

HEARD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WORK SESSION
February 17, 2026 – 4:30 P.M.

The Heard County Board of Commissioners held a work session on February 17, 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, and District 5 Commissioner David Walls. District 4 Commissioner Larry Hammond was absent.

The board proceeded to open and review thirteen sealed bids for county lawn-care services. Copeland Complete Lawn Care submitted an annual bid of \$54,000.00, while Legacy Lawn Care offered \$76,800.00 per year. Hutchins' Lawn Care provided a yearly total of \$90,000.00, and Holcomb Lawn Care submitted a bid of \$81,000.00 annually. Victory Construction & Property Management LLC proposed \$163,500.00 for the year, while Caldwell Lawn Care listed \$81,600.00 annually.

Kowalski LLC Enterprises, operating as “Kscaping,” submitted a bid totaling \$62,533.35 per year, and CWL Outdoor Solutions offered \$78,630.00 annually. Luxor Group LLC did not provide a yearly total but listed a rate of \$4,104.00 per cut. EatDirt & Cleanup LLC submitted a yearly bid of \$73,000.00. Top Line Lawncare & Landscaping provided seasonal pricing, including \$59,420.00 for summer, \$20,225.00 for fall and winter, \$2,760.00 for yearly pruning, and \$1,965.00 for pine straw and mulch. Alternative Environments submitted a breakdown consisting of \$57,645.00 for the growing season, \$6,030.00 for the dormant season, \$630.00 for yearly pruning, \$500.00 for pine straw, and \$740.00 for mulch. The final bid came from Luke’s Lawn Care, totaling \$48,750.00 per year.

Commissioners discussed which bidders were local to Heard County and noted that several had local ties. The board agreed to hold a Called Meeting on March 3rd at 9:00 a.m. to award the lawn-care contract

The board then moved into an extended review of the county's ELA (Estate Lot Arrangement) standards. Members recalled earlier discussions about removing the word "average" from the lot-size requirement so that each parcel must individually meet the minimum acreage, which had previously been described as 7.5 acres per lot. They also revisited concerns about long-term road maintenance, noting that past developments had required the county to assume responsibility for roads when residents failed to maintain them. Commissioners questioned whether ELA roads should be required to meet a paved or chip-seal standard and reviewed existing language stating that private ingress easements must be maintained through a perpetual maintenance agreement approved by the county attorney. The document notes that such easements must be built to support emergency vehicles and must be inspected and approved before a certificate of occupancy is issued ("must be constructed to the appropriate width to support the weight of applicable fire department apparatus...").

The board also examined whether the ordinance clearly assigns each lot owner a proportional share of road maintenance costs. Members agreed that the current language does not explicitly state the 1/8 cost-sharing concept previously discussed and that the ordinance should instead specify that each owner is responsible for an equal portion based on the total number of lots. They compared this to a typical HOA model in which the developer builds the road and utilities initially, and subsequent owners share ongoing maintenance responsibilities.

Setback requirements were also reviewed, particularly concerns that the rear of a home could face a roadway depending on lot layout. Commissioners agreed that the ordinance should require

a consistent setback from the road—front, side, or rear—so that any part of a house must meet the same minimum distance from the edge of pavement. The document reflects this discussion (“any part of the house is supposed to have been 100 feet from the road...”).

The board then discussed school-bus and postal-service pull-offs, noting that earlier drafts had required these areas to be located on private property rather than on county or state rights-of-way. They referenced recent issues on Highway 100 where GDOT halted a proposed pull-off due to safety concerns and the lack of a required permit. Updated language now requires developers to design improvements that allow safe queuing for mail delivery and school buses (“must design dedicated improvements... to remove mail delivery and school buses from existing travel lanes”).

The board confirmed that all Brush Creek Park fees had been addressed and restated the updated structure for clarity. Commissioners agreed to raise the monthly RV site rate from \$350 to \$400, increase the nightly RV rate to \$35, and set primitive camping at \$20 per night. They reaffirmed that the fishing fee would remain \$5, and pavilion rentals would increase from \$50 to \$100.

Members noted that staff would verify the appropriate pricing for boat and vehicle entry before finalizing the posted rates, but agreed that there would be no additional per-person charges. The group also acknowledged the need to correct inconsistencies between printed park rules and the county website, with the goal of standardizing day-use and boat-ramp access fees once the final amounts were confirmed. Commissioners reiterated that once all fees were finalized, staff would prepare a laminated reference sheet to ensure consistent enforcement.

The board then turned to broader issues at Brush Creek Park, noting that significant work was needed throughout the property. Commissioners discussed the deteriorated landscaping, the possibility of adding new campsites near the old boat-ramp area, and the poor condition of the

bathhouses. They agreed that any future improvements — including bathrooms, electrical upgrades, and additional sites — must first be incorporated into the park’s master plan so the county could seek approval from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Members emphasized that without master-plan approval, even basic improvements such as trenching for utilities or repurposing the unused paved area would not be permitted. The board also reviewed dredging efforts at Snake Creek and Brush Creek, noting that although the Corps had provided verbal permission for dredging, written authorization had only been issued for Snake Creek. They discussed the challenges of silt buildup, the limited dredging volumes previously allowed, and the need to resume dredging when water levels drop later in the year. Commissioners noted that state funding received last year covered current dredging costs, and the county had reapplied for additional funding of up to \$500,000 to support further improvements, including bathroom renovations.

Members described the bathhouses at Brush Creek as severely outdated, with electrical issues, aging infrastructure, and lighting controlled by timers that visitors often did not understand. They agreed that the facilities needed substantial renovation or complete rebuilding. Similar concerns were raised about Snake Creek, where the boat ramp remained inaccessible due to siltation.

Commissioners discussed the possibility of abandoning the ramp entirely if dredging proved ineffective, noting that the site had become a frequent location for illegal activity and required repeated placement of concrete barriers to prevent vehicle access. They reflected on how heavily the ramp had once been used by local fishermen and how dramatically conditions had changed as the creek shifted and filled in over time.

The board also reviewed the county’s obligations for maintaining multiple river access points, including locations at Hollingsworth, Boy Scout Road, and areas near Plant Wansley. They noted

that some sites had conflicting jurisdictional histories between the Corps of Engineers and the Department of Natural Resources, but the county had recently been instructed to maintain them. Commissioners discussed the need to focus resources on access points that could realistically be maintained and kept safe, rather than continuing to invest in locations that were no longer viable. Returning to Brush Creek, members agreed that the park had strong potential to generate revenue if restored properly. They noted that the campground had historically been full, and recent demand suggested that improved facilities could again attract consistent visitors. Commissioners acknowledged that years of deferred maintenance had created the current challenges and that investment would be required to bring the park back to a profitable and sustainable condition. They discussed the low-cost long-term lease the county holds for the property and the importance of pursuing grants to support needed upgrades. Commissioners also agreed that they would work together on updating the master plan, with Commissioner Hammond and another member taking the lead and encouraging all commissioners to visit the site to assess conditions firsthand.

The conversation then shifted to electrical issues at the park, with commissioners noting that Carroll EMC had previously assisted informally but was reluctant to continue doing so because the infrastructure is not on their system. The board discussed the need for significant underground electrical repairs and improvements to support future growth and ensure safety. They also noted increasing public interest in the campground, with multiple monthly rentals already secured and additional inquiries coming in daily.

Commissioners briefly discussed the financial history of the park, noting that while recreational facilities often operate at a loss, Brush Creek had previously generated revenue until rising grass-cutting costs in recent years reduced profitability. They emphasized that with proper

maintenance and improvements, the park could again become a strong asset for the county, both financially and as a community resource.

The board then moved to a separate topic involving the state legislative session and ongoing discussions about data centers. Commissioners considered placing a 60-day moratorium on data-center applications to allow time for the legislature to complete its work and for the county to craft ordinances consistent with any new state laws. They noted that misinformation about data centers was widespread and that new educational materials were being developed to help address public concerns. Members discussed the Public Service Commission's recent decisions regarding utility costs and the potential impact on data-center development.

As the work session neared its end, Commissioners discussed the importance of improving communication with the public, noting that social media often spreads inaccurate information about county operations. A resident who had assisted during a recent fire spoke with the board and offered positive feedback about the county's progress, prompting a broader discussion about public engagement and the value of community involvement.

The meeting concluded with a brief discussion about Yarbrough Road, where a large tract of land had recently been purchased and new roads were being cut. Commissioners were uncertain about the road's historical status and agreed to review maps to determine the extent of the county's right-of-way. They also revisited concerns about the deteriorated bridge on Tennessee Road, noting that the structure would require complete replacement but could potentially be reopened in the future with appropriate funding and weight-limit restrictions.

With no further business, the work session was adjourned.

End time 5:42 p.m.

Katrina Billingsley

County Clerk

Date 03/17/24

Taney McCombs

Chairman



