

**MINUTES OF THE HARDEMAN COUNTY
LEGISLATIVE BODY FEBRUARY TERM
REGULAR SESSION FEBRUARY 17, 2026**

Be it remembered that a Regular Meeting of the Legislative Body for the County of Hardeman, State of Tennessee was conducted in the Hardeman County Courthouse in the City of Bolivar, on the 17th day of February, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. Hon. Todd Pulse, County Mayor, was present and presiding, and a quorum of Commissioners, namely, Hon. David Bell, Hon. Cory Bufford, Hon. Russell Deberry, Hon. Michion Gatlin, Hon. Mark Gilliam, Hon. Brad Grantham, Hon. Bobby Hensley, Hon. Joe Jenkins, Hon. Jeff Kennamore, Hon. Chandra Y. Lake, Hon. Johnny Lanier, Hon. Bethany Miller, Hon. Johnny Weems, Hon. John Vickers Hon. Jackie Sain, and Hon. Bobby Wright were present. County Clerk, Tonet Griggs, and County Attorney, Dale Conder Jr. was present. The meeting was opened in due form of the law and had to wit:

16 PRESENT 0 ABSENT

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the January 20, 2026, meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Hon. Johnny Lanier and seconded by Hon. Jackie Sain.

CARRIED BY ACCLAMATION

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Director of Schools (Dr. Christy Smith):

- **Storm Update:** Reported minimal damage to school facilities following the ice storm, primarily limited to minor roof leaks caused by falling ice.
- **Energy Project:** A planned lighting upgrade for the schools has been temporarily paused due to proposed state legislation that may change how project funding is administered.
- **Budget Amendments:** Five amendments were proposed, including changes for alternative school staffing, federal grant allocations for behavior intervention, and technology department staffing. All school amendments were approved by roll call vote. Hon. Johnny Lanier motioned to accept the B.O.E Amendments, and Hon. Johnny Weems seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: 16 Aye 0 Nay

Highway Department (Casey Swift):

- The department is currently focused on county-wide storm cleanup. Coordination is underway with local cities to establish debris burning sites.

Election Commission:

- Reported that 72 candidate petitions have been issued so far, with a filing deadline set for Thursday, February 19, 2026.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

The Commission reviewed and approved seven budget amendments collectively. Hon. Johnny Lanier made a motion to accept the budget amendments, and Hon. Jackie Sain seconded the motion.

1. **Election Commission:** Funding for voter notifications regarding center changes.
2. **Airport:** Receipt and allocation of state grant reimbursements for improvements.
3. **Development:** Line-item transfer for health insurance shortfalls.
4. **Juvenile Court:** Funding for ankle monitor services, to be recovered from parents.
5. **Sheriff's Office:** Three separate transfers to cover shortfalls in communication equipment and vehicle maintenance.

Roll Call Vote (1-7): 16 Aye 0 Nay

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (EMA) REPORT

Director Don Taylor and Assistant Director Darren Grantham provided an update on the February ice storm.

- **Operational Impact:** The storm was described as more devastating than the previous year's tornadoes, with significant damage to water systems and power grids.
- **Equipment Donation:** The county received 10 generators via a donation from Elon Musk, which are being distributed to residents who rely on electricity-dependent medical equipment, such as oxygen machines.
- **Utility Update:** Bolivar Energy Authority (BEA) reportedly spent approximately \$1.3 million on restoration efforts during the event.

RESOLUTIONS AND NEW BUSINESS

- **Black History Month:** The Commission officially recognized the 100th anniversary of Black History Month, honoring the legacy of local leaders, including former Mayor Spencer.
- **Litigation Fees:** Approved a resolution to add a \$10 fee to criminal and civil court cases per TCA 67-4-601(b). This is expected to generate roughly \$23,000–\$25,000 annually to offset building renovation costs.

Roll Call Vote: 16 Aye 0 Nay

- **Tax Sale/Environmental Risk:** Passed a resolution stating the county will not purchase properties deemed environmental risks during tax sales, specifically referencing the Kellogg and Associates, Inc.

CARRIED BY ACCLAMATION

MAYOR'S RECOGNITION OF SERVICE

Mayor Pulse presented a resolution of appreciation for the extraordinary efforts of First Responders, county employees, and volunteers during the 2026 Ice Storm.

- Recognition was given to the Middleton Fire Department, BEA linemen, TDOT, the Sheriff's Department, County Commissioners, Hardeman County Highway Department, Ambulance Department, City Mayors, and the hospital staff.
- Special gratitude was expressed for the volunteers at the Middleton shelter and local citizens who provided equipment and resources to save failing water systems.

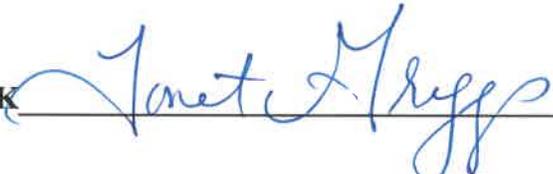
PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Benefit Fundraiser:** Commissioner Bell announced a fundraiser for Chandler Denette on Saturday, February 28, and Sunday, March 1. The event will include a barrel clinic, fish fry, and barbecue at the Bell farm, north of Middleton.
- **Regional Appreciation Event:** A district-wide "United In the Storm" honoring disaster recovery heroes and their families. The event is scheduled for Sunday, March 1, at the McNairy County Agriculture Center. This event will be presented by Senator Page Walley.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Hon. Mark Gilliam made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Hon. Jackie Sain seconded the motion. The next scheduled commission meeting is March 17, 2026.

COUNTY MAYOR  _____

COUNTY CLERK  _____