



BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN MEETING AGENDA

February 26, 2026 - 5:30 P.M.
Town Hall, 100 Main Street E.

1. Call to Order
2. Invocation
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Roll Call
5. Welcome from the Mayor
6. Approval and/or Correction of the minutes of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen Special Called Meeting dated January 29, 2026, monthly financial report, and department reports.
7. Visitors' Comments:
8. Old Business:
9. New Business:
 - A. FIRST READING: Ordinance 26-545: Municipal Court Costs-Pay Per Offense Fee
 - B. DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION: Resolution 26-671: Participation in 2026 CDBG Grant
 - C. DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION: Resolution 26-672: Participation in 2026 LPRF Grant
 - D. DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION: Hawkins County ECD- Future Actions
10. Board Comments: Mayor, Vice-Mayor, Aldermen
11. Staff Comments: Town Manager, Asst. Town Manager, Town Attorney
12. Adjourn



TOWN OF MOUNT CARMEL

BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES

A special called meeting of the Town of Mount Carmel, Tennessee Board of Mayor and Aldermen was held at Mount Carmel Town Hall, 100 East Main Street, on January 29, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

5:30 pm by Mayor John Gibson

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Mayor Gibson and Alderman Shugart

ROLL CALL:

BMA	Present	Absent	Town Administration Present
Alderman Darby Patrick	✓		Jim Stables, Town Manager
Alderman James Cross	✓		Tyler Williams, Asst. Town Manager/CFO/Recorder
Alderman Mindy Shugart	✓		Allen Coup, Town Attorney
Alderman Philip Binstock	✓		
Alderman Jim Gilliam	✓		
Vice-Mayor Jim Bare		✓	
Mayor John Gibson	✓		

WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR

Mayor Gibson welcomed everyone

APPROVAL and/or correction of the January 22, 2026, Board of Mayor and Aldermen meeting minutes.

Motion: Alderman Shugart

Second: Alderman Binstock

Approved: All present voting in favor

VISITOR COMMENTS

None

OLD BUSINESS

- A. SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING: Ordinance 26-544: Budget Amendment (Police Dept. staffing)

PUBLIC HEARING:

No public comment given.

Motion to Close: Alderman Shugart
Second: Alderman Binstock

APPROVAL:

Motion: Alderman Shugart
Second: Alderman Binstock

	AYES	NAYS	OTHER
Alderman Darby Patrick	✓		
Alderman James Cross	✓		
Alderman Mindy Shugart	✓		
Alderman Philip Binstock	✓		
Alderman Jim Gilliam		✓	
Vice-Mayor Jim Bare			Absent
Mayor John Gibson	✓		

NEW BUSINESS

- A. DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION: Resolution 26-670: Amendment to Personnel Policies and Procedures

Motion: Alderman Binstock
Second: Alderman Shugart

	AYES	NAYS	OTHER
Alderman Darby Patrick	✓		
Alderman James Cross	✓		
Alderman Mindy Shugart	✓		
Alderman Philip Binstock	✓		
Alderman Jim Gilliam	✓		
Vice-Mayor Jim Bare			Absent
Mayor John Gibson	✓		

ADJOURN

Motion: Alderman Shugart at **5:40 P.M.**

Second: Alderman Binstock

	AYES	NAYS	OTHER
Alderman Darby Patrick	✓		
Alderman James Cross	✓		
Alderman Mindy Shugart	✓		
Alderman Philip Binstock	✓		
Alderman Jim Gilliam	✓		
Vice-Mayor Jim Bare			Absent
Mayor John Gibson	✓		

Approve: _____
John Gibson, Mayor

Attest: _____
Tyler Williams, Town Recorder



FINANCIAL REPORT

TOWN OF MOUNT CARMEL, TN

Month ending 01/31/2026

<u>GENERAL FUND:</u>	<u>BALANCE:</u>
Checking Account (First Horizon)	\$1,005,180.79
LGIP Investment Account	\$6,711,330.80
Capital Outlay Savings (First Horizon)	\$1,154.05
TOTAL:	<u>\$7,717,665.64</u>
<u>DRUG FUND:</u>	<u>BALANCE:</u>
Drug Fund Checking (First Horizon)	\$16,648.72
Special Drug Fund (First Horizon)	\$0.00
TOTAL:	<u>\$16,648.72</u>
<u>SEWER FUND:</u>	<u>BALANCE:</u>
Checking Account (First Horizon)	\$342,175.61
Savings/Sewer Savings 2014 (First Horizon)	\$1,056.37
LGIP Investment Account	\$1,008,410.75
TOTAL:	<u>\$1,351,642.73</u>

GRAND TOTAL CASH ON HAND: \$9,085,957.09

Current Savings Rate: 2.43%

Current LGIP Rate: 3.71%

Mount Carmel Fire Department

Mitch Walker, Fire Chief



February 2nd, 2026

To: James Stables, City Manager

Ref: January 2026 Monthly Report

Call Data

- 44 Calls for Service
 - o Fires: 3
 - o Hazardous Situations: 3
 - o Medical: 19
 - o Public Service: 12
 - o No Emergency: 7

Volunteer Response Time to Station

- Average: 00:37
- 90th Percentile: 1:24

Apparatus Response Times

- Average: 5:44
- 90th Percentile: 9:12

Volunteer Staff Hours

- Emergency Response Hours: 89 hours, 36 minutes, 9 seconds

Training Hours

- Total: 344 Hours
 - o Company Level Training – 144 hours
 - o Hazardous Materials Training – 8 hours
 - o Fire Officer Training – 49 hours
 - o Technical Rescue – 66 hours
 - o Medical Training – 77 hours

Significant Activities

- Two Junior members were added to the department
- One volunteer was added to the department
- Attended meetings with Hawkins County E-911 regarding funding request
- Aerial test of Tower 18 performed; unit passed with no deficits
- Closed out 2024 CDBG Grant in conjunction with FTDD
- Began work on 2026 CDBG Grant
- Placed multiple new equipment items in service from sale of old ladder truck
- ISO site visit conducted
- Budget work for FY26-FY27 conducted
- Submitted 2026 Tennessee Rescue Squad Grant
- Received \$100 grant from Harbor Freight
- Training for Wildland Firefighting has increased; better trained personnel for wildland urban interface as well as increased chances for Tennessee Division of Forestry Grant
- Conducted state mandated training consisting of CPR, domestic violence, and SIDS
- Multiple training sessions on new rope rescue equipment
- Firefighter Michael Clark obtained his Fire Instructor II certification
- Chief Mitch Walker obtained his Rope Awareness and Rope Operations certifications

Date: February 19, 2026
To: Jim Stables, Tyler Williams
Copy: Jason Salyer, Matt Malone
From: Chad Arnold
Subject: January 2026 Management, Operations & Maintenance Report - WWTP

Executive Summary

There were zero (0) excursions to the NPDES permit during the month of January 2026.

There were two (2) Sanitary Sewer Releases during the month of January 2026. These instances were reported to TDEC and the issues with the residential lift stations were resolved.

- 303 Songbird Court
- 300 Poplar Street

Overall, the plant is stable and operating efficiently. We have started to experience a decline in performance with the rental dewatering press. The filtrate being produced by it is saturated with dewatered sludge and this is being returned to the plant. I am in communication with PW Tech regarding this issue.

Quotes continue to be received for a replacement panel for lift station 6. The lift station continues to operate off one pump at the station, and a diesel bypass pump is on site serving as an emergency backup.

A replacement blower for blower 2 has been ordered through United Blower and we are awaiting the delivery of the blower.

Operations

Loading and percent removal as follows:

Parameter	Influent, mg/L	Effluent *mg/L / lbs/day	Reduction % Monthly (85% minimum)	Reduction % Daily (40% minimum)
BOD average	296	15 / 21	95%	93%
TSS average	362	5 / 7	99%	98%

* NPDES Effluent Limit (Monthly Average) – 30 mg/L / 119 lbs/day

Flow as follows:

Flow*	MGD
Influent Flow Average, monthly	0.298 MGD*
Effluent Flow Average, monthly	0.180 MGD

*Mt Carmel STP is rated at **0.472 MGD**.

Please refer to the attachments for the state operating report.

Biosolids Dewatering & Disposal

- Dewatering
 - Dewatered 120,599 gallons.
 - 3 loads were transported to Eco-Safe Landfill in January 2026.
 - 41.8 wet tons disposed.

Biosolids Wet Tons Disposed via Landfill

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2026	41.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	41.8

Residential Lift Stations Maintenance Summary

- Inframark’s Maintenance Team responded to 23 (23) recorded residential lift station calls during the month of January 2026.
- Three (3) residential lift station pump replacements were recorded during the month of January 2026.
- One (1) residential lift station pump was pulled and cleared of blockages that were preventing the pump from running.

Residential Lift Station Pumps Replaced

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2026	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3

Major Maintenance Items - WWTP

- Running the dewatering press as efficiently as possible is the main goal at the wastewater plant right now. This requires constant monitoring and operation of a piece of equipment that should require very little of either. As stated, I am in communication with PW Tech to attempt to resolve this issue.
- No new maintenance issues have arisen in the plant. Installation of the new blower upon arrival is top priority.

Major Maintenance Items – Lift Stations

- No new maintenance issues at main lift stations this month. We continue to monitor lift station 6 closely while deciding on the path forward with a new panel.

Maintenance Opportunities

- A 5-year Capital Improvement Plan is currently being worked on for the Town of Mount Carmel. This will detail the immediate and future maintenance opportunities available to us.

Financial Update

Type	Month	Fiscal Year	Remaining Balance (1)
Repair & Maintenance Cap	\$9,997.42	\$96,282.59	\$3,717.41
Chemical Cap	\$1,326.00	\$16,019.30	\$6,298.70
Sludge Cap	\$10,202.71	\$10,202.71*	\$107,822.29*

*Sludge Cap totals revised to reflect actual spending.

(1) Annual Repair & Maintenance Budget - \$100,000.00

Annual Sludge Cap Budget - \$118,025.00

Annual Chemical Budget - \$22,318.00

NOTE: Expenses are applied to the Caps once Inframark has paid the invoices.

Capital Expenditures Procured by the Town of Mount Carmel

Type	Month	Fiscal Year
Residential Pump Maintenance	\$22,500	\$94,188.00**
WWTP Maintenance	\$24,950	\$36,317.51**
Machinery & Equipment Rental	\$0	\$62,500.00**
TOTAL	\$0	\$193,005.51**

Please refer to the attachments for the operational and maintenance tracking financial reports.

**Corrected to reflect revised totals for Capital Expenditures

Health & Safety

- There were no recordable injuries for the month of January 2026.
- Safety training is assigned to each team member individually and is completed on-line.

Personnel

- The employees at Mount Carmel STP are developing very quickly. I always make time to talk with the crew and see if they have any questions or concerns. We have safety tailgate meetings daily. Everyone enjoys working with one another and I am proud of the crew we have built here in Mount Carmel.



February 11, 2026
Mount Carmel STP
Permit Number TN0062057
Reporting Period: January 2026
Re: DMR Cover Letter

There were no excursions to the NPDES permit during the month of January 2026.

The Mount Carmel STP, laboratory, and lift stations are operated and maintained by Inframark. The Town of Mount Carmel maintains responsibility for the collection system lines. If you have any questions or require additional information, please call me at (423)387-2369.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anthony C. Arnold".

Anthony C. Arnold
Project Manager – Mount Carmel STP

Enclosures

Distribution: Jim Stables, Town of Mount Carmel
Tyler Williams, Town of Mount Carmel
William Parks, TDEC-DWR
Matthew Malone, Inframark



LEGISLATIVE MEMORANDUM

**TO: Honorable Mayor Gibson, Vice Mayor Bare, and Alderman Gilliam,
Alderman Patrick, Alderman Shugart, Alderman Binstock, Alderman Cross**

FROM: Tyler Williams, Assistant Town Manager/CFO

DATE: February 26, 2026

**RE: FIRST READING: Ordinance No. 26-545: Municipal Court Costs- Pay Per
Offense Fee**

SUMMARY:

The purpose of Ordinance No. 26-545 is to amend Section 3-202 of the Mount Carmel Municipal Code to authorize the Municipal Judge to impose an offender-based fee per paid violation. This fee is intended to offset the maintenance, collections, upgrades, and support costs associated with the Town's Municipal Court system.

Currently, the operational costs for Municipal Court are borne by the Town. This amendment creates a mechanism to allocate these costs directly to offenders whose cases are processed through the Municipal Court system.

The specific fee amount will be maintained administratively and may be adjusted as necessary to reflect actual system costs. Currently, the fee will be an additional \$26.00 per ticket.

REQUESTING DEPARTMENT(S):

Administration

FISCAL IMPACT:

Savings of \$6,500 per year

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval

ATTACHMENTS:

Ordinance 26-545



ORDINANCE # 26 – 545

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF MOUNT CARMEL, TENNESSEE AMENDING TITLE 3 “MUNICIPAL COURT,” CHAPTER 2 “COURT ADMINISTRATION,” SECTION 3-202, “IMPOSITION OF FINES, PENALTIES, AND COURT COSTS,” OF THE MOUNT CARMEL MUNICIPAL CODE

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. That Section 3-202, “Imposition of Fines, Penalties, and Court Costs,” of Title 3, “Municipal Court,” Chapter 2 “Court Administration,” of the Municipal Code be amended as follows:

3-202. Imposition of Fines, Penalties, and Court Costs.

(6) The Municipal Judge shall impose an offender-based fee per paid violation to offset the maintenance, collections, upgrades, and support fee for the Town of Mount Carmel Municipal Court system. The amount of the fee will be maintained in the office of the Town Recorder and Municipal Court Clerk.

SECTION 2. This ordinance shall take effect upon publication after its final passage in a newspaper of general circulation, the public welfare requiring it.

Voting by the Board, as follows, February 26, 2026, First Reading:

	AYES	NAYS	OTHER
Alderman Darby Patrick			
Alderman James Cross			
Alderman Mindy Shugart			
Alderman Philip Binstock			
Alderman Jim Gilliam			
Vice-Mayor Jim Bare			
Mayor John Gibson			

Voting by the Board, as follows, March 26, 2026, Second Reading:

	AYES	NAYS	OTHER
Alderman Darby Patrick			
Alderman James Cross			
Alderman Mindy Shugart			
Alderman Philip Binstock			
Alderman Jim Gilliam			
Vice-Mayor Jim Bare			
Mayor John Gibson			

John Gibson, Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Tyler S. Williams, Town Recorder

Allen Coup, Town Attorney



LEGISLATIVE MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor Gibson, Vice Mayor Bare, and Alderman Gilliam,
Alderman Patrick, Alderman Shugart, Alderman Binstock, Alderman Cross

FROM: Tyler Williams, Assistant Town Manager/CFO

DATE: February 26, 2026

RE: **DISCUSSION/CONSIDERATION:** Resolution 26-671: Participation in 2026 CDBG Grant

SUMMARY:

This resolution supports the Town of Mount Carmel's application for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for the purchase of a new fire tanker.

This grant would provide funding assistance to acquire essential firefighting equipment to improve fire protection services, enhance public safety, and support the Town's emergency response capabilities. Approval of the resolution formally authorizes submission of the application and commits the Town to meeting all grant requirements, including a required local match.

REQUESTING DEPARTMENT(S):

Administration

FISCAL IMPACT:

20% local match of grant amount (Projected \$84,000 of \$420,000)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution 26-671



RESOLUTION 26-671

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF MOUNT CARMEL, TENNESSEE AUTHORIZING AN APPLICATION FOR 2026 CDBG GRANT FUNDS

WHEREAS, the Town of Mount Carmel recognizes the need to purchase a fire tanker for the Fire Department; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Mount Carmel and the Fire Department do not have the financial resources to undertake the improvements that are needed; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Mayor and Aldermen understands that the Tennessee Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program provides assistance to units of local government for this purpose; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee Code Annotated Section 8-4-401 authorizes cities and counties to use the CDBG program; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen meeting at Mount Carmel, Tennessee, on this 26th day of February, 2026, that

SECTION 1. The Board of Mayor and Aldermen hereby authorize the Mayor to make, sign, and submit an application requesting fiscal year 2026 Community Development Block Grant funds in the amount not to exceed \$420,000, plus any eligible Three-Star bonus allowance for the purpose of purchasing a fire tanker.

SECTION 2. The Town of Mount Carmel will provide the twenty percent (20%) local match from its general fund.

SECTION 3. The Mayor is authorized to enter into any and all necessary agreements and assurances to implement this application and project.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately, the public welfare requiring it.

ADOPTED this 26th day of February, 2026.

John Gibson, Mayor

Attest:

Tyler Williams, Town Recorder



LEGISLATIVE MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor Gibson, Vice Mayor Bare, and Alderman Gilliam,
Alderman Patrick, Alderman Shugart, Alderman Binstock, Alderman Cross

FROM: Tyler Williams, Assistant Town Manager/CFO

DATE: February 26, 2026

RE: **DISCUSSION/CONSIDERATION:** Resolution 26-672: Participation in 2026 LPRF Grant

SUMMARY:

The attached resolution supports the Town of Mount Carmel's application for the 2026 Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF) Grant through the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation.

This grant would provide matching funds to assist with additional improvements to the Town's park facilities. Approval of the resolution formally authorizes submission of the application and commits the Town to providing the required local match and maintaining the improvements in accordance with grant requirements.

REQUESTING DEPARTMENT(S):

Administration

FISCAL IMPACT:

25% local match of grant amount (Projected \$250,000 of \$1,000,000 project)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution 26-672



RESOLUTION 26-672

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF MOUNT CARMEL, TENNESSEE
AUTHORIZING AN APPLICATION FOR 2026 LPRF GRANT FUNDS**

WHEREAS, the Town of Mount Carmel recognizes the importance of providing quality recreational facilities for the health, well-being, and enjoyment of its residents; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Mount Carmel has identified a need for further improvements and enhancements to its public park; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) administers the Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF) Grant, which provides funding assistance to municipalities for park and recreation development; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Mount Carmel desires to apply for the 2026 LPRF Grant to support these improvements and recognizes that grant approval is contingent upon the Town's official support; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen meeting at Mount Carmel, Tennessee, on this 26th day of February, 2026, that

SECTION 1. The Board of Mayor and Aldermen hereby authorize the Mayor to make, sign, and submit an application requesting fiscal year 2026 LPRF Grant funds. The Mayor is also authorized to enter into any and all necessary agreements and assurances to implement this application and project.

SECTION 2. The Town of Mount Carmel will provide the twenty-five percent (25%) local match from its general fund.

SECTION 4. The Town will register the Notice of Limitation of Use against the Warranty Deed for the Park if the proposed project is funded.

SECTION 5. The project will meet all Federal, State, and Local regulations including, but not limited to, the Americans with Disabilities Act.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately, the public welfare requiring it.

ADOPTED this 26th day of February, 2026.

John Gibson, Mayor

Attest:

Tyler Williams, Town Recorder



MEMORANDUM 2026.02.001

To: **John Gibson-Mayor, Jim Bare-Vice Mayor, Jim Gilliam-Alderman, Darby Patrick-Alderman, Mindy Shugart-Alderman, Philip Binstock-Alderman, James Cross-Alderman**

From: **James Stables, Town Administrator/Manager**

Date: **February 19, 2026**

Subject: **Summary of Hawkins County Emergency Communication District Board Meeting on Wednesday, February 18, 2026, and Recommended Future Actions**

Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor and Aldermen.

Yesterday afternoon, I attended the Hawkins County Emergency Communications District (HC-ECD) Board Meeting yesterday afternoon, this meeting was a special called board meeting regarding the proposed cost share for dispatch services countywide. The meeting was well attended by the local media, as some of you may have already seen the reports from last night and/or today. Additionally, representatives for the impacted local jurisdictions were in attendance. Specifically, Surgoinsville, Church Hill and Mount Carmel. Also, Alderman Binstock attended.

While this meeting was collegial and collaborative, the HC-ECD Director began the meeting with a personal, somewhat abrasive, and lengthy response to Mayor Gibson's recent speaking points about how he took over a distressed district in 2021 with multi-system failure occurring and the changes that have been made to address those things have saved lives. However, the point that should not be lost in the conversation is unilaterally decisions were made by the HC-ECD Director and its Board to overspend available revenues that has clearly placed them into the "distressed district" category by the Tennessee Emergency Communication Board for multiple years. Also, the personnel costs represent a majority of the liability for these additional expenses as indicated by the Director in his comments. I am attempting to get an official audio recording of the meeting if one was made, if no recording was made, I have also requested the official minutes when they are available, which I will provide to each of you when received.

The HC-ECD moved Resolution 2026/02/01 (attached) proposed, to approval for the cost share using the population based method by a 7-1 vote. This has started a timeclock of July 1, 2026, for us and the other entities to negotiate an interlocal agreement either accepting or declining dispatch services, and other items we may want like a reduced rate, adequate representation on the HC-ECD Board which I recommend every jurisdiction strive for, and some forms of cost containment from non-revenue supported expenditures which are made at the sole discretion of the Director and the HC-ECD Board, which more than likely will continue driving up the cost of the 9-1-1 regionalized direct dispatching service provided by the HC-ECD.

The comments throughout this memo are not to criticize the 9-1-1 center or dispatching functions of HC-ECD, but to focus on the financial aspects of this situation. I am still of the strong opinion that the 9-1-1 regionalized direct dispatching method is the best and most efficient one available, but the revenue funding method should be addressed at the county level and not left for each

municipality to address independently for the various reasons listed in this memo. While the HC-ECD is not a county department or agency specifically, it was founded at the sole discretion of the County, and the board members are all appointed by the County Mayor and confirmed by the County Legislative Body (Commission). The Town of Mount Carmel taxpaying citizens continue to pay 62% higher taxes to Hawkins County than the Town where most of the residents' direct services are funded and provided. This fact begs the question what do the Town residents receive for their county tax dollars. This fact was echoed by HC-ECD Board Member David Good, and the lone dissenting board member to the resolution in the meeting last night. Every taxpaying citizen should know what their county tax dollars are funding in lieu of essential public safety services.

Furthermore, under the proposed HC-ECD method, it seems that the residents of the municipalities impacted would be paying up to three times for 9-1-1 and dispatching services. For example, first, a Town of Mount Carmel, Tennessee taxpaying citizen who has phone devices pays \$1.50 per device per month, which is primarily meant to fund 9-1-1 services, but may also fund dispatch if minimum 9-1-1 standards are met. Second, a Town of Mount Carmel, Tennessee taxpaying citizen then pays a county tax rate of 2.55460 per \$100 valuation on 25% of their appraised value for countywide services. Third, a Town of Mount Carmel, Tennessee taxpaying citizen then pays a tax rate of 1.58970 per \$100 valuation on 25% of their appraised value for town services, which is where most direct governmental services occur for our residents and visitors. For a taxpayer with a home valued at \$350,000, with two cell phones and one landline phone their combined amount annually is \$3,680.27, represented in the example below:



The Town of Mount Carmel continues to make fiscally responsible decisions to live within our budgeted dollars and revenue available, ensuring public safety and other essential services are addressed before non-essential services are considered. The projected financial impact of this cost share resolution for the Town of Mount Carmel is estimated to be **\$128,476**, which represents 5% of our FY 2025/26 Budgeted Local Taxes, that seems to be a pretty good taxing authority amount for a non-taxing authority agency. The jurisdictional breakdown of all based on population is reflected in the table below:

<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Population %</u>	<u>Cost Share</u>
Hawkins County	37,697	72%	\$840,936
Church Hill	6,998	13%	\$151,836
Mount Carmel	5,473	11%	\$128,476
Surgoinsville	1,882	4%	\$46,719

This issue causes me great concern for our residents' safety and security, as we most certainly cannot establish and operate a dispatch system by July 1, 2026, so we are somewhat in a conundrum for maintaining the ability to provide essential services to our residents via emergency dispatching services. At this time I recommend a multi-directional approach to address this challenge; first authorize me to pursue interlocal agreement negotiations for continued services with the District, establish a working group of elected representatives and technical experts from all the impacted jurisdictions and develop collaborative solutions that address this situation with a long-term focus (recommend countywide funding for countywide service), and respectfully but adamantly address the Tennessee legislature with a collective agenda and voice for resolving the dilemma of 9-1-1 being legislatively bound but not including the dispatch elements for efficiency and effectiveness and the maintenance of public safety in our communities. Public Safety Answering Points receiving a 9-1-1 call and then transferring it somewhere else is not in the best interest of the public's safety and security or the first responder's efficiency and effectiveness, and I cannot believe that the Tennessee legislature truly intended for this situation to happen this way. Throughout the State of Tennessee this scenario is playing out and it is incumbent on us to seek a resolve for system stability. Additionally, dispatch transfers from 9-1-1 call taking can lead to insurance premium increases due to the impact on community grading for public protection classification ratings under the Verisk-Insurance Services Office, Fire Suppression Rating Schedule.

As always, I remain available should you have any questions or if you would like to discuss this situation any further.

cc Tyler Williams, Assistant Town Administrator/Manager
Mitch Walker, Fire-Rescue Chief
David Larson, Chief of Police

Attachments:

Hawkins County Emergency Communication District Resolution

**HAWKINS COUNTY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DISTRICT
RESOLUTION**

No. 2026/02/01

RESOLUTION IN REF: ESTABLISH DISPATCH SERVICE FEES AND REQUIRE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENTS FOR DISPATCHING SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE DISTRICT

WHEREAS, the Hawkins County Emergency Communications District (hereinafter “the District” or “HCECD”) was created in 1993 by a countywide referendum under the authority of Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) § 7-86-106, establishing the District as a public corporation and municipality with perpetual succession; and

WHEREAS, during the referendum, every voting precinct in Hawkins County voted in the affirmative to create the 911 Emergency Communications District, with a final vote of 3,165 For and 754 Against; and

WHEREAS, as a stand-alone governmental entity, the District is its own public corporation and municipality, it is not a department, board, or agency of Hawkins County, nor is it a department of any municipality within Hawkins County, and has no taxing authority over its citizens; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to TCA § 7-86-107, the board of directors of an Emergency Communications District shall create an emergency communications service designed to have the capability of utilizing at least one of the following three methods in response to emergency calls: (A) Direct Dispatch method, (B) Relay method, or (C) Transfer method, and the board shall elect the method it determines to be most feasible for the District; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to TCA § 7-86-107(b), each public safety emergency service provider retains the right to dispatch its own services, and dispatching by the District may be performed only if a voluntary agreement is made between such provider and the board of directors of the Emergency Communications District; absent such agreement, the ECD has no obligation to provide dispatching services; and

WHEREAS, a portion of Tennessee 911 surcharge, currently set at \$1.50 per device per month, is allocated to Emergency Communications Districts for the operation of 911 call-taking systems and related expenses. Absent an interlocal agreement, the District is not permitted to subsidize 911 surcharge for local government dispatching operations or non-emergency call-taking and dispatching; and

WHEREAS, the base funding for Hawkins County from the 911 surcharge is \$1,176,173, and the intent of the 911 surcharge is specifically to ensure the equipment, technology, and trained personnel are in place so that a 911 call gets through and is answered, dispatching is a separate service the 911 surcharge funds were never legislatively intended to cover; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Emergency Communications Board sets revenue standards where all required items and technical standards must be met prior to using or subsidizing the 911 surcharge for other operations.

**HAWKINS COUNTY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DISTRICT
RESOLUTION**

No. 2026/02/01

WHEREAS, the TECB does not distribute funding to Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) for their operations; and

WHEREAS, during an organizational meeting of the HCECD Board of Directors on September 15, 1994, the Board was presented with three budget scenarios: (1) a transfer-only method requiring no additional revenue beyond surcharge funds; (2) a partial central dispatch for the Sheriff's Department, fire departments, and rescue services requiring only additional funding from Hawkins County; and (3) a full direct dispatch operation requiring additional revenue from sources beyond telephone surcharge revenue; and

WHEREAS Hawkins County, the City of Church Hill, and the Town of Surgoinsville accepted a request to contribute to the central dispatch operation; the Town of Bulls Gap and the Town of Mount Carmel declined to contribute; and the Town of Rogersville retained its right to conduct its own dispatching; and

WHEREAS, the opinion of the Board in 1994 was that all agencies that use the central dispatch operation should either provide funding in the future or the level of service by the 911-central dispatch operation would have to be reduced, forcing various agencies and organizations to find other methods of handling their own dispatching services; and

WHEREAS, the same funding issue has arisen on numerous occasions throughout the history of the District, including 2011, 2012, and 2014, due to the lack of adequate funding; and

WHEREAS, on at least two occasions, during the history of the District, the Tennessee Emergency Communications Board was present and confirmed that if a central dispatch type operation was to continue, additional funding sources other than the 911 surcharge would be required, and provided recommendations on cost-sharing formulas; and

WHEREAS, one such meeting occurred during a board meeting related to the District being placed in a Distressed District category by the Tennessee Emergency Communications Board; and

WHEREAS, despite these recommendations, the cost-sharing formulas were never put in place by the Board of Directors; and the records reflect that when the Board requested additional funding from Hawkins County, the Hawkins County Commission stated that the other municipalities utilizing the central dispatch operation should also contribute to the funding; and

WHEREAS, the District currently dispatches for twenty (20) emergency service providers between Hawkins County, the Town of Surgoinsville, the City of Church Hill, and the Town of Mount Carmel; the District handles over one million radio transmissions annually, answered 19,080 emergency calls and an additional 37,860 non-emergency phone calls for emergency service providers, made 16,674 outgoing phone calls, and dispatched 44,372 calls for service for emergency service providers in the most recent reporting year; and

WHEREAS, the District answered 99.39% of 911 calls in 15 seconds or less and answered non-emergency lines 97.10% of the time in 15 seconds or less; and

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RESOLUTION**

No. 2026/02/01

WHEREAS, the current total operating budget for HCECD is greater than the revenues received from 911 surcharge fees and the funding from Hawkins County, and approximately 80% of funding is allocated to salaries, wages, and benefits; and

WHEREAS, the District currently maintains only one interlocal agreement, with Hawkins County, for an annual funding share of \$406,720.00 (not including NCIC expense), and this amount is not sufficient to cover the cost share of dispatching the county emergency service providers; and

WHEREAS, the interlocal agreement with Hawkins County is to provide dispatching services to Hawkins County Sheriff's Office, Hawkins County Emergency Management Agency, Hawkins County Medical Death Investigator's Office, Hawkins County EMS, Hawkins County Rescue Squad, Church Hill Rescue Squad, and the volunteer fire departments in the unincorporated area of Hawkins County; and

WHEREAS, no interlocal agreements exist for the Town of Surgoinsville, the City of Church Hill, or the Town of Mount Carmel for dispatching their emergency service providers (police and fire departments), two of which are combination paid/volunteer fire departments; pursuant to TCA and TECB policy, in order to utilize 911 surcharge funds for services provided to other government agencies, an interlocal agreement must be in place; and

WHEREAS, in Fiscal Year 2024-2025, the District experienced a negative net change of \$231,537, excluding depreciation, and the budget was balanced by using reserves; a negative net change is also expected for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 and Fiscal Year 2026-2027, with reserves expected to be used for Fiscal Year 2025-2026; if a balanced budget is not achieved for Fiscal Year 2026-2027, the District will have three consecutive years of negative net change and be classified as a distressed district under TECB policy; and

WHEREAS, once the ECD becomes distressed, the TECB will begin oversight of the District's operations and approve all spending, and will balance the budget either by consolidating the District with another Emergency Communications District or by ordering a reduction in services, and even then, the same fundamental issue of adequately funding dispatching will remain; and

WHEREAS, the only way to reduce the budget and achieve balance without emergency service providers funding their dispatch operations is by reducing personnel; however, reducing personnel to the amount to balance the budget and maintaining the same level of service that HCECD currently provides would be detrimental to the welfare and public safety of the citizens of Hawkins County, as citizens would experience wait times to speak with call-takers and delays in the dispatch of emergency service providers; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Emergency Communications Board (TECB) has clarified that ECDs are not required to dispatch by law but permitted to do so if the ECD enters into a voluntary agreement with the emergency service provider, that noting in the law states the ECD must bear the cost of dispatching solely on the funds provided by 911 surcharge, and that in most cases ECDs that also dispatch do so for some negotiated funding provided by local governments; and

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WHEREAS, TECB Policy 8 requires all interlocal agreements in which resources, equipment, or income are shared between an ECD and another government entity to be adopted by the District's Board and submitted to TECB within 45 days of execution; and

WHEREAS, the intent of the 911 legislation was never for ECDs to subsidize dispatching services with 911 surcharge revenues and jeopardize the local 911 system, and it is well documented that the legislative intent was not for 911 districts to bear the financial burden of dispatching, as most recently affirmed in Tennessee Senate Joint Resolution 0048 (SJR0048); and

WHEREAS, the District's continued use of 911 surcharge revenue for dispatching operations jeopardize compliance with state law, TECB policy, and threatens the financial stability of the local 911 system itself; and

WHEREAS, absent local cost-sharing, continued operations at current staffing and service levels have depleted reserves and risk the District's operational capability for 911 services, its only primary statutory function.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Hawkins County Emergency Communications District as follows:

All public safety agencies and emergency service providers in which resources, equipment, or income are shared between the ECD, and another government entity shall be required to enter into written interlocal agreements with HCECD outlining the scope of services and the associated funding responsibility, in compliance with TCA § 7-86-107 and TECB Policy 8. All such agreements shall be adopted by the Board of Directors and submitted to the TECB within forty-five (45) days of execution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the District shall develop a standardized, equitable fee formula for dispatch services based on a population-based formula utilizing U.S. Census data to determine population totals for each participating jurisdiction. The formula shall include the total cost of sixteen (16) FTE dispatchers, including base salary, benefits, and the annual cost-of-living adjustment consistent with the Social Security Administration rate. Any increase in FTE should be approved by the HCECD Board of Directors and jurisdictions participating in the central dispatch operation. The Board's preferred methodology of the population-based formula relies on an unbiased and verifiable data source.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the fee structure is intended solely to cover the actual cost of providing dispatch services. The adopted formula shall establish the maximum possible cost for each fiscal year; however, agencies shall only be billed for actual costs incurred. If a dispatch position is vacant, the District will not assess fees for that position until it is filled. Nothing in this resolution prevents the ECD and a jurisdiction from negotiating a lower cost for each fiscal year, which would be outlined in the interlocal agreement. Both the ECD and the jurisdiction shall agree to any lower annual cost share.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the District shall notify all participating agencies and municipalities by March 1 of each year of the upcoming fiscal year's dispatch service cost-share.

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED consistent with TCA and TECB policy, HCECD is not legally permitted to subsidize 911 surcharge fees to provide services to another government entity without a voluntary written interlocal agreement. If a government entity that HCECD provides dispatching services declines to enter into an agreement under the adopted cost-share formula, HCECD will provide reasonable written notice and a transition timeline for the agency to resume or arrange its own dispatching operations. This ensures that HCECD's primary statutory responsibility, ensuring the 911 infrastructure is in place, operational, and answering the 911 call, remains fully funded and operational.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED if any jurisdiction elects to retain its right to dispatch its own emergency service providers, the jurisdiction will have to decide whether it wants to receive its 911 calls from the transfer or relay method. The jurisdiction/emergency service provider shall provide a ten-digit telephone number to HCECD by the effective date of this resolution. All costs incurred by the chosen method shall be the responsibility of the jurisdiction. If any law enforcement agency elects to retain its right to conduct its own dispatching, absent a voluntary agreed upon interlocal agreement by HCECD and the law enforcement agency, HCECD shall also discontinue servicing as the Non-Terminal and/or Terminal Agency for that agency's NCIC services, and the law enforcement agency would be responsible for designating its own Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) and ensuring compliance with all applicable Criminal Justice Information System, Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, and Federal Bureau of Investigation requirements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED if any provision of this Resolution or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this Resolution which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to the end the provisions of this Resolution are declared severable.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED this resolution shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

Adopted this 18 day of Feb, 2026, by the Board of Directors of the Hawkins County Emergency Communications District.

Motion By <u>John Murnane</u>	ACTION:	AYE	NAY
Seconded By <u>Travis Fields</u>	Roll Call	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>
	Voice Vote	___	___
APPROVED:	Absent (1)	___	___



Meredith Bachman, Board Chair

Special Called Meeting

02/18/2026

 Date	@February 18, 2026
 Location	2291 East Main Street, Rogersville, TN 37857
 AI summary	The Hawkins County Emergency Communications District Board held a special meeting on February 18, 2026, with key attendees including Chair Meredith Bachman and Vice-Chair David Good. No previous minutes, committee reports, or financial reports were presented. Public comments were absent, but Director Lynn Campbell addressed a letter from Mayor John Gibson. A resolution to establish dispatch service fees and require interlocal agreements was adopted with seven votes in favor and one against. The meeting concluded with a motion to adjourn.
 AI keywords	Dispatch Service Fee
 Attachments	02182026_Agenda.pdf 021826_Attend.pdf Resolution 20260201.pdf
 Last edited by	 Lynn Campbell
 Last edited time	@February 20, 2026 3:09 PM

Call to Order

The Hawkins County Emergency Communications District Board of Directors met at the Hawkins County Emergency Communications Center, 2291 E. Main St., Rogersville, TN, on February 18, 2026, for a special called meeting. It began at 4:00 PM and was presided over by Meredith Bachman, with Lynn Campbell as secretary.

Attendees

List attendees, including voting members, guests in attendance and member's not in attendance.

- Chair Meredith Bachman, Vice-Chair David Good, Peggy Ray, Sheriff Ronnie Lawson, Director Travis Fields, Jerrell Moore, Jamie Miller, John Murnane, Andy Stump (Excused)
- Paula Arnwine, Hawkins County 911; Cheyenne Murrell, Hawkins County 911; Elijah Housewright, Hawkins County 911; Charles Johnson, Hawkins County 911; Tonya Taylor, Hawkins County 911; Chad Mosley, Church Hill PD; Kimberly Dobbs, Church Hill City CMFO; Jim Stables, Mount Carmel Town Manager; James Hammonds, Surgoinsville Police; Marrah Ste. Marie, WCYB; Hailey Pitcher, WJHL; Matthew Williams, Here! Hawkins County News; Sarah Monoson, Kingsport Times News; Donna Hipshire, 911; Matthew Wilder, Hawkins County 911; Jeff Greer, Hawkins County 911; Philip Binstock, Alderman-Mt. Carmel; Teresa Whitaker, Hawkins County 911

Approval of Minutes

Due to this being a special called meeting there was not previous minutes.

Committee Reports

Due to this being a special called meeting there was no committee reports.

Financial Report

Due to this being a special called meeting there was no financial report.

Staff Reports

Due to this being a special called meeting there was no staff reports.

Public Comments

No one from the public wished to address the board.

Public Response

Director Lynn Campbell addressed the Board of Directors regarding a letter posted on social media by Mayor John Gibson of the Town of Mount Carmel.

New Business

- Resolution 2026/02/01 to Establish Dispatch Service Fees and Require Interlocal Agreements for Dispatching Services Provided by the District -
Director Lynn Campbell presented to the Board a resolution entitled "Establish Dispatch Service Fees and Require Interlocal Agreements for Dispatching Services Provided by the District." The Director reviewed the purpose of the resolution, outlining the statutory authority under Tennessee Code Annotated § 7-86, Tennessee Emergency Communications Board (TECB) policy requirements, the District's current funding structure, and the need for written interlocal agreements with jurisdictions receiving dispatch services. The resolution establishes a standardized population-based cost-sharing formula for dispatch services, requires execution of interlocal agreements in compliance with state law and TECB Policy 8, provides for annual notification of cost shares, outlines procedures for agencies that elect to dispatch their own services, and specifies an effective date of July 1, 2026. John Murnane made a motion to adopt the resolution, and the motion was seconded by Travis Fields. A roll call vote was conducted with the following results: David Good voted no; Peggy Ray, Ronnie Lawson, Travis Fields, Jerrell Moore, Jamie Miller, John Murnane, and Meredith Bachman voted aye; and Andy Stump was not present. With seven (7) votes in favor and one (1) vote opposed, the motion passed and the resolution was adopted.

Adjournment

David Good moved that the meeting be adjourned, and this was agreed upon by all members present.

Signed & Dated

_____, Secretary

_____, Chair

_____, Date