

**MINUTES OF THE HARDEMAN COUNTY
LEGISLATIVE BODY JANUARY TERM
REGULAR SESSION JANUARY 20, 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 20th day of January, 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. Jackie Sain, and Hon. Bobby Wright were present. County Clerk, Tonet Griggs and County Attorney, Dale Conder Jr. was present and Hon. John Vickers was absent and the meeting was opened in due form of the law and had to wit:

15 PRESENT 1 ABSENT

Approval of Minutes, Notaries & Agenda

Previous Minutes: Motion made and seconded to approve the minutes from the November 18, 2025 regular meeting and the special call meeting December 9, 2025. Hon. Johnny Weems made a motion and Hon. Jackie Sain seconded the motion.

Notaries for November 18, 2025 were brought forth for approval. Hon. Mark Gilliam made a motion approve the notaries brought forth and Hon. Johnny Lanier seconded the motion.

Reports from County Officials

Election Commission:

Discussion regarding the need for signage on Highway 64 to direct voters to the Commission office. It was noted that over 2,400 letters were mailed informing voters of the poll location change from the Armory to the Commission building.

Industrial Development Board (IDB):

Chair John Keller reported on utility mapping with TVA, the award of a \$20,000 "Three Star" grant for marketing, and five active business projects, including a data center project and ongoing wastewater capacity upgrades.

Legal Report & Litigation Settlements

The County Attorney provided updates on active litigation and presented a major settlement proposal. Total litigation costs related to long-standing matters were estimated in the millions.

Active Litigation Updates

The Perry Case: Ongoing efforts for vehicle removal; a new hearing date is being set.

Jonathan Joy vs. Hardeman County: Two active lawsuits, including a new disability discrimination claim.

Vicky Jones vs. Hardeman County: Trial scheduled for April 6, 2026.

Civic vs. Hardeman County: Represented by Paul Brewer.

Comp Time & Vacation Settlement

The commission approved a settlement with nine plaintiffs regarding disputed vacation pay, holiday pay, and compensatory time. This settlement concludes the plaintiffs' ability to seek further liquidated damages. Hon. Michion Gatlin made a motion to accept the settlement and Hon. Cory Bufford seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote 11 Aye 4 Nay

Financial Impact: Total payout of \$129,187.76, consisting of \$89,781.76 to plaintiffs and \$39,406.00 in attorney fees.

Logistics: Checks are to be issued within seven days of the final agreement.

Budget Amendments

Items 2–6: Routine transfers for Sheriff's vehicle maintenance, guard overtime, airport grants, and fire prevention.

Roll Call Vote 15 Aye 0 Nay

Item 1 (Sheriff's Dept. Settlement): Amendment for \$200,738 to cover legal settlement payouts using budget overages.

Roll Call Vote 13 Aye 2 Nay

Item 7 (Comp Time Settlement): Amendment for \$134,965.94 for the FLSA settlement funded from the county's fund balance. Approved via roll call (11-4).

Roll Call Vote 11 Aye 4 Nay

Hon. David Bell made the motion to accept the budget amendments and Hon Chandra Lake seconded the motion.

Mayor's Report

FEMA Funds: Preliminary disaster relief funds have been released; contracts are being finalized.

Cleanup Initiative: The Mayor proposed a county-wide cleanup effort involving local churches and citizens.

Infrastructure: Groundbreaking for the "Wet Center" (water education system) at Lone Oaks is set for April 10, 2026.

Ambulance Services: A CDBG grant was applied for to purchase a new ambulance; procurement begins in late February.

Community Services: Highlighted the Alzheimer's Advocate (Sarah Skinner) at the Health Department.

Adjourn

Hon. Brad Grantham made a motion to adjourn, and Hon. Johnny Weems seconded to adjourn.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 17, 2026.

COUNTY MAYOR Todd Fulse

COUNTY CLERK Janette Huggs