

THE CITY OF DALTON
MAYOR AND COUNCIL MINUTES
FEBRUARY 2, 2026

The Mayor and Council held a meeting this evening at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall. Present were Mayor Annalee Sams, Councilmembers Dennis Mock, Tyree Goodlett and Steve Farrow, City Administrator Andrew Parker and City Attorney Jonathan Bledsoe.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sams called the meeting of the Mayor and Council to order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmembers led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On the motion of Councilmember Mock, second Councilmember Goodlett, the Mayor and Council approved the agenda. The vote was unanimous in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Chirag Patel of Walnut Express apologized for an employee's failure to verify a minor's age, resulting in an unlawful sale. Patel stated he has invested in ID scanners and mandated Georgia alcohol seller-server certification for all staff. Patel further requested the board reconsider the 30-day license suspension, proposing a reduced suspension of seven days to avoid severe financial hardship.

TJ Kaikobad expressed gratitude for the opportunity to share personal reflections, marking 36 years in Dalton since arriving on February 2, 1990. Kaikobad stated initially he planned to stay only 60 days, however the community's hospitality and leadership won him over. Kaikobad continued praising Dalton's resilience, strong local leadership, and commitment to progress, and thanked everyone for making the city a great place to live and work.

PRESENTATION

Margaret Thigpen, Director of Tourism, presented a plaque to Steve Roberts, Recreation Director, on behalf of the World Sports League (WSL) in recognition of Heritage Point Park as the Complex of the Year. She expressed appreciation to Steve and his team for their outstanding contributions to the community.

City Administrator Andrew Parker acknowledged State of Georgia, Representative Carpenter, and Senator Chuck Payne for their support in securing grant funding for the park's turf field renovation stating the upgrade has significantly improved field resiliency, enabling Heritage Point to host regional multi-day tournaments without disruption from North Georgia thunderstorms, thanks to the conversion of infields to synthetic turf.

MINUTES

The Mayor and Council reviewed the Regular Meeting Minutes of January 20, 2026. On the motion of Councilmember Mock, second Councilmember Farrow, the minutes were approved. The vote was unanimous in favor.

The Mayor and Council reviewed the Special Called Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2026. On the motion of Councilmember Mock, second Councilmember Goodlett, the minutes were approved. The vote was unanimous in favor.

REVIEW OF PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION HEARING DECISION REGARDING CMG DALTON DEVELOPMENT D/B/A WALNUT EXPRESS

City Attorney Jonathan Bledsoe presented the finding from the Public Safety Commission hearing held on December 16 regarding CMG Dalton Development (Walnut Express), which was found guilty of a second alcohol license violation of selling to a minor. Bledsoe stated the review of the recommendation is limited to determining if sufficient evidence supports the Commission's findings with no new testimony or evidence will be considered. Bledsoe further added the Commission imposed a \$2,500 fine and a 30-day suspension, consistent with the ordinance table for a second violation within 36 months.

Council member Mock stated that he reviewed the transcript and Mr. Patel's corrective actions, and acknowledges the owner's efforts to prevent future violations. Mock stated although the ordinance table calls for a 30-day suspension, he makes a motion to reduce the suspension to two weeks, Council member Farrow seconded the motion. The motion passed with Council members Mock and Farrow voting aye and Council member Goodlett voting naye.

FIRST READING ORDINANCE 26-02 - VAP ORDINANCE

The Mayor and Council held a first Reading of Ordinance 26-02 To Amend Chapter 26 of the 2001 Revised Code of The City of Dalton, Georgia Captioned "Businesses" To Reserve Sections 26-333 through 26-344 and By the Addition of a New Article X Captioned "Vape Shops"; To Provide for An Effective Date; To Provide for The Repeal of Conflicting Ordinances; To Provide for Severability; And for Other Purposes.

City Administrator Andrew Parker briefed the Mayor and Council, noting that the City Attorney provided a comprehensive overview of the draft vape shop ordinance during the January 5, 2026 work session. Parker confirmed that no changes have been made to the working draft since that presentation and highlighted key sections of the proposed code. Parker additionally stated if there are any requested amendments that those can be captured before the second reading and then a revised draft can be circulated.

FIRST READING ORDINANCE 26-03 - THE REQUEST OF WHITFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AND THE CITY OF DALTON MAYOR AND COUNCIL TO MAKE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE UNIFIED ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT

The Mayor and Council held a first Reading of Ordinance 26-03 a request from Whitfield County Board of Commissioners and the City of Dalton Mayor and Council to make proposed amendments to the Unified Zoning Ordinance text to add the definition for "Biohazard Waste" "Biological Waste" and "Hazardous Waste" and to update the Permitted Use Table to add a new line item for "Biohazard Waste", "Biological Waste" and "Hazardous Waste", delete Section 4-6-13 and replace, amend the requirements for the UPUD zoning district, and for other purposes. (County & City).

**FIRST READING ORDINANCE 26-03 - THE REQUEST OF WHITFIELD COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AND THE CITY OF DALTON MAYOR AND COUNCIL
TO MAKE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE UNIFIED ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT**

Continued

Ethan Calhoun, Assistant Planning Director, explained that the proposed text amendment to the Unified Zoning Ordinance (UZO) stating it will introduce four new definitions: (1) Biohazard Waste, (2) Biological Waste, (3) Data Center, and (4) Hazardous Waste. Calhoun further stated that amendment will delete Section 4-6-13 and replace it with language specifying that facilities or operations involving biological waste, biohazard waste, or hazardous waste will be permitted only as a Special Use in the M-1 and M-2 districts, provided they comply with all local, state, and federal regulations for waste management.

Additionally, he stated the amendment will:

- Add a new line item in the Permitted Use Table for “Data Center,” allowing this use exclusively in the M-2 Heavy Manufacturing Zoning District.
- Introduce a new Section 5A-6 to establish a Greenspace Courtyard Subdivision option within the UPUD District.

Note: Item will have a second reading at the next Mayor and Council meeting.

FIRST READING ORDINANCE 26-04 – REZONING REQUEST OF VIVIANA RAMIREZ
The Mayor and Council held a first Reading of Ordinance 26-04 a request of Viviana Ramirez to rezone from General Commercial (C-2) to Medium Density Single Family Residential (R-3) a tract of land totaling 0.33 acres located at 409 S. Spencer Street, Dalton, Georgia. Parcel (12-238-19-002). Assistant Planning Director Ethan Calhoun stated this request received approval from both the Staff and the Planning Commission.

Note: Item will have a second reading at the next Mayor and Council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, on the motion of Councilmember Mock, second Councilmember Goodlett the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:39 p.m.

Bernadette Chattam
City Clerk

Annalee Sams, Mayor

Recorded
Approved: _____
Post: _____