



Mayor and City Council Work Session
Tuesday, August 19, 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

I. Call to Order

Mayor Jones called the meeting to order at 6:33 P.M.

II. 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 (absent at the beginning of the meeting, later arrived at the beginning of Executive Session), Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe, Mayor Beverly Jones

III. Invocation and Pledge

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

IV. Citizen Comments – Including comments from public/stakeholders

Citizen Comment 1: Dave Thomas – discussed disappointment in the investigation – removable does not seem justifiable, maybe consider a censure instead; Mayor should own up and make a public apology; mentioned an ethics claim.

Citizen Comment 2: Carl Wright – investigation shed a light on the Mayor – many inconsistencies and many different statements.

Citizen Comment 3: Joyce Thomas – rise up, it is time to use your outside voice; with the circumstances surrounding the Mayor's banking improprieties, it is time to speak up; Mayor's comment said it was not her intention to defraud and she was looking out for the safety of the city's accounts; even if it was a mistake, the Mayor offered no apology; there are claims of a hunt against; the Mayor's intention is not an excuse; when the bank made contact, did the Mayor contact City Attorney or other council; if old names were on the account for years, why was it all of a sudden an emergency; the Mayor's role requires her to be better; many unanswered questions and glossed over comments.

Citizen Comment 4: Mark Keaton – discussed restrooms next to city hall with a few people, over the last 9 months – talked with previous City Manager and Police Chief, the bushes create a hiding spot – people hanging out all times of night; lack of maintenance; restrooms need to be closed at dusk as noticed.

Citizen Comment 5: Cheryl Dudley – so called investigation – a real investigation is not done by an attorney with no government experience; more so a case of public opinion in a news magazine before a person has due process; there was no malfeasance or malpractice done; someone needs to investigate the City – money is missing, \$800,000 on bathrooms for work that was not done; need to investigate the council members as a whole; the investigation is on time with the elections.

Citizen Comment 6: Joan Monroe – who chose to run the political witch hunt; four to two to takeover and supply the media with lies; four to two means no truth or representation of the citizens - fear or wish to overthrow; a cover up of misappropriated funds; where is the \$800,000; ARPA funds are gone; finance person testified money was mishandled – that's crime; cavalier attitude towards money, safety, and quality of life; write and pass unconstitutional rules for political gain; a statement by county officials for an emergency situation was ignored; there are no crime reports; Interim City Manager spends money for jobs the City Manager is supposed to be doing; hired an advisor who had an illegal real estate deal; investigator appears to be a real estate attorney; good old boy advisor spent time in prison; fraud and lies in the same ball park; where is our money; there was no forensic audit; lie about decent people; felons should not be advisors in the city; diversion for greedy influencers; want real estate developers, crooks, and felons to run.

Citizen Comment 7: Ms. Thomas – pledge of allegiance equal justice for all - no; he without sin cast the first stone John 8:7; discussed the story of a woman who died by jumping in the river to save her child; council is supposed to protect residents; the mayor protects as a City; bank accounts – nobody said a word for nine months; Mayor put the City first; City Council Bass, Smith, Crowe voted the City Manager as interim and final – did he ever say anything; incompetence of previous City Manager Edmondson; who is responsible for keys and bank when employees leave; why four council members keep rewriting the laws; who swore the statements of the investigator; was told by City Management to have a sworn oath for an ethics complaint through email; citizens paid an auditor to do investigation with no sworn oaths; citizens got a copy of the investigation from the media; Mayor Pro Tem influenced the outcome of the investigation.

Citizen Comment 8: Sherrica Freeman – mentioned of being a local activist; came today for truth telling; because this is a shadow council, this is a sundown town; the members of this community have had an infiltrated city council; unelected members making lots of opinions – shaping opinions; real estate investors that have something to gain – conflicts of interest; there has been a minority of racists running Stone Mountain for a long time – time is up; sat for 20 years with a Mayor who did nothing; she was a white woman and everyone was satisfied – nobody complained; the moment Dr. Beverly Jones was elected, it is a problem; police was flying down the street for voter suppression; this has been a witch hunt; what the council wants to happen is that the whole council is white; people are upset that a black woman is the Mayor of Stone Mountain; this is a kangaroo court – somebody investigating that knows nothing about what to do; what are the credentials of the investigator; city charter needs to be fixed; just make it up as you go; going to end up with serious problems; looks like a circus; white supremacy is over; mostly are politically motivated; real estate deals are going to fail.

Citizen Comment 9: Vanessa Walls – was not going to speak but it is saddening as a city – there is so much division taking place; with this investigation, the Mayor violated the city charter; moments like this can create division in the community - with division no one is a winner; it is not about tearing anyone down; when the charter is violated, trust is broken; without trust we cannot move forward together; we can confront the truth with accountability; the community deserves leaders who follow the rules; need to start the healing process; talked about in cities all over; put personalities and differences aside and do what is best for the city.

Citizen Comment 10: C Monroe – incomplete report delivered by so called investigation proves and confirms nothing – rushed judgement; the four who voted for the investigation have something to gain to remove the elected Mayor; wait until November to let the people decide the Mayor; auditor stated no fraud detected – worse there are not looking fraud; fraud investigation has been ignored by the phony four elected to council; witch hunt is designed to smear the Mayor – that brings us all down to the same low bar; confirmation bias is what some people are suffering from

on council; wasting money on a smear campaign against the Mayor; if we don't start healing and come to an agreement, the city will be in the paper for years; you got to prove a case and this case is not provable - no cause of action; city's restrooms are still not open – they are locked.

Citizen Comment 11: Reverend Orea Parker – enough is enough – what are we to gain; why is money being spent pursuing the issue with the Mayor; should be focused on more pressing matters such as infrastructure and water issues; should focus on the contracts and the restrooms; yet talks are happening for money that was not taken; where is transparency; what about having an audit to investigate everything; hate does not profit; someone has more power than you do, reap what you sow; time for the citizens to speak up; leaders have self-interest; develop is great and needs to be properly done.

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

1. Consideration of an action on a request to approve August 5, 2025 Meeting Minutes, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE AUGUST 5, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

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 6 Teresa Crowe

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

VI. **Reading of Communications**

VII. **Adoption of The Agenda of The Day**

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA OF THE DAY

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)

VIII. **Committee Discussion Items**

1. Stone Mountain Community Garden

Columbus Brown gave details and updates on SMCG as outlined in the report provided. Mayor Jones inquired about food banks.

2. Planning Commission – No updates

2. Historic Preservation Commission

Theresa Hamby – overview given on current cases. Mentioned Planning Manager Tamaya Huff has been helping out tremendously.

3. Parks and Recreation Committee – No updates

IX. **Staff Reports**

162
163 1. Public Safety- Police Chief- James Westerfield Jr.
164

165 Police Chief Westerfield led a moment of silence in honor of fallen Officer David Rose and Detective
166 Larry. Following the tribute, Chief Westerfield presented an overview of recent activity and crime
167 statistics, as outlined in the agenda packet. During the report, Council Member Bryant inquired about
168 active shooter preparedness, to which Chief Westerfield provided a brief overview of escape plans and
169 active shooter protocols.
170

171 X. **City Manager's Report**
172

173 1. Interim City Manager – Maggie Dimov
174

175 Interim City Manager Maggie Dimov reviewed the Operations Report as outlined highlighting key
176 accomplishments and updates.
177

178 Members of the governing body raised questions regarding the \$800,000 spent on restrooms, the
179 paving of a cul-de-sac as part of the current paving project, parking at the Methodist Church, lighting on
180 Main Street, and the contracts and invoices related to the restroom project. Interim City Manager Dimov
181 provided feedback.
182

183 2. Investigation Update – Banking Allegations Against Mayor Jones – City Attorney Angela Couch
184

185 City Attorney Couch reported that the investigation findings had been provided, outlining the current
186 status of the matter.
187

188 Members of the governing body engaged in a robust discussion, expressing concern and
189 disappointment with the investigation. Consideration was also given to why not involve the GBI. Mayor
190 Jones noted that the position authorizes a single signer and remarked on the unfortunate division within
191 the city.
192

193 **ACTION: MOTION TO INITIATE THE REMOVAL PROCEEDINGS OF MAYOR JONES FOR**
194 **VIOLATION PURSUANT OF CITY CHARTER SECTION 2.32(6), SECTION 3.13, AND**
195 **SECTION 2.29, VIOLATION OF OATH OF OFFICE, AND VIOLATION OF STATE LAW**
196 **REGARDING THE DDA ACCOUNTS**

197 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2
198 Mark Marianos
199

200 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos,
201 Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe
202

203 **Voting Nay:** Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant
204

205 **MOTION PASSED**
206

207 XI. **Council Policy Discussion Topics**
208

209 XII. **Unfinished Business**
210

211 XIII. **New Business**
212

213 1. Consideration of an action on a request to approve an agreement with Sumter Consulting
214

215 It was recommended that a 30-day clause be included in the agreement. An inquiry was also made
216 regarding the candidate designated to assist with the city's financial matters, specifically whether that
217 individual would be virtual or in office.
218

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE AN AGREEMENT WITH SUMTER CONSULTING FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES

Motion made by Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Seconded by Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman

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

Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman was not present for the vote

MOTION PASSED

2. Consideration of an action on a request to approve a Subrecipient Agreement with Dekalb County for VFW Park improvements

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE A SUBRECIPIENT AGREEMENT WITH DEKALB COUNTY FOR VFW PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Motion made by Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

Voting Nay: Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Smith, Council Member Shawnette Bryant

MOTION PASSED

3. Consideration of an action on a request to approve the issuance of the proposed subpoena to Truist Bank for the provision of specified records as outlined

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE ISSUANCE OF THE PROPOSED SUBPOENA TO TRUIST BANK FOR THE PROVISION OF SPECIFIED RECORDS AS OUTLINED

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

4. Consideration of an action on a request to rename Mackin Street to William Woodson Morris Street

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE RENAMING OF MACKIN STREET TO WILLIAM WOODSON MORRIS STREET

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)

5. Consideration of an action on a request to reallocate grant funds for Stone Mountain Elementary School's reading program

Mayor Jones expressed concern that all grant funds allocated to Stone Mountain Elementary School may not have been utilized. Interim City Manager Maggie Dimov will review the funding and provide additional information. Mayor Jones recommended tabling the item until further details are available.

NO ACTION TAKEN

XIV. New Ordinances and Resolutions

1. Resolution 2025-3: Employee Benefits – Dental Insurance Revision

City Clerk Shavala Ames reviewed the resolution and reported that the current dental provider may be going out of network, making it difficult for employees to access local dental services. Given that the City already works with Cigna for healthcare, it was recommended that Cigna also provide dental coverage for City of Stone Mountain employees.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-23 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS – DENTAL INSURANCE REVISION

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)

XV. Executive Session

ACTION: MOTION TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 9:31 P.M. TO DISCUSS LITIGATION AND PERSONNEL

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 5 Shawnette Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION AND RECONVENE THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING AT 10:08 PM

Motion made by Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, 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)

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY ATTORNEY TO RESPOND TO POTENTIAL LITIGATION THAT A PUBLIC HEARING OFFICER WILL NOT BE PROVIDED

Motion made by Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe, 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

XVI. Adjournment

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

Motion made by Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman, 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