



Mayor and City Council Work Session
Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 6:30 PM
City Hall, 875 Main Street, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Minutes

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

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6 **Staff: Shawn Edmondson - City Manager | Maggie Dimov - Assistant City Manager | Shavala**
7 **Ames - City Clerk | Jeff Strickland - City Attorney**

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9 **City of Stone Mountain, GA Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/CityofStoneMtn/>**
10 **Link to join Webinar: [\[LINK\]](#)**

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13 **Call to Order**

14 Mayor Jones called the meeting to order at 6:37 P.M.

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16 **Determination of Quorum**

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

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21 **Invocation and Pledge**

22 Mayor Jones led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the Invocation.

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24 **Citizen Comments – Including comments from public/stakeholders**

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26 **Citizen Comment 1: Kay Nunez** – Expressed concerns regarding the Lawn on Main and expected
27 uses. Lawn on Main should be utilized as mixed use to include arts and music to engage with the talent
28 in the city. Let the lawn be the highlight of the city. We need more business and ideas to bring people
29 into the city.

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31 **Citizen Comment 2: Susan Taylor** – Agreed with the previous comment about the uses for the Lawn
32 on Main. It would be short sited to change the zoning now. Urge not to vote at this time and allow the
33 citizen's to be a part of the decision.

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35 **Citizen Comment 3: Sean Minton** – See the good things that council is doing with information session
36 on Homestead, Georgia Power presentation to help people reduce their power and the Citizen's
37 Academy. Lawn on main is a huge asset with a big ripple effect. Protecting the environment and
38 property values are important and all concerns regarding the use are valid. There are solutions that can
39 enrich the city to support city services and using assets wisely.

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41 **Citizen Comment 4: Cheryl Dudley** – Discussed the success of having businesses that succeed. CSX
42 does not need money regarding the pay for parking downtown. Why are they suddenly charging for
43 parking downtown. The downtown businesses struggle to pay for parking. Spoke on the businesses

44 that are vacant downtown. German Bakery needs help. The sign for the cemetery does not need to
45 move to be more visible.

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47 **Citizen Comment 5: Shani Linder** – Read an open letter on behalf of residents, property owners, and
48 business owners who are deeply invested in the City of Stone Mountain regarding the Lawn on Main.

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50 **Review of the Journal**

- 51 1. Consideration of an action on a request to approve the October 1, 2024, City Council Meeting
52 Minutes, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames.

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54 It was discussed that the presented minutes should have more of a description of the motion. City Clerk
55 Ames stated that there can be a median to meet the expectations of Councilmember Freeman’s
56 expectations. Councilmember Freeman read an example of anticipated minutes from a 2010 City of
57 Stone Mountain Council meeting. Councilmember Marianos argued that the minutes are descriptive as
58 required. City Attorney Strickland read the Georgia Code on what the minutes should entail.

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60 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE OCTOBER 1, 2024 CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES AS
61 PRESENTED**

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

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64 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem:
65 Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

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67 **Voting No:** Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

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69 **MOTION PASSED**

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71 2. Consideration of an action on a request to approve the October 15, 2024 City Council Meeting
72 Minutes, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames.

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74 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE OCTOBER 15, 2024 CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
75 AS PRESENTED**

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

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78 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem:
79 Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

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81 **Voting No:** Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

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83 **MOTION PASSED**

- 84
85 3. Consideration of an action on a request to approve the January 7, 2025 City Council Meeting
86 Minutes, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames.

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88 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE JANUARY 7, 2025 CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES AS
89 PRESENTED**

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

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92 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem:
93 Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

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95 **Voting No:** Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

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97 **MOTION PASSED**

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4. Consideration of an action on a request to approve the January 14, 2025 Special Called Meeting Minutes, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE JANUARY 14, 2025 CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED

Motion made by Councilmember Post 1 Bass, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

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

Voting No: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

MOTION PASSED

Reading of Communications

Adoption of The Agenda of The Day

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA OF THE DAY

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

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

Committee Discussion Items

5. Stone Mountain Community Garden
Columbus Brown gave an overview of the Stone Mountain Community Garden Committee (SMCG). The SMCG contributed over 15,000 fresh produces to 291 families in 2024 and donated 984 pounds of produce to the pantry (agenda packet pages 30-35). Would like for someone to do something about the safety issue on the entrance of the garden. Briefly discussed the SMCG budget.
6. Planning Commission – None
7. Economic Development/Downtown Development Authority – Economic Development Director Maggie Dimov gave updates on the Downtown Development Authority to include landscape project along Main Street and the installation of a mural at 901 Main Street. The DDA was awarded \$25,000 to which funds were used to support several projects in the city. There were 16 concerts held in 2024 and over 4000 participants at the Mardi Gras parade.
8. Historic Preservation Commission – None
9. Parks and Recreation Committee – None

Staff Reports

10. Public Safety- Police Chief- James Westerfield Jr
Chief Westerfield reviewed the 2024 statistics for the Police Department. A presentation was held for the following: Major S. Parks - Completion of Chief Executive Training with GACP; Detective

152 Amy Hall - Officer of the Year; Officer Elizabeth Hilton - Promotion with City of Clarkson, Pinned by
153 her brother Officer; Detective Swisher, Detective Hall, Officer Jabir, Officer Shedeke - Special
154 Recognition.

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156 11. Administration- City Manager- Shawn Edmondson
157 City Manager Edmondson reviewed the administrative reports for the month of December.

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159 **City Manager's Report**

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161 12. City Manager - Shawn Edmondson
162 City Manager Edmondson discussed key topics that include the City Hall parking lot project –
163 which funds are left over to fund another paving project. CSX parking lot meeting was held, and
164 concerns were explained. Councilmember Freeman would like to see code violations.
165 Councilmember Bryant noted that she does not see a strong code enforcement presence in the
166 City. City Manager was instructed to send See Click Fix link to Council.

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168 **Council Policy Discussion Topics**

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170 **Unfinished Business**

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172 Mayor Jones invited guests on the agenda to move to the top of the New Business section. Whitaker
173 Accounting Firm was not contacted to present findings on the 2024 audit, nor was Attorney Walker to
174 discuss blighted properties. City Manager Edmondson informed council the 2023 audit has not been
175 complete and the 2024 audit is in RFP status. City Manager Edmondson will follow up on the audit and
176 blighted properties once contact information is received.

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178 **New Business**

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180 1. Consideration of an action of a request to set and advertise the Qualifying Fees for the 2025 City of
181 Stone Mountain Municipal Election, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames

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183 City Clerk Ames corrected the election year of the municipal election to 2025 and corrected the
184 qualifying amount of Mayor to state \$720 and for Council Members to state \$360 (agenda packet
185 page 46).

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187 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE QUALIFYING FEES FOR THE 2025 CITY OF STONE**
188 **MOUNTAIN MUNICIPAL ELECTION**

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

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191 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem:
192 Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council
193 Member: Post 6 Crowe

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195 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**

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197 2. Consideration of an action on a request to authorize the purchase of JustFOIA, an Open Records
198 Management Software in the amount of \$8,464.50, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames

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200 City Clerk Ames gave an overview of the JustFOIA open records software (agenda packet pages
201 47-67). Mayor questioned if the item is budgeted, City Clerk Ames confirmed the item is budgeted.

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203 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE PF THE JUSTFOIA OPEN RECORDS**
204 **MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$8,464.50**

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

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Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

3. Consideration of an action on a request to set a Special Called Meeting date for the purposes of establishing a third Public Hearing Meeting date for the Homestead Exemption, requested by City Manager Shawn Edmondson.

City Manager Edmondson informed the Council on their options if they chose to opt-in or opt-out of the Homestead Exemption Tax (agenda packet page 76-78). City Attorney Strickland gave an overview of both options and what will take place if they choose to opt out. It was noted that a decision must be made on public hearing advertisements to satisfy state regulations.

ACTION: MOTION TO SET PUBLIC HEARING DATES FOR THE HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION ON FEBRUARY 13, 2025 AT 10:00 A.M., FEBRUARY 13, 2025 AT 6:30 P.M., AND FEBRUARY 18, 2025 AT 6:30 P.M.

Motion made by Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

4. Consideration of an action on a request to authorize the purchase of Verkada, a citywide camera system in the amount of \$149,889.11, requested by City Manager Shawn Edmondson. City Manager Edmondson discussed the Alscan Verkada city-wide camera system and noted to refer to the workshop session held on December 17, 2025, where representatives introduced the platform (agenda packet page 79-85). Council Member Bryant stated that she was not in attendance at that meeting, therefore she needs more information before making an informed decision.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE AUTHORIZATION TO PURCHASE ALSCAN VERKADA CITY WIDE CAMERA SYSTEM IN THE AMOUNT OF \$149,889.11

Motion made by Council Member: Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

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

Voting No: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

MOTION PASSED

5. Consideration of an action on a request to approve the Financial Advisory Committee, requested by Mayor Dr. Beverly Jones.

City Attorney Strickland reviewed the previously submitted memorandum regarding the establishment of City committees in accordance to the Charter.

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ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CITIZENS FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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

Voting Yea: Councilmember Post 4: Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

Voting No: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION FAILED

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR SPLOST I AND SPLOST II

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

Voting Yea: Councilmember Post 4: Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

Voting No: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION FAILED

6. Consideration of establishing regulation guidelines when obtaining an Occupation Tax Certificate (Business License) with the City of Stone Mountain regarding business hours, requested by Councilmember Teresa Crowe.

Councilmember Crowe noted that many businesses do not display their operation hours and would like to know the legal ramifications to withhold their business license if hours of operations are not provided. City Attorney Strickland stated the city could require that operation hours be provided on the business license application, but it would not go into effect for old businesses, only new businesses if adopted.

[Due to the adoption of Resolution 2024-14, the meeting will end at 10:00 p.m. and any remaining items will be moved to the next available meeting]

Adjournment

ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 10:01 P.M.

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

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)