OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

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Merit Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, September 23, 2026
Location: Floyd County Administration Building, Human Resources Conference Room
Address: 12 East 4th Avenue, Rome, GA 30161

Attendance

- John Harkins, Merit Board Chair
- Amanda Billings, Merit Board Member
- Jim Ford, Merit Board Member (via telephone)
- Utamu Lackey, Merit Board Vice Chair
- Betty Bailey Dean, Merit Board Member
- Jessica Espinoza, HR Generalist
- Reagan Spurgeon, HR Office Administrator

Public Attendance

No members of the public were present.

Adoption of Previous Meeting Minutes

Utamu Lackey made a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes. Amanda Billings seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The approved minutes were signed by Chair John Harkins.

Merit Board Elections

The Merit Board reviewed the upcoming Merit Board elections and discussed the candidates for the Post 5 position. The Board discussed the established guidelines and qualifications for Merit Board members.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
RHONDA WALLACE, *CHAIR*
SCOTTY HANCOCK, *VICE CHAIR*
MIKE BURNES
ALLISON WATTERS
DAVID THORNTON

ADMINISTRATION
JAMIE McCORD, *COUNTY MANAGER*
DARRYL BOWIE, *DIRECTOR*

The Board discussed the qualifications and backgrounds of the candidates, including the importance of human resources experience, balance on the Board, and the ability to make difficult decisions using sound judgment.

Two candidates, Maria King and Ouida Sams, were seriously considered for the Post 5 position. The Merit Board discussed the candidates and proceeded with a vote.

The votes were recorded as follows: Amanda Billings – King; Betty Bailey Dean – Sams; Utamu Lackey – Sams; and John Harkins – Sams. Ouida Sams received three votes and was selected for the Post 5 position.

Employee Elections

The Merit Board discussed the employee election process for the employee's candidate. Jessica Espinoza reviewed the current nominations from the Floyd County Employees with the Board. Employee nominations were due by 5:00 p.m. on September 23, 2026. The election is expected to take place in November through the Elections Office. An email will be sent to all employees regarding the election, and the Merit Board members will be provided with the employee election list.

Other Business

The Board discussed how the 25% increase in health insurance costs and the hiring and promotion freeze have affected the County.

Next Meeting

The next Merit Board meeting will be held on October 14, 2026.

Adjournment

Amanda Billings made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Utamu Lackey seconded the motion. The motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned.

Chair Signature: _____ **Date:** 11/04/2026