

Jennifer Rivera (Administration)

From: Charles Vanderbilt [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2026 6:46 AM
To: Jennifer Rivera (Administration)
Cc: David Gibbs (County Commission); Casey Ramsey (Administration); Justin R. Lawhon (Legal Services)
Subject: Public Comment Submission – Agenda Item 166/2026 (Tonight’s Meeting)

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Dear Ms. Rivera,

I would like to submit the following public comment for **tonight’s meeting regarding Agenda Item 166/2026.**

If possible, I would appreciate it being read into the record during the public comment portion.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Respectfully,
Charles Vanderbilt

COMMENT (optimized for Clerk to read aloud)

Public Comment – Agenda Item 166/2026

Good evening, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners,

I wanted to briefly share a governance perspective regarding Agenda Item 166/2026.

As I understand it, this item would begin the process of drafting a resolution to require an affirmative vote from the district commissioner

where the property is located, or an at-large commissioner, for zoning matters to move forward.

As these discussions continue, I would respectfully ask the Board to consider how this concept aligns with the broader discussion of commissioner election structure, including the possibility of countywide elections.

If decision-making authority becomes more closely tied to a specific district, while elections are conducted countywide, there may be a disconnect between who elects a commissioner and the community most directly affected by their decisions.

Given the potential long-term impact of this type of structural change, I would encourage a clear and transparent process, with opportunity for public input, before moving forward.

Thank you for your time.
Charles Vanderbilt

On Mar 24, 2026, at 10:27 AM, Jennifer Rivera (Administration) <jrivera@hallcounty.org> wrote:

Hi Charles,

Thank you for your email. I will forward your comment to the Board of Commissioners and it will be included in the official record.

Thanks,
Jennifer

Jennifer Rivera, CMC
Board of Commissioners Clerk
Hall County Government
Tel: 770-297-2684
jrivera@hallcounty.org
www.hallcounty.org

<image001.png>

From: Charles Vanderbilt [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2026 7:27 PM
To: David Gibbs (County Commission) <dgibbs@hallcounty.org>
Cc: Casey Ramsey (Administration) <cramsey@hallcounty.org>; Justin R. Lawhon (Legal Services) <jrlawhon@hallcounty.org>; Jennifer Rivera (Administration) <jrivera@hallcounty.org>
Subject: Follow-Up on Governance Discussions and Upcoming Agenda Item

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Chair Gibbs,

I wanted to follow up after today's letter regarding the addition of an agenda item to begin drafting a resolution related to zoning vote requirements.

I had previously shared a note following the March 9 work session regarding the discussion of countywide commissioner elections, and I wanted to respectfully revisit that context as these conversations continue to develop.

As I understand it, the current proposal would explore requiring an affirmative vote from the district commissioner where the property is located (or an at-large commissioner) for zoning matters to move forward. While I understand the intent to strengthen local input, it seems this discussion is closely tied to broader questions of representation, accountability, and how decision-making authority is structured across the Board.

As these topics are considered together, I wanted to respectfully note a potential alignment question. If decision-making authority on zoning matters becomes more closely tied to individual districts, while commissioner elections are considered on a countywide basis, there may be a disconnect between who elects a commissioner and the specific community their decisions most directly affect. I would appreciate any insight into how this alignment is being evaluated.

In addition, I wanted to ask:

1. Has there been any coordinated legal or structural analysis of how these concepts may interact under the current enabling framework?
2. How might the Board evaluate alignment between geographic representation and voting authority if both concepts are considered?
3. What process will be used to ensure public awareness and input before advancing any proposed legislative changes of this nature?

I share these questions/concerns as a Hall County resident interested in how governance structures support both fair representation and consistent decision-making across the county. Given the potential long-term implications, a clear and transparent review process would be valuable for the community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Charles Vanderbilt

On Mar 12, 2026, at 5:31 PM, Charles Vanderbilt [REDACTED] wrote:

Mr. Lawhon,

Your email address was included below in error. The previous message did not go through and was returned, which is why I am sending it again.

Best regards,
Charles Vanderbilt

From: Charles Vanderbilt [REDACTED]
Date: March 12, 2026 at 5:15:16 PM EDT
To: dgibbs@hallcounty.org
Cc: jlawhon@hallcounty.org, cramsey@hallcounty.org
Subject: Question Regarding Discussion of Countywide Commissioner Elections

Dear Chair Gibbs,

I wanted to follow up on the discussion during the March 9 work session regarding the possibility of changing the commissioner election structure so that all commissioners would run countywide. I have attached the work session minutes for reference.

I understand the concern that was raised about accountability when commissioners vote on matters outside their own districts. At the same time, I wanted to respectfully ask whether a countywide election system could unintentionally reduce geographic representation across the county.

For example, under the current district-based structure, different areas of the county, including communities with lower population density, have direct representation on the Board. If commissioner seats were elected countywide, could areas with larger population concentrations have greater influence over multiple seats? And could this potentially make it more difficult for smaller or less densely populated communities to maintain representation?

From a governance perspective, district-based representation has traditionally helped ensure that the Board reflects the diversity of the county's communities while still allowing commissioners to collaborate on decisions affecting the county as a whole.

Before any structural changes are considered, I would appreciate understanding:

Has there been any legal or structural analysis regarding how such a change might impact representation across districts?

What process would be required under state law to modify the current election structure?

Would public input be sought before exploring a change of this magnitude?

I have copied the County Attorney and County Administrator simply for awareness given the governance and administrative considerations related to this topic.

I share this comment as a Hall County resident interested in how governance structures support fair and balanced representation across the county.

Thank you for your time and for considering these questions.

Best regards,

Charles Vanderbilt
Hall County Resident

Attachment: March 9 Work Session Minutes

<3-9-2026_Work_Session_Minutes.pdf>