



## **CITY OF STONECREST, GEORGIA**

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### **CITY COUNCIL MEETING – MINUTES**

**3120 Stonecrest Blvd., Stonecrest, GA 30038**

**Monday, September 25, 2023 at 6:00 PM**

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*Mayor Jazzmin Cobble*

*Council Member Tara Graves - District 1      Council Member Rob Turner - District 2*

*Council Member Alecia Washington - District 3      Mayor Pro Tem George Turner - District 4*

*Council Member Tammy Grimes - District 5*

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**Citizen Access:** [Stonecrest YouTube Live Channel](#)

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** George Turner, Mayor Pro-Tem

The meeting began at 6:07pm.

**II. ROLL CALL:** Sonya Isom, City Clerk

All members were present with Mayor Jazzmin Cobble arriving immediately after roll call.

**III. INVOCATION:** Rob Turner, District 2 Councilmember

**IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Alecia Washington, District 3 Councilmember

**V. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Mayor Pro Tem George Turner stated that an item that was voted on to be added to this agenda is not listed. Item RZ 23-003 4700 Browns Mill Road has been delayed due to the lengthy traffic study. This item will be on the October meeting Agenda.

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Rob Turner to approve the City Council Meeting agenda for September 25, 2023. Seconded by Councilmember Tara Graves.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**VI. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a.** Approval of Meeting Minutes - City Council Meeting July 24, 2023

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Rob Turner to approve the July 24, 2023, City Council meeting minutes. Seconded by Councilmember Tammy Grimes.  
**Motion passed unanimously.**

**b. Approval of Meeting Minutes - Special Called Meeting August 18, 2023**

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Tara Graves to approve the August 18, 2023, Special Called Meeting minutes. Seconded by Councilmember Alecia Washington.  
**Motion passed unanimously.**

**c. Approval of Meeting Minutes - City Council Meeting August 28, 2023**

Councilmember Tammy Grimes stated that she previously asked to defer this item to this meeting for the audio to be used to settle the dates in questions from the last meeting. Mayor Pro Tem answered that an email regarding this item was sent prior to the meeting.

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Rob Turner to approve the August 28, 2023, City Council Meeting minutes. Seconded by Councilmember Tara Graves.  
**Motion passed unanimously.**

## **VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*Citizens wishing to make a public comment may do so in person. Citizens may also submit public comments via email to [cityclerk@stonecrestga.gov](mailto:cityclerk@stonecrestga.gov) by 2 pm on the day of the meeting to be read by the City Clerk.*

*All members of the public wishing to address the City Council shall submit their name and the topic of their comments to the city clerk prior to the start of any meeting held by the City Council.*

*There is a two (2) minute time limit for each speaker submitting or reading a public comment. Individuals will be held to established time limits.*

Geraldine Champion –insulted that the Mayor is not present during the public comment section of the meeting. She has concerns about code enforcement for the city parks, asked the council if they could visit their districts at least once a month, and asked what has been done in the last five years to make Stonecrest a better city. Mrs. Champion stated the stickers on the city vehicles should be permanent decals. As the representative of the Neighborhood Association of 84, she asked what the city is doing with money.

Dele Lowman – Ms. Lowman stated that the original item she wanted to speak on was removed from the agenda. She commented on citizen engagement and the agendas being posted in a timely manner, to allow citizen time to review. Mrs. Lowman also commented on changing the amount of time given for public comments and is asking appointments for the Charter Commission are not made in the middle of election season, as some council seats are up for election and not guaranteed to be in those seats when the Charter Commission convenes.

Faye Coffield –stated citizens still do not know how the Board of Education will money awarded by city. She asked if the money awarded to Piedmont College includes tuition for City

of Stonecrest residents, and stated she has made a request asking how much money artist Chrisette Michelle was paid. Ms. Coffield lastly wanted to apologize to Councilmember Alecia Washington for supporting the Mayor and not Ms. Washington.

Read by the City Clerk from Piper Bunch – As a taxpaying citizen of South DeKalb, she is emailing on behalf of her community as they are currently fighting a concrete recycling plant that the council voted to have in the city. She stated that three years ago some of the council openly invited Metro Green and some turned a blind eye to what was about to invade the community. Three years later we are still fighting. We are demanding that City of Stonecrest Attorneys continue to fight Metro Green and do not issue a business license and deny the Certificate of Occupancy to Metro Green. It is Stonecrest's responsibility to protect us from Metro Green. Protect South DeKalb. We deserve to breathe clean air. We deserve to have a quiet residential area. We deserve protection.

## VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

*Citizens wishing to participate and comment during the public hearing portion of the meeting may comment in person. You may also submit your request including your full name, address, position on the agenda item you are commenting on (for or against) via email to cityclerk@stonecrestga.gov by 2 pm the day of the Public Hearing to be read into the record at the meeting. A zoom link for the meeting will be sent to you.*

*When it is your turn to speak, please state your name, address and relationship to the case. There is a ten (10) minute time limit for each item per side during all public hearings. Only the applicant may reserve time for rebuttal.*

### **a. Public Hearing - SLUP 22-016 1352 Regal Heights Drive - Ray White, Director of Planning & Zoning**

Presenter Matthew Williams, Deputy Director of Planning & Zoning stated the applicant, Stella Akolade, is seeking a SLUP to operate a personal care home. There was a review of future land use, current zoning, the aerial map and floor plan. The current zoning is R100, and the home is 2,478 sq feet. The applicant must obtain a SLUP and business license before operation. There are three bedrooms and two baths. Section 4.2.41 – Personal Care Homes & Child Caring Institutions, list regulations that the applicant must adhere to.

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Rob Turner to open public hearing for SLUP 22-016 1352 Regal Heights Drive. Seconded by Councilmember Tammy Grimes.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

In Favor:

Dyshell Swans

In Opposition

Piper Bunch

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Tammy Grimes to close public hearing for SLUP 22-016 1352 Regal Heights Drive. Seconded by Councilmember Rob Turner.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

The applicant confirmed she will be living in the home, that she is the owner of the home

and answered Councilmember Grimes' question, stating the home is in District 1. She also confirmed there will be two to three applicants, and she will live in the home also.

Mayor Pro Tem George Turner asked if this SLUP would allow up to six residents in some cases. Director White replied, stating the SLUP will allow up to six and this can be conditioned. Councilmember Tara Graves asked staff what the current conditions are. Director White stated we must comply with section 4.2.41 and remain in compliance with all building codes. Mayor Pro Tem asked the applicant if she will be providing 24-hour care. The applicant replied, yes.

After confirming with the applicant, Councilmember Grimes asked if we could state approval with condition of capping residents at three. Mayor Pro Tem stated yes.

- b. For Decision** - Ordinance for SLUP 22-016 1352 Regal Heights Drive - *Ray White, Director of Planning & Zoning*

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Tara Graves to approve SLUP 22-016 1352 Regal Heights Drive with the condition of a three-resident maximum. Seconded by Councilmember Tammy Grimes.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

The preamble was read by the City Clerk.

- c. Public Hearing** - SLUP 23-008 6419 Rockland Road - *Ray White, Director of Planning & Zoning*

Presenter Matthew Williams, Deputy Director of Planning & Zoning stated the applicant, Joe Burkholder, is seeking a SLUP to operate a short-term vacation rental. There was a review of the facts and background, future land use, zoning map, overlap district, aerial map and submitted floor plan. The home is 3,122 sq feet and the current zoning is R100, located in the Arabia Mountain Overlay District. Staff recommends approval with 4 conditions as stated in packet.

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Tara Graves to open public hearing for SLUP 23-008 6419 Rockland Road. Seconded by Councilmember Tammy Grimes.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

The applicant stated the most common complaints are parking and violating the noise ordinance. The home has been vacant for years and brough back to share with the community.

Comments in Favor

None

Comments in Opposition

None

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Rob Turner to close public hearing for SLUP 23-008 6419 Rockland Road. Seconded by Councilmember Tara Graves.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Councilmember Rob Turner asked the applicant if there will be any alterations to the property. The applicant replied, no.

Councilmember Grimes asked how many years the property had been vacant, what the property backs up to and if there would be designated property for guests. The applicant stated the property has been vacant for approximately 10 years and that the property backs up to the lake, which could go behind Arabia Mountain. The applicant also stated asphalt has been put down to accompany approximately 8 cars and that there is also a garage.

Councilmember Washington asked if it would be well lit and the applicant replied, yes. The solar lights are all the way down the driveway, which is wide enough to get through without hitting the lights, in addition to there being lights around the house.

Mayor Pro Tem asked for confirmation on the maximum number of days for short term rentals. The answer was thirty days, and the applicant can renew at the end of that term.

Mayor Cobble asked for confirmation on what the thirty days was for. The answer was that the thirty days was for the applicant and not the SLUP.

- d. **For Decision** - Ordinance for SLUP 23-008 6419 Rockland Road - *Ray White, Director of Planning & Zoning*

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Tammy Grimes to approve SLUP 23-008 6419 Rockland Road with approval conditions from Planning & Zoning. Seconded by Councilmember Rob Turner.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

The preamble was read by the City Clerk.

## IX. CONSENT AGENDA

## X. APPOINTMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Appointment to Planning Commission - *Jazzmin Cobble, Mayor*

Mayor Jazzmin Cobble stated there is a need for an appointment for the Planning Commission to represent District 1, replacing Stephanie Brown. She is nominating Erica Williams as the District 1 representative for the Planning Commission.

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Rob Turner to approve Mrs. Erica Williams for the appointment by the Mayor to the Planning Commission. Seconded by Councilmember Tara Graves.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- b. Appointment to Charter Commission - *George Turner, Mayor Pro-Tem*

Mayor Pro Tem George Turner stated he has not yet received all appointments for the Charter Commission and is asking to defer this item until the next meeting.

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Tammy Grimes to defer the appointments to the Charter Commission until the next City Council meeting. Seconded by Councilmember Rob Turner.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

## **XI. REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS**

## **XII. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. For Decision** - Ordinance for SLUP 23-003 6736 Joanne Lane - *Ray White, Director of Planning & Zoning*

Presenter Matthew Williams, Deputy Director of Planning & Zoning stated the applicant Tahniqua Williams of Qua-Sell, LLC is seeking a SLUP to operate a personal care home. The current zoning is R100 and located in the Arabia Mountain Conservation Overlay District. Staff recommends approval with conditions as listed in packet.

Councilmember Grimes asked for confirmation that the applicant will not have more than three residents. Ms. Williams replied that the State law allows no more than 3 residents through the community living arrangement and stressed it is not a personal care home. Councilmember Rob Turner wanted to confirm the applicant will be able to comply with all the conditions the Planning & Zoning Department has put into place with no problem. Ms. Williams replied yes, as she has completed everything that was required. Mayor Pro Tem asked for the distinction between a Community Living Home and a Personal Care Home. Director White explained that the state has requirements that are more restrictive, as they are confirming the arrangements are consistent with the locality and adheres with state requirements. The city is doing the same on the local level. Director White confirmed that the correct agenda item name is SLUP 23-003.

The preamble was read by the City Clerk.

Councilmember Grimes questioned if the language in the ordinance should be different for Community Living Homes. Attorney Denmark stated that the city can impose that requirement if they would like to address differently.

Mayor Cobble stated that the city code speaks to a personal care home not a community living arrangement which is the state definition and term. The City of Stonecrest code speaks to a Personal Care Home and the permit would be based on those conditions.

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Tammy Grimes to approve SLUP 23-003 6736 Joanne Lane with the five recommended conditions.

**Amended Motion** – made by Councilmember Tammy Grimes to approve SLUP 23-003 6736 Joanne Lane with the four recommended conditions and a fifth condition capping the number of clients at three. Seconded by Councilmember Rob Turner.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

## **XIII. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. For Decision** - MP 23-000002 6718 Varkel Lane - *Ray White, Director of Planning & Zoning*

Presenter Matthew Williams, Deputy Director of Planning & Zoning stated this is a lot combination for the properties at 6718, 6734, 6750, 6766, 6782, 6798 Varkel Lane and 2269 Randall Road. The applicant is seeking to combine seven lots into one property. DeKalb County has approved the combination lot and as part of the DeKalb County

regulation, the applicant must submit an as built survey, which is being presented to council as a gravel parking lot. The applicant applied before the moratorium was in place, so the applicant will not be subject to the new regulation. Staff is recommending approval.

Deputy Director Williams confirmed it is just one parking lot now, there is gravel on all of the lots and currently the parking lot has seven lots, separated into two with a detention pond in the middle. Mr. Williams also confirmed the applicant is wanting to combine the lots due to the development being on one lot now instead of seven lots previously. The truck gravel parking lot which is the only business that will be on the lot.

Applicant Lance Ravenscraft stated that he works for the owner of the parking lot and stated the lot is gravel, has fencing and two detention ponds. He also confirmed that the business name is Varkel Lane Truck Parking and that the business name on the business license is the business address on Varkel Lane, with no official name as it is currently vacant. Mr. Ravenscraft confirmed the lot will not be used for any other activity in the future.

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Tara Graves to defer the decision on MP 23-000002 6718 Varkel Lane to the next City Council meeting. Seconded by Councilmember Tammy Grimes.

Mayor Cobble asked for confirmation that the combination plat is basic, the owner owns more than one property and would like it to be one parcel with one address versus seven lots, and that all checklist items, as well as regulations, have been met. Director White replied yes and agreed that staff has satisfied everything needed on their end and there is nothing else staff must do to satisfy the requirements. Councilmember Graves stated the reason for the recommended deferral was to hear the unreadiness of the constituent that is present and has a question. City Attorney Alicia Thompson stated that the constituent comment should be heard during the public comments section of the meeting.

Councilmember Tara Graves restated the motion to defer the decision on MP 23-000002 6718 Varkel Lane to the next City Council meeting. Seconded by Councilmember Tammy Grimes.

**Motion passed 4-1 with Councilmember Rob Turner voting nay.**

**b. For Decision** - Approval of Music, Film, Entertainment Study - *Christian Green, Director of Economic Development*

Christian Green, Economic Development Director is requesting approval of the Stonecrest Film, Music and Digital Entertainment strategic plan. The plan findings and result of this plan were presented to council during the September 11, 2023, Work Session by consultant, Sound Diplomacy. The Film and Entertainment Commission met on September 21st and the results of the survey taken by Economic Development revealed that the Commission did agree with the findings of the plan. This request is to allow the Economic Development community to create and implement the strategic action plan which will be used to detail the strategic metrics and timelines to be used by the team.

Councilmember Rob Turner asked Director Green, if approved, will that end the Sound Diplomacy contract with the city. Mr. Green replied yes.

Mayor Pro Tem Turner confirmed with City Manager Scruggs that everything put in order with the budget. Ms. Scruggs stated that it was previously budgeted and with the council's approval the Economic Development team can put together a work plan based off the study.

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Rob Turner to approve the Music, Film, Entertainment Study. Seconded by Councilmember Tara Graves.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**c. For Decision** - Approval for Stonecrest Development Authority Funding - *Jazzmin Cobble, Mayor*

Presenter Mayor Jazzmin Cobble stated that this MOU is for the Development Authority to have access to the funds in the bank account labeled Development Authority. This would be used to set up a bank account with its own EIN and with its own identity. There would be a return of the funds no later than December 31, 2026.

Councilmember Alecia Washington stated that she did not agree with the terms of the MOU and would like a better understanding of the terms and requests a deferral. Mayor Cobble asked Councilmember Washington to identify the parts or section so that she could have more knowledge of it. Councilmember Washington stated she did not have it in front of her.

The preamble was read by the City Clerk.

Councilmember Tammy Grimes commented December 31, 2026 seems like a long time and Mayor Cobble stated the date can be changed as the development authority is looking to have it repaid as soon as possible. Councilmember Grimes asked if there is any benefit to having the term shortened. Attorney Thompson stated that would rest more on the activities of the Development Authority and she does not know the plan to get to that payment amount but believes shortening terms is good and will get the city its money faster. Mayor Cobble stated the development authority must complete projects and build economic development to generate revenue and without the bank account that cannot happen. As the development authority finalizes development projects the development authority will generate revenue from that and will repay the city. Mayor Pro Tem stated he supports any activities needed to get this jump started and, on the road, again. Director Green believes in three tenants: Strong BRE Business Retention Expansion. Strong Business Attraction and Marketing and Communications. He is currently working on building out the business attraction component based off the five market sectors that the city is focusing on. The implementation and use of this component is very crucial to accomplishing the goal and will meet the timeline to getting the funds back to the city.

Councilmember Tammy Grimes stated that she would like to see the term being December 31, 2025, instead of December 31, 2026.

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Tammy Grimes to approve the Stonecrest Development Authority funding with the proposed adjustment term of December 31, 2025. Seconded by Councilmember Rob Turner.

**Motion passed 4-1 with Councilmember Alecia Washington voting nay.**



#### **XIV. CITY ATTORNEY COMMENTS**

Attorney Denmark thanked Councilmembers Washington and Grimes for attending the rebranding of their firm to Denmark Ashby, that was held September 21, 2023.

#### **XV. CITY MANAGER UPDATE**

City Manager Gia Scruggs mentioned the proposed FY24 Budget will be discussed at the work session on October 9, 2023. Encouraging public to come out.

#### **XVI. MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Mayor Cobble wanted to thank everyone who helped put Screen on the Green together and those who weathered the storm, including staff and constituents.

District 1 Councilmember Tara Graves wanted to thank everyone that came out to volunteer for the district 1 clean-up event.

District 2 Councilmember Rob Turner stated that Stonecrest Film and Entertainment Commission will have a hair and makeup all call on Sunday October 1, 2023, from 2pm-4pm at Our Studios, located at 5311 Dividend Drive, Stonecrest, GA. This is a wonderful event that includes special effects make up.

District 3 Councilmember Alecia Washington wanted to thank all constituents and volunteers that came out for the clean-up event with she and Councilmember Graves. that showed up and helped. Congratulations to Denmark Ashby on their rebranding.

District 5 Councilmember Tammy Grimes acknowledged that the cancer event was wonderful, and she is looking forward to having the event in Stonecrest each year. Thanks to Denmark Ashby for the invite to the rebranding event. She is proud of them for being the largest minority firm in local government.

District 4 Mayor Pro Tem George Turner stated the Browns Mill Recreation Center is for all ages. There was a Town Hall meeting there on Thursday and the number of adults as well as young adults participating was incredible. There is a lot going on in the city. Visit the city's website to find out what is going on in Stonecrest. Check the city calendar for meetings and activities.

Mayor Cobble added there are several events scheduled at Browns Mill Rec Center, including The Garden Club, that meets every 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday at 10am, The Citizens Academy starts October 5<sup>th</sup>, and The Bike Ped and Trail Community Open House will be held on October 11<sup>th</sup> from 6pm - 7:30pm for feedback on bike ped and trail plan.

#### **XVII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

*(When an executive session is required, one will be called for the following issues: 1) Personnel, 2) Litigation, 3) Real Estate)*

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Rob Turner to go into Executive Session for litigation and personnel. Seconded by Councilmember Tara Graves.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Tammy Grimes to exit Executive Session and return to the regular scheduled council meeting. Seconded by Councilmember Rob Turner.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Rob Turner to approve the minutes from the Executive Session. Seconded by Councilmember Tammy Grimes.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

## **XVIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion** – made by Councilmember Rob Turner to adjourn the City Council meeting. Seconded by Councilmember Tammy Grimes.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48pm.

### *Americans with Disabilities Act*

*The City of Stonecrest does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its programs, services, activities and employment practices.*

*If you need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication (such as a sign language interpreter, an assistive listening device or print material in digital format) or reasonable modification to programs, services or activities contact the ADA Coordinator, Sonya Isom, as soon as possible, preferably 2 days before the activity or event.*