



Cleveland City Council Called Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 13, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Oak Springs Community Center – 342 Campbell Street, Cleveland, GA

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Turner called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

Mayor Josh Turner, Council Members Nan Bowen (Mayor Pro Tem), Annie Sutton, Jeremy McClure, and C.J. McDonald

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

INVOCATION

Council Member Annie Sutton gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Council Member McClure, seconded by Council Member Bowen, and voted, unanimously, to approve the agenda.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. First Public Hearing - Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Millage Rate and Digest

Mayor Turner opened the Public Hearing. He stated that the current millage rate is 5.056 mills and that Georgia law requires the City to advertise a notice of property tax increase if the full rollback millage rate is not adopted. He stated that the city intends to retain the current millage rate of 5.056 mills.

Mayor Turner provided additional information regarding the Floating Local Option Sales Tax (FLOST). He explained that the 1% tax approved by the citizens of White County may only be used to reduce property taxes. The FLOST revenue is divided among White County, the City of Cleveland, and the City of Helen, with the City of Cleveland eligible to receive up to 15% of the revenue.

Mayor Turner further explained that, although FLOST revenue is being used to help reduce property taxes, under Georgia tax laws, the City's proposed millage rate of 1.938 mills, which is 0.012 mills higher than the rollback rate of 1.926 mills, constitutes a millage rate increase. However, by applying the FLOST revenue toward property tax relief, the City can retain the 5.056-mill rate while providing the equivalent of a 1.938-mill property tax reduction.

Mr. Harris stated that the city collaborated with the City of Helen and White County to place the question before the voters, which was subsequently approved by the voters.

Mr. Solmon addressed the Mayor and Council Members and provided a presentation regarding the 2026 tax digest and five-year history of the levy. He stated that the current tax digest reflects a 60.35% decrease in taxes for this year. He also reviewed the millage overview, which reflects an increase of \$1,847.

Mayor Turner asked if there were any public comments. Ms. Ritchie stated that there were none.

Council Member Sutton expressed her appreciation to staff for their work.

Mayor Turner closed the Public Hearing.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Turner stated the dates and times for the upcoming Public Hearings regarding the millage rate.

2. The Second Public Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Millage Rate and Digest will be held at a Called Meeting on Thursday, August 20, 2026, at 8:00 a.m. at the Oak Springs Community Center, located at 342 Campbell Street

ADJOURN

Motion by Council Member McDonald, seconded by Council Member McClure and voted, unanimously, to adjourn the Called Meeting of August 13, 2026, at 6:13 p.m.