

# CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL SESSION

321 WALNUT STREET, GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA  
TUESDAY, JULY 22, 2025 – 6:00 PM



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## MINUTES

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Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag – **Mayor Johnson**

Roll Call

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mayor Matt Johnson, Vice Mayor Ed Gaw, Council Member Glee Glisson, Council Member Darren Stutts

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** L.J. Arnold, III, City Attorney, Steve Kennedy, City Manager, Mike Null, Assistant City Manager, Erin West, City Clerk

Mayor to call on members of the audience wishing to address the Council on matters not on the Agenda.

1. Diane Whiteman 723 Magnolia Ave. GCS advised she received an email and she would like staff to review the numbers in the document, verify their accuracy, and get back to her with the information, as she didn't have time to fact-check before the meeting.

### COUNCIL BUSINESS

1. Establish Interim Millage Rate for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 *Sue Wang*

Finance Director Sue Wang presented the TRIM process and the steps involved in setting interim millage rates. She detailed the taxable value for the city of Green Cove Springs, including the general fund portion and the CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) portion. Ms. Wang explained the impact of the millage rate on property tax revenue and recommended setting the interim millage rate at 6.0 mills.

Van Royal 3688 LaCosta Ct. GCS spoke about two topics: the millage rate and population growth and compared the topics to Orange Park. Mr. Royal advised the Council to show fiscal responsibility by keeping the current 5.3 millage and to absorb the 9% growth.

Mayor Johnson reminded the Council that setting the interim millage rate at 6.0 is a procedural step to comply with legal notice requirements. This does not commit the city to the full 6.0 rate. He recommended setting the interim rate at 6.0 mills to provide flexibility during budget discussions.

Council Member Glisson shared feedback from citizens and business owners who are frustrated with repeated fee increases. She acknowledged the potential need for a 5.3 millage rate, but suggested Mr. Kennedy having the department heads review the budget and find a 10% reduction in expenses.

Council Member Stutts showed support for negotiating to reduce the tax burden on business owners and plans to address budget priorities, including opposing department head raises and funding a new garbage truck motor. He stressed that the council's vote tonight is not final, with further discussions planned to reflect citizens' interests.

Vice Mayor Gaw advised he supports the 6.0. He advised the new council member present at the meeting and advised that implementing a more restrictive millage rate would be unfair to her, as she cannot participate in the discussion.

Mayor Johnson advised the focus for tonight is to approve the interim millage rate and set the two dates for the first and second public hearings.

**Motion to approve the 6.0 interim millage rate for the physical year of 25 – 26 and set September 3, 2025 as the first reading and the second reading on September 16, 2025 both of those are 6pm.**

Motion made by Council Member Stutts, Seconded by Council Member Glisson.

Voting Yea: Mayor Johnson, Vice Mayor Gaw, Council Member Glisson, Council Member Stutts

#### Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the City Council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA

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Daniel M. Johnson, Mayor

Attest:

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Erin West, City Clerk