

**MINUTES OF THE VAN BUREN COUNTY COMMISSION
VAN BUREN COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

The Van Buren County Commission met in a Special Called Meeting on September 8, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. at the Van Buren County Administrative Facility & Justice Center. The following action was taken as recorded in Minute Book, "V".

Call to Order

Sheriff Michael Brock called the Meeting to Order.

Roll Call

Members present: Jeff Blair, Michael Chandler, Jordan Delong, Gage Farmer, Joey Grissom, Terry Hickey, Terry Hodges, Seth Pettit, Bradi Roberts, and Rip VanWinkle.

Also present: County Attorney Howard Upchurch, County Mayor Barry Austin, County Clerk Lisa Rigsby, and Jay Williams with zoom and Several Citizens of Van Buren County.

Prayer

Commissioner Bradi Roberts led us in prayer.

Pledge

Commissioner Terry Hickey led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Elect a Chairman and a Vice Chairman

Commissioner Terry Hickey open the floor for nominations for Chairman of the Full Commission.

Commissioner Jeff Blair made a motion to nominate Terry Hickey as Chairman and move that all nominations cease and for him to be elected by acclamation. Commissioner Rip VanWinkle seconded that motion.

Upon roll call: Jeff Blair, Michael Chandler, Jordan Delong, Gage Farmer, Joey Grissom, Terry Hodges, Seth Pettit, Bradi Roberts, and Rip VanWinkle voted yes. Terry Hickey abstained. 9-yes votes. 1- Abstained. Motion passed. **New Chairman of the Full Commission is Terry Hickey.**

Chairman Terry Hickey open the floor for nominations for Vice Chairman.

Commissioner Michael Chandler nominated Terry Hodges to be Vice Chairman.

Commissioner Gage Farmer nominated Rip VanWinkle to be Vice Chairman.

"Chairman Terry Hickey called for further nominations from the floor." Hearing none, a roll call vote was initiated for nominee Terry Hodges:

Upon roll call: Michael Chandler, Joey Grissom, and Seth Pettit voted yes. Jeff Blair, Jordan Delong, Gage Farmer, and Bradi Roberts voted no. Terry Hickey, Terry Hodges, and Rip VanWinkle abstained. 3-yes votes. 4-no votes. 3-abstained.

A roll call vote was initiated for nominee Rip VanWinkle:

Upon roll call: Jeff Blair, Jordan Delong, Gage Farmer, Joey Grissom, and Bradi Roberts voted yes. Terry Hodges and Seth Pettit voted no. Michael Chandler, Terry Hickey, and Rip VanWinkle abstained. 5-yes votes. 2-no votes. 3-abstained.

Terry Hodges and Rip VanWinkle fell short of the required six-vote majority.

Chairman Terry Hickey asked if any Commissioner wished to change their vote. Commissioner Michael Chandler changed his vote for Rip VanWinkle from abstain to no. Commissioner Seth Pettit changed his vote for Rip VanWinkle from no to yes.

The final tally of Rip VanWinkles votes were as following: 6-yes votes, 2-no votes, 2-abstained. **Commissioner Rip VanWinkle secured the position of the new Vice Chairman of the Full Commission.**

Appoint Committees

Mayor Barry Austin presented to the Full Commission the new County Committees. This new structure divides Commissioners into three groups which are as following:

Committee A: Solid Waste, Ambulance Service, School, Tourism, Insurance, Jail & Law Enforcement.

Terry Hickey, Gage Farmer, Michael Chandler, Joey Grissom, and Jeff Blair

Committee B: Fire Protection, Agriculture, Veterans, Highways, Park & Recs, Building & Grounds.

Bradi Roberts, Terry Hodges, Rip VanWinkle, Seth Pettit, and Jordan Delong.

Committee C: Budget

Gage Farmer, Rip VanWinkle, Terry Hickey, Jeff Blair, Jordan Delong, and Joey Grissom.

Commissioner Rip VanWinkle made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jeff Blair, to approve Committees as presented by the County Mayor.

Upon roll call: Jeff Blair, Jordan Delong, Gage Farmer, Joey Grissom, Terry Hickey, Terry Hodges, Seth Pettit, Bradi Roberts, and Rip VanWinkle voted yes. Michael Chandler voted no. 9-yes vote. 1-no vote. Motion passed.

Deputy of the Quarter Recognition for Sheriff's Department

Sheriff Michael Brock recognized Deputy Tracey Denton as Deputy of the Quarter for a job well done.

Public Comments

None

Adjournment

Jordan Delong made a motion, seconded by Rip VanWinkle, to adjourn. All approved by voice vote. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Chairman Terry Hickey

County Clerk Lisa Rigsby