by a resident who was gathering information from Georgia Tech and other sources and had encouraged the resident to share any research or recommendations with the Board.

Commissioners reiterated that the county remains in the information-gathering phase as data center ordinance development continues and welcomed additional public input.

With no further business to discuss, Commissioner Harris made a motion to adjourn the work session. Commissioner Mock seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, and the work session was adjourned.

End time 4:57 p.m.

Katrina Billingsley

County Clerk

Date 10/20/2026

Chairman