



Mayor and City Council Work Session

Tuesday, October 21, 2025 at 6:30 PM

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

Minutes

Mayor and Council: Dr. Beverly Jones – Mayor | Post 3: Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Smith
Post 1: Council Member Anita Bass | Post 2: Council Member Mark Marianos
Post 4: Council Member Gil Freeman | Post 5: Council Member Shawnette Bryant
Post 6: Council Member Teresa Crowe

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

Public Hearing was called to order at 6:33 p.m.

PRESENT: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe, Mayor Beverly Jones

ABSENT: Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman

I. Public Hearing

1. Public Hearing on overview of the Proposed Budget

Interim City Manager Maggie Dimov provided a general overview of the Proposed Budget as outlined in the provided city council packet.

Council Member Freeman arrived at 6:54 p.m.

Public Hearing comments

Public Comment 1: Theresa Thomas – Asked about the status of the 2024 audit and the budget amendment, expressing concern that City Council is using 2025 funds to pay outstanding 2024 balances; changes to the budget format from last year to this year have made it more difficult to follow.

Mayor Pro Tem Smith requested that Council Member Freeman not record residents during public comment.

Resident Ms. Thomas came back forward to give comments about open record requests and recordings.

Public Comment 2: Denise Phillips – Discussed the posted budget and DDA fund balance, urging the City to focus on creativity rather than adding personnel; the City's website needs updating; finance packet is from 2011; the DDA is not receiving financial reports regularly.

Public Comment 3: Eileen Smith – Stated that SPLOST funds are not free and suggested scaling back on events, noting \$118,000 spent on parties and events; discussed \$60,000 salary for the City Planner; - not enough workload; Recreation Coordinator – no city residents are participating, event coordinator can assist.

Public Comment 4: Beverly Patterson – Expressed concern about SPLOST funds and whether they have already been spent.; need to separate SPLOST II account; does not believe it is necessary to have a Public Works Director.

Public Comment 5: Carl Wright – Expressed appreciation for the DDA and suggested that the City consider lowering property taxes for residents.

Public Comment 6: Clint Monroe – Urged residents to be mindful when vetting committee members and encouraged commissions to be more active. They also suggested ensuring veterans are included in the November 11 Veterans Day commemoration event.

II. Adjournment – 7:16 P.M.

ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:16 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 5 Shawnette Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

III. Call to Order

Mayor Jones called the meeting to order at 7:16 P.M

IV. Determination of Quorum

PRESENT: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe, Mayor Beverly Jones

V. Invocation and Pledge

Mayor Jones led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the invocation

VI. Citizen Comments – Including comments from public/stakeholders

Citizen Comment 1: Eileen Smith – Expressed concern regarding the decision to move the Executive Session to the beginning of the meeting, noting that the audience is required to wait for the session to conclude; suggested having a Special Called meeting for Executive Sessions to take place.

Citizen Comment 2: Sara Abrams – Expressed gratitude to the City for the renovations made to the Caboose; lives next to VFW Park and encourages the City to be intentional with the budgeting process for upcoming park renovations; requested that residents living near the park be included in decisions regarding the community garden.

Citizen Comment 3: Ms. Thomas – Asked the Chief of Police to investigate incidents of vandalism and removal of candidate signs; addressed the paving project on West Rockborough Road, noting that work was halted when A&S Contractors left to fulfill another contract before completing the project; JRB sinkholes look dangerous; need a timeline to finish Ridge Forest streets.

Citizen Comment 4: Clint Monroe – Expressed gratitude for being able to attend the meeting after narrowly avoiding a head-on collision with a wrong-way driver; noted that previous city managers focused only on above-ground infrastructure, which he believes

poses safety hazards; recommended installing a catch basin in the parking lot under renovation to prevent water runoff into nearby homes and suggested using permeable paving as an alternative solution.

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

1. Consideration of an action on a request to approve October 07, 2025 Meeting Minutes

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE OCTOBER 7, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

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

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

MOTION PASSED

VIII. **Reading of Communications – None**

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

ACTION: MOTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA WITH THE CHANGES TO MOVE EXECUTIVE SESSION TO THE NEXT AGENDA ITEM BEFORE COMMITTEE REPORTS, ADD ONE NEW BUSINESS ITEM: CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST TO APPROVE JOHNSON AND FREEMAN, LLP FOR GOVERNMENT LITIGATION REPRESENTATION; AND INCLUDE A DISCUSSION OVERVIEWING THE BUDGET AFTER THE CITY MANAGERS REPORT

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 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

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

ACTION: MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 7:32 P.M. TO DISCUSS LITIGATION AND PERSONNEL.

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

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 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant and Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION AND RECONVENE THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING AT 8:28 PM

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

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 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

XI. Committee Discussion items

1. Stone Mountain Community Garden

Juliana Taylor gave details and updates on SMCG as outlined in the report provided.

2. Planning Commission – No updates

3. Historic Preservation Commission

Tamaya Huff provided updates as outlined in the submitted report and referenced a request for a possible name change to Mackie Street, which will be presented on November 18th.

XII. Staff Reports

1. Public Safety – Reports/Updates given by Police Chief James Westerfield

Chief James Westerfield presented an overview of recent activity and crime statistics, as outlined in the agenda packet. He addressed the Pepperwood incident, assuring the council that the Police Department is actively investigating. Council members raised questions regarding tennis shoes hanging on wires outside the City. Chief James Westerfield reported that DeKalb County had been notified, as the location is within their jurisdiction. He also addressed concerns about vandalism and theft of campaign signs, stating that officers are taking proactive measures to prevent further incidents during the campaign period.

XIII. City Manager's Report - Budget Discussion

1. Council discussed the proposed budget and raised questions about receiving tax revenues at the end of the year. Members suggested adjusting the City's fiscal year to align with DeKalb County's cycle, which runs from July 1 through June 30, to receive tax revenues earlier and reduce reliance on reserves. The Interim City Manager supported exploring the idea but noted that additional information is needed.

Council also discussed reducing City-sponsored events to two: Juneteenth and the Back-to-School Bash. The Mayor proposed transferring funds from the canceled 2025 Caribbean Festival to 2026, but the Interim City Manager clarified that the funds would return to the General Fund, and the 2026 budget for city events will remain.

Discussion regarding funding for the Rockborough Back-to-School event and Stone Mountain Day was tabled for a future meeting.

XIV. Council Policy Discussion Topics – None

XV. Unfinished Business

1. Consideration of an action on a request to have the City Attorney prepare a written legal opinion addressing conflict of interest regarding a candidate for City Council on the Ethics Board

Council Member Freeman moved to postpone consideration of a request for the City Attorney to prepare a written legal opinion addressing potential conflicts of interest and irregularities regarding a candidate for the City Council serving on the Ethics Board until the next Council Meeting

ACTION: MOTION TO POSTPONE A REQUEST TO HAVE THE CITY ATTORNEY PREPARE A WRITTEN LEGAL OPINION ADDRESSING THE CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGARDING A CANDIDATE FOR A CITY COUNCIL ON THE ETHICS BOARD

Motion made by Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman, Seconded by Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman, Seconded by Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

MOTION FAILED

ACTION: MOTION TO DENY A REQUEST TO HAVE THE CITY ATTORNEY PREPARE A WRITTEN LEGAL OPINION ADDRESSING THE CONFLICT OF INTEREST REGARDING A CANDIDATE FOR A CITY COUNCIL ON THE ETHICS BOARD

Motion made by Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe, 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 6 Teresa Crowe

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman, Seconded by Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

MOTION PASSED

2. Discussion: Bi-weekly financial action and discussion preparation for the 2026 budget, requested by Council Member Gil Freeman

Council Member Freeman withdrew the item from the agenda.

XVI. New Business

1. Consideration of an action on a request to authorize the City Attorney to execute an engagement letter with Johnson and Freeman, LLP for Government Litigation Representation

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE A REQUEST TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY ATTORNEY TO EXECUTE AN ENGAGEMENT LETTER WITH JOHNSON AND FREEMAN, LLP FOR GOVERNMENT LITIGATION REPRESENTATION

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

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

MOTION PASSED

2. Consideration of an action on a request to approve Engineering Services for VFW Park Project, requested by Interim City Manager Maggie Dimov

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE A REQUEST TO APPROVE ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR VFW PARK PROJECT

Motion made by Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Seconded by Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

Voting Nay: Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

MOTION PASSED

3. Consideration of an action on a request to approve a new mural location and proposed artwork at Medlock Park

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE A NEW MURAL LOCATION AND PROPOSED ARTWORK AT MEDLOCK PARK

Motion made by Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, 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 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

4. Consideration of an action on a request to approve a proposal from Thomson Reuters for their CLEAR Proflex information service. This would replace the current services provided by LexisNexis (Accurint) and ERAD Group, Inc

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE A REQUEST TO APPROVE A PROPOSAL FROM THOMSON REUTERS FOR THEIR CLEAR PROFLEX INFORMATION SERVICE.

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

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 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

5. Consideration of an action on a request to approve a proposal from Verizon Connect for vehicle location services (GPS). This would replace the current services provided by GeoTab

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE A PROPOSAL FROM VERIZON CONNECT FOR VEHICLE LOCATION SERVICES (GPS).

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

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 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

6. Consideration of an action on a request to approve the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) Local Government Survey and Planning Grant and Resolution 2025-28 to accept the HPF Grant

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE A REQUEST TO APPROVE THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA) FOR THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND (HPF) LOCAL GOVERNMENT SURVEY AND PLANNING GRANT AND RESOLUTION 2025-28 TO ACCEPT THE HPF GRANT

Motion made by Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith

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 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

XVII. New Ordinances and Resolutions

1. Ordinance 2025-07 – 1008B Main Street – Special Use Permit (FIRST READ)

No Action Taken

2. Ordinance 2025-08 - 6804 James B. Rivers Memorial Drive - Special Use Permit (FIRST READ)

No Action Taken

3. Ordinance First Read 798 Third Street - Special Use Permit (FIRST READ)

No Action Taken

XVIII. Remarks of Privilege

- 1.** Council Member Freeman announced the upcoming Kaboom event, scheduled to begin this Saturday, and advised volunteers to bring ponchos in case there are not enough provided by the city.

XIX. Announcements by the Mayor – None

XX. ADJOURNMENT

ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING 10:00 P.M.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

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 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

Dr. Beverly Jones, Mayor

Shavala Ames, City Clerk