



Cleveland City Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 21, 2026 at 6:30 PM
Cleveland Municipal Complex, 55 Cantrell Road, Cleveland, GA

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Turner called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. He welcomed everyone to the new City Hall.

Mayor Turner called for a moment of silence in memory of a Truett-McConnell University student who recently passed away.

PRESENT:

Mayor Josh Turner, Council Members Annie Sutton, Jeremy McClure, and C.J. McDonald

Nan Bowen (Mayor Pro Tem) was not in attendance.

Also, present were City Manager Kevin Harris, Deputy City Manager/Finance Director John Solmon, City Attorney Keith Whitaker, and City Clerk Lisa Ritchie

INVOCATION

1. Lead Pastor Marc Turner, Cleveland Worship Center, and White County Ministerial Alliance

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Council Member McClure, seconded by Council Member McDonald, and voted, 3 to 0 (Council Member Bowen was not in attendance), to approve the agenda.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

2. Economic Development and Planning Director Tom O'Bryant – August 2026 Report

Mr. O'Bryant addressed the Mayor and Council Members. He reported the following August items:

-Occupational License - 1

-Building Permits - 6

-Building Inspections - 17

-Plan Review - 2

-Current Commercial Activity - 8

-Development Inquiry - 5 Grant Applications and Administration:

Grant Applications and Administration:

- Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant - the US Army Corps review is complete, scheduled and advertised public hearing for the project.

- The Rural Workforce Housing Initiative (RWHI) - Campbell Street Sewer Relief Line - Site crew is visiting the site and establishing sewer line alignment within the easement
- Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) - construction is underway, forms and concrete have been poured, the project is approximately 11% complete. Moved archived construction plans to the old tax office.

Infrastructure and Planning:

- Completed the monthly US Census Bureau report on construction status of the WWTP expansion, including expenditures.
- Submitted GDOT permit application for West Kytte Street waterline project.
- Coordinated with AGL for new natural gas service lines in the Campbell Street area.
- City of Cleveland Downtown Development Authority (DDA) attended board member training on August 20th.
- Attended GMRC Economic Development Retreat with Georgia Power and HEMC addressing demand for data center locations; attended Chestatee-Chattahoochee Resource Conservation Development Board Meeting.
- Presented at the Georgia Association of Conservation Districts on Housing and Infrastructure Planning.
- Responded to an open records request for West Jarrard Village.

Council Member McClure asked if the grant for the well was reimbursable. Finance Director John Solmon stated that it is reimbursable.

4. Finance Director John Solmon – April 2026 Report

3. Finance Director John Solmon – July 2026 Report

Mr. Solmon addressed the Mayor and Council Members. He reported the following July items:

- General Fund: Revenues are down, while expenses are down due to three payrolls occurring during the month.
- LOST and SPLOST Collections: Collections increased 4% for the year.
- Public Safety: Police and Fire expenditures account for approximately 56% of General Fund expenditures
- Water and Sewer Fund: Revenues are up; expenses are down

4. Fire Chief Jason Bryant – August 2026 Report

Fire Chief Bryant addressed the Mayor and Council Members. He reported the following August items:

- Total of 113 calls (66.37% inside the city limits and 21.24% in the automatic aid area) for the month and 1,070 for the year
- The new Scott SCBA air packs arrived
- Personnel participated in 146 documented training hours
- Fire safety education programs were conducted at The Bridge Church and J.P. Nix Elementary School

5. Police Chief Jeff Shoemaker – August 2026 Report

Chief Shoemaker addressed the Mayor and Council Members. He reported the following August items:

- Public assist - 299

- Premise checks – 1,363
- Field interviews – 9
- Incident reports – 36
- Accident reports – 24
- Investigative/Supplemental – 22
- Citations – 69
- Warnings – 138
- Warrants – 6
- Juveniles – 1
- Admin: Alcohol Badges, CHRI, Peddler – 40
- Arrests - 7

6. Public Works Director Ricky Hunt – August 2026 Report

Mr. Hunt addressed the Mayor and Council Members. he reported the following August items:

- Street R-O-W Maintenance - 3
- Inspection - 3
- City Hall Maintenance - 24
- Meter Change Out - 9
- Cut Off and Lock Meter - Non Payment - 19
- Check for Leak - 15
- Final Reading - Do Not Lock - 19
- Garbage Request - 14
- Meeting with customer - 5
- Final Read and Lock Meter - Disconnect - 11
- Meter Inspection - 32
- Residential Turn On - 32
- Commercial Turn On - 1
- Meter Readings - Monthly - 2,318
- Meter Re-Reads - Monthly - 31
- Utility Locates - 101
- Sewer Backup - 1
- Street Repair - 1
- Outside New Water Cut-In & Sewer Cut-In - 1
- After Hours Work - 2

Total Work Orders - 2,642

- Inmates worked five of their 17 scheduled workdays, as there is currently no assigned officer.
- Routine sewer lift stations daily inspections – 9 lift stations, 7 days a week, 279 inspections conducted

-Sanitation (Residential & Commercial) – 55 loads collected, 181.95 tons of waste transported to the transfer station

7. Water Resources Director Scott Brown – August 2026 Report

Mr. Brown addressed the Mayor and Council Members. He reported the following August items:

Water Treatment

- City wells produced 16.7 MG
- Purchased 6.1 MG from the County
- Performed 195 laboratory tests on drinking water
- Collected and shipped all required monthly samples to EPD's lab
- Submitted all monthly operating reports to EPD
- Water loss for the month was 26.1%

WATER RECLAMATION:

- Discharged 11.7 MG of treated effluent into the Tesnatee Creek
- Performed 108 laboratory tests on influent and effluent wastewater
- Cleaned all UV lamps
- Submitted the discharge monitoring report to EPD
- Greased and changed filters on blowers
- Responded to 1 sewer odor complaint call

INDUSTRIAL PRETREATMENT:

- Reviewed Cobb-Vantress and NOK self-monitoring reports
- Semi-annual Industrial Pretreatment inspection by EPD

PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Turner opened the Public Hearing.

8. First Reading and Public Hearing - Amendments to the Sign Ordinance

Economic Development and Planning Director Tom O'Bryant addressed the Mayor and Council Members. He presented the proposed amendments, which included electronic LED signage regulations and standards, and new technologies. Council Member McDonald asked Mr. O'Bryant to look at billboards, and Mayor Turner asked that he consider other items previously communicated.

Mayor Turner closed the Public Hearing.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no comments from the public.

NEW BUSINESS

9. Resolution 2026-15 - White County-Cleveland - Hazard Mitigation Plan

White County Public Safety Director David Murphy addressed the Mayor and Council Members. Mr. Murphy discussed the item.

Motion by Council Member McClure, seconded by Council Member Sutton, and voted, 3 to 0 (Council Member Bowen was not in attendance), to approve Resolution 2026-15 - White County-Cleveland - Hazard Mitigation Plan.

10. Resolution 2026-16 Declaring certain city-owned vehicles, equipment, and miscellaneous property as surplus and authorizing their lawful disposition

Mr. Harris discussed the item.

Motion by Council Member McClure, seconded by Council Member Sutton, and voted, 3 to 0 (Council Member Bowen was not in attendance), to approve Resolution 2026-16 Declaring certain city-owned vehicles, equipment, and miscellaneous property as surplus and authorizing their lawful disposition.

11. Resolution 2026-17 Authorizing the Establishment of a separate Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST VI) Account; authorizing the Deputy City Manager/Finance Director to establish and administer such account; and for other purposes

Mr. Solmon discussed the item.

Motion by Council Member McDonald, seconded by Council Member McClure, and voted, 3 to 0 (Council Member Bowen was not in attendance), to approve Resolution 2026-17 Authorizing the Establishment of a separate Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST VI) Account; authorizing the Deputy City Manager/Finance Director to establish and administer such account; and for other purposes.

CALLED MEETING/MEETING MINUTES

12. Approval of the August 17, 2026 Meeting Minutes
13. Approval of the August 20, 2026 Called Meeting Minutes (8:00 a.m.)
14. Approval of the August 20, 2026 Called Meeting Minutes (6:00 p.m.)
15. Approval of the August 20, 2026 Called Meeting Minutes (6:15 p.m.)

Motion by Council Member Sutton, seconded by Council Member McDonald and voted, 3 to 0 (Council Member Bowen was not in attendance), to approve the minutes of the following Meetings/Called Meetings:

-August 17, 2026 Meeting

-August 20, 2026 8:00 a.m. Called Meeting

-August 20, 2026 6:00 p.m. Called Meeting

-August 20, 2026 6:15 p.m. Called Meeting

EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

16. Approval of the August 20, 2026 Executive Session Minutes (Real Estate)

Motion by Council Member McClure, seconded by Council Member Sutton and voted, 3 to 0 (Council Member Bowen was not in attendance), to approve the April 20, 2026 Executive Session Minutes.

CITY ATTORNEY KEITH WHITAKER

Mr. Whitaker did not have any items to report.

CITY MANAGER KEVIN HARRIS

Mr. Harris discussed the following items:

- Municipal Complex ribbon-cutting and Open House
- Operations & Communications Coordinator, Bre Bardenwerper
- Upcoming social media platform changes
- Utilization of YouTube rather than Facebook
- Park & Recreation Advisory Board
- future Annexations
- FLOST reduced property taxes from 5.056 to 1.938 - plans for no property taxes in the city
- Department staffing numbers

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Ritchie gave the announcements.

17. The next Cleveland City Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 5, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. at the Cleveland Municipal Complex
18. The White County Water Authority Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 8, 2026, at 7:30 a.m. at the White County Water Authority
19. The Planning and Zoning Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 22, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. at the Cleveland Municipal Complex

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Council Member McClure, seconded by Council Member McDonald and voted, 3 to 0 (Council Member Bowen was not in attendance), to enter an Executive Session at 7:31 p.m.

20. Personnel and Real Estate

Motion by Council Member Sutton, seconded by Council Member McClure and voted, 3 to 0 (Council Member Bowen was not in attendance), to adjourn the Executive Session and return to the regular Meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Motion by Council Member McDonald, seconded by Council Member McClure and voted, 3 to 0 (Council Member Bowen was not in attendance), to authorize a full-time position for a Deputy Utilities Clerk.

Motion by Council Member McClure, seconded by Council Member McDonald and voted, 3 to 0 (Council Member Bowen was not in attendance), to re-enter Executive Session at 7:55 p.m.

Motion by Council Member Sutton, seconded by Council Member McClure and voted, 3 to 0 (Council Member Bowen was not in attendance), to adjourn the Executive Session and return to the regular Meeting at 8:28 p.m.

ADJOURN

Motion by Council Member Sutton, seconded by Council Member McClure and voted, 3 to 0 (Council Member Bowen was not in attendance), to adjourn the Meeting of September 21, 2026, at 8:31 p.m.