



Mayor and City Council Work Session Minutes

Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 6:30 PM

City Hall, 875 Main Street, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Minutes

1 **Mayor and Council: Jelani Linder – Mayor | Post 3: Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Smith | Post 1: Council**
2 **Member Anita Bass | Post 2: Council Member Mark Marianos | Post 4: Council Member Kay Nunez**
3 **Post 5: Council Member Hub Jordan | Post 6: Council Member Elaine Vaughn**

4
5 **Staff: Maggie Dimov – City Manager/Economic Development Director/DDA | Angela Couch - City**
6 **Attorney | City Clerk – Shavala Ames**

7
8 Mission Statement: The City of Stone Mountain serves our residents, businesses, and visitors by
9 providing an enhanced quality of life and a unique sense of place, guided by trust and integrity.

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11 **Public Hearing was called to order at 6:30 p.m.**

12 **Determination of Quorum**

13
14 PRESENT: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro
15 Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine
16 Vaughn

17
18 PRESENT VIA PHONE: Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan

19 **I. Public Hearings**

20 **1. Public Hearing #3 on Millage Rate**

21
22 City Manager, Maggie Dimov, provided a general overview of the Millage Rate Scenarios.

23
24 *Mayor Linder opened the public hearing.*

25 **Public Hearing comments**

26
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28 **Public Comment 1: Eileen Smith** – Expressed that the Millage Rate was planned back in October when
29 the current budget was created. Gave an overview of past tax receipts. Expressed the reasoning why the
30 City is facing a Millage Rate increase. Feels that no effort has been made to revise the budget or prevent
31 the increase. Hopes City Council Members vote to do the right thing.

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35 **Public Comment 2: Denise Phillips** – Expressed that the governing body is being asked to make a big
36 decision and feels that City Council Members haven't been provided the information to make that
37 decision. Feels that the previous financials are not adding up. Inquired how citizens are to believe and
38 accept the increase if they cannot receive valid financials. Hopes City Council Members consider the
39 hard time people are having, the information they've been given and haven't been given and why the City
40 was overbudget last year.

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42
43 **Public Comment 3: Gina Cox** – Congratulated the New York Knicks on their championship win and
44 highlighted Jalen Brunson for being a standup player and detailed the sacrifice he made to help his team.

45 Expressed that everyone has a part to play. Feels that if the Millage Rate is increased, staff should
46 consider where and how their salaries should be adjusted. Urged the governing body to advise the
47 citizens regarding any information they're missing in reference to their budget suggestions.
48

49 **Public Comment 4: Linda Jackson** – Expressed her understanding regarding the need to raise the
50 Millage Rate due to decreasing revenue and housing values. Expressed the strain that property tax
51 increases cause.
52

53 **Public Comment 5: Beverly Howard Patterson** – Inquired how the City will make the money with the
54 proposed Millage Rate Increase, if none was made with the previous Millage Rate. Expressed that the
55 City went overbudget and feels that the citizens aren't being provided good financial reports. Expressed
56 that there is a serious problem within the City and that everyone's taxes are increasing. Feels that elders
57 and younger people need to be considered and expressed that the money and power need to be fixed.
58 Expressed feelings of wanting to move out of the City due to the unaffordability. Urged the governing
59 body to do better with the budget and to devise a new plan.
60

61
62 **II. Adjournment** – 6:48 P.M.
63

64 **ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:48 P.M.**

65 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Anita
66 Bass
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68 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor
69 Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub
70 Jordan, and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn
71

72 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**
73

74 **III. Call to Order**

75 Mayor Linder called the meeting to order at 6:48 P.M.
76

77 **IV. Determination of Quorum**

78 **PRESENT:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro
79 Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine
80 Vaughn
81

82 **PRESENT VIA PHONE:** Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan
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84 **V. Invocation and Pledge**

85 Mayor Linder led a 30-second moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance
86

87 **VI. Citizen Comments – Including comments from public/stakeholders**
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89 **Citizen Comment 1: Beverly Patterson** – Expressed the need for a better financial report and that
90 the citizens must know what's going on in the City. Feels that although comments are being
91 expressed, nothing is being done. Inquired what City Staff are doing behind the scenes. Mentioned
92 how the two million dollars from SPLOST funds haven't been seen in any reports and inquired when
93 the 2025 audit report is due.
94

95 **Citizen Comment 2: Ginger Criswell** – Expressed how JBR is a major entry way to the biggest
96 tourist attraction in Georgia. Suggested possibilities to receive funding assistance from senators to
97 redo the entire JBR intersection. Described the visibility of drug dealing, prostitution and random
98 carts that can be seen from Memorial Drive. Feels unsafe to go to the BP gas station. Urged the
99 governing body to go see it for themselves and advised the Council Members to work with Dekalb
100 County to annex the street to take control of it.
101

102 VII. **Review of the Journal (City Clerk)**
103

- 104 1. Consideration of an action on a request to approve May 28, 2026, Meeting Minutes, requested by
105 City Clerk Shavala Ames Goal - Governance
106

107 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE MAY 28, 2026, MEETING MINUTES**

108 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2, Mark
109 Marianos
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111 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos,
112 Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post
113 5 Hub Jordan, and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn
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115 **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**
116

- 117 2. Consideration of an action on a request to approve June 2, 2026, Meeting Minutes, requested by City
118 Clerk Shavala Ames Goal – Governance
119

120 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE JUNE 2, 2026, MEETING MINUTES**

121 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 4 Kay
122 Nunez
123

124 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos,
125 Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post
126 5 Hub Jordan, and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn
127

128 **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**
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- 130 3. Consideration of an action on a request to approve June 4, 2026, Meeting Minutes, requested by City
131 Clerk Shavala Ames Goal – Governance
132

133 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE JUNE 4, 2026, MEETING MINUTES**

134 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2, Mark
135 Marianos
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137 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos,
138 Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan, and Council Member:
139 Post 6 Elaine Vaughn
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141 **Abstained:** Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez
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143 **MOTION CARRIED**
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- 145 4. Consideration of an action on a request to approve June 8, 2026, Meeting Minutes, requested by City
146 Clerk Shavala Ames Goal – Governance
147

148 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE JUNE 8, 2026 MEETING MINUTES**

149 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 4 Kay
150 Nunez
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152 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council
153 Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan, and Council Member: Post 6
154 Elaine Vaughn
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156 **Abstained:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass

157

158 **MOTION CARRIED**

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160 VIII. **Reading of Communications – None**

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162 IX. **Adoption of The Agenda of The Day**

163

164 **ACTION: MOTION TO ADPOT THE AGENDA OF THE DAY TO ADD THE EMERGENCY**
165 **REPAIR OF THE HVAC SYSTEM AT THE DEPOT UNDER NEW BUSINESS ITEM #1**

166 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Mark
167 Marianos

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169 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council
170 Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan, Council Member: Post 6 Elaine
171 Vaughn

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173 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**

174

175 X. **Committee Reports**

176

177 1. Stone Mountain Community Garden – Columbus Brown gave an overview as outlined in the agenda
178 packet.

179

180 City Council Members applauded Columbus Brown for conducting a great brunch event and thanked him
181 for his continuous hard work.

182

183 2. Planning Commission – Report Submitted as Written (No Verbal Updates)

184

185 3. Historic Preservation Commission - Report Submitted as Written (No Verbal Updates)

186

187 XI. **Staff Reports**

188

189 1. Public Safety - Police Chief James Westerfield – reviewed report as outlined in the meeting packet.

190

191 City Council Member Bass thanked the Public Safety department for all that they do. Council Member
192 Nunez inquired about JBR mentioned by Ms. Criswell and Chief Westerfield advised that it is outside of
193 the City's jurisdiction. Council Member Jordan stated that the street is 10 feet outside of the City and
194 therefore is very close.

195

196 XII. **City Manager's Report**

197

198 1. Operations Report – City Manager Maggie Dimov – reviewed report as outlined in the meeting packet.

199

200 The governing body inquired regarding the Hearthstone drain, SeeClickFix, the JBR sinkhole and
201 requested a grant update in the next report.

202

203 2. April 2026 Financials Presentation – Michelle Uran, Finance Consultant – reviewed report as outlined
204 in the meeting packet.

205

206 City Council members requested reports and a brief update of the audit. Inquired what other items
207 department heads are identifying and what the best practices are for other cities regarding budget
208 reporting. Suggestions were made to offer a public finance education class and to evaluate the reduction

209 of certain public events and agreements as a potential cost-saving measure. Applauded Michelle Uran
210 for doing a great job.

211
212 **XIII. Council Policy Discussion Topics - None**

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214 **XII. Unfinished Business – None**

215
216 **XIV. New Business**

- 217
218 1. Consideration of an action on a request to approve Emergency Repair of HVAC System at Historic
219 Stone Mountain Depot to utilize GEFA Funding

220
221 Public Works Director, Mike Helton, provided an overview regarding the need to prepare the Depot
222 for the Museum.

223
224 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE EMERGENCY REPAIR OF HVAC SYSTEM AT THE**
225 **HISTORIC STONE MOUNTAIN DEPOT TO UTILIZE GEFA FUNDING**

226 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Anita
227 Bass

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229 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor
230 Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub
231 Jordan, Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

232
233 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**

234
235 **XV. New Ordinances and Resolutions**

- 236
237 1. Ordinance 2026-11 - 5406 E. Mountain Street – Sign Variance

238
239 **ACTION: MOTION TO DENY ORDINANCE 2026-11 – 5406 E. MOUNTAIN STREET – SIGN**
240 **VARIANCE**

241 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Mark
242 Marianos

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244 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro
245 Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan,
246 Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

247
248 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**

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250 2. Ordinance 2026-12 – Purchasing

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252 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 2026-12 - PURCHASING**
253 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Mark
254 Marianos

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256 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos,
257 Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post
258 5 Hub Jordan, Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

259
260 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**

261

262 3. Ordinance 2026-13 Millage Rate Adoption

263

264 Finance Consultant Michelle Uran presented an overview of the recommended millage rate of
265 16.75 mills, explaining that the recommendation was intended to balance the concerns expressed
266 by the Mayor and Council, the public's desire to minimize the tax impact on residents, and the
267 City's responsibility to maintain essential services and operations.

268

269 The governing body engaged in a discussion regarding the proposed millage rate, acknowledging
270 the importance of supporting City staff, maintaining services, and meeting the needs of the
271 community. Members recognized that setting the millage rate is a difficult decision each year, as
272 it impacts both the City's financial stability and its taxpayers. There was consensus that the City
273 should continue pursuing long-term strategies to strengthen the tax digest through economic
274 development, business growth, and potential annexation opportunities to reduce reliance on
275 property taxes.

276

277 Members noted that adjustments to the previous year's budget required the use of available funds
278 and discussed the possibility of utilizing reserve funds to balance the budget. Concerns were
279 expressed regarding the long-term sustainability of relying on reserves. Council agreed that
280 delaying necessary financial decisions would not be in the City's best interest and emphasized
281 the importance of fostering business development to improve the City's long-term financial
282 outlook. Members also recognized that budget decisions affect every department and noted the
283 value of maintaining municipal services, including the City's Police Department. Council
284 acknowledged the positive progress made throughout the City and expressed a desire to maintain
285 that momentum.

286

287 Some members expressed concern that residents have experienced increased tax burdens in
288 recent years and suggested that additional operating expenses should continue to be evaluated
289 for potential reductions. A recommendation was made to consider a millage rate of 16.25 mills.
290 Appreciation was expressed to City staff for their continued dedication and willingness to serve
291 the community despite ongoing financial challenges, noting that many departments had already
292 implemented cost-saving measures where feasible.

293

294 Council also discussed public concerns regarding property values and taxation, noting that while
295 some residents have experienced changes in property values, the City has continued to provide
296 essential services. Members commended residents for their engagement throughout the budget
297 process, expressed appreciation for staff who continue to fulfill multiple responsibilities, and
298 recognized Council's efforts to reach a balanced solution. It was emphasized that the long-term
299 goal remains to diversify the City's revenue streams in order to reduce future reliance on property
300 taxes and create opportunities to lower the millage rate over time.

301

302 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE MILLAGE RATE ADOPTION AT 16.75%**

303 Motion made by Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1
304 Anita Bass

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306 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Council
307 Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

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309 **Voting No:** Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan

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311 **MOTION CARRIED**

312

313 4. Resolution 2026-11– City Banking Account for Confiscated Funds

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315 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE 2026-11 – CITY BANKING ACCOUNT FOR**
316 **CONFISCATED FUNDS**
317 Motion made by Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Mark
318 Marianos

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320 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor
321 Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub
322 Jordan, Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

323
324 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**
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326 **XVI. Remarks of Privilege**

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328 Council Member Nunez highlighted the Stone Mountain Day Fish Fry on June 19th.
329

330 **XVII. Announcements by The Mayor**

331
332 Mayor Linder highlighted the City’s upcoming Juneteenth and Tunes by the Tracks events and advised
333 Council and the public that it is okay to disagree.
334

335 **XVIII. Executive Session to Discuss Personnel, Legal, Cyber Security and/or Real Estate (if**
336 **needed)**
337

338 **ACTION: MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:37 P.M. TO DISCUSS REAL**
339 **ESTATE AND LITIGATION**

340 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Mark
341 Marianos
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343 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor
344 Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub
345 Jordan, and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn
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347 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**
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349 **ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION AND RECONVENE THE CITY**
350 **COUNCIL MEETING AT 9:07P.M. - (2) ITEMS DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION**

351 Motion made Mayor Pro Tem: Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez
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353 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor
354 Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub
355 Jordan, and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn
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357 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**
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359 **XIX. Adjournment**

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361 **ACTION: MOTION TO RESUME MEETING AT 9:08 P.M.**

362 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Anita
363 Bass
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365 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor
366 Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub
367 Jordan, and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn
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MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING AT 9:08 P.M.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan, and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

Jelani Linder, Mayor

City Clerk, Shavala Ames