



Mayor and City Council Work Session

Tuesday, May 20, 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: Shawn Edmondson - City Manager | Maggie Dimov - Assistant City Manager/Economic
Development Director/DDA | Shavala Ames - City Clerk | Angela Couch - City Attorney**

Public Hearing was called to order at 6:30 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 4 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette
Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe, Mayor Beverly Jones

I. Public Hearing

1. Public Hearing #1 - Millage Rate

City Manager Shawn Edmondson provided a general overview of the millage rate process, offering
context on the purpose and significance of setting the annual rate. He outlined the factors influencing
the recommendation and emphasized the City's commitment to fiscal responsibility and transparency.
Finance Director Adam Kurt followed with a detailed presentation on the financial implications of the
millage rate options. He explained the calculated rollback rate of 15.827 mills, which represents the rate
that would generate the same amount of revenue as the previous year, excluding the impact of
reassessments. He then presented the proposed millage rate of 16.000 mills.

Public Hearing Comments

Public Comment 1: Joan Monroe - \$15.85 is a cut of \$15,000 off the budget; City Manager budget
needs to be cut – he does not need 15 assistants for one job; dial it back.

Public Comment 2: Jelani Linder - doesn't agree with the rollback, keep the budget the same; budget
surplus last year half a million dollars, don't cut us off at the knees; administration built the base for
growth; Council needs to strategize on revenue streams, do not depend solely on taxes from residents;
focus on diverting revenue streams.

Public Comment 3: Jodi Norwood - agrees with the previous citizen comment; the downtown is doing
nothing and needs to be cleaned up; find a way to like Tucker and Lawrenceville have; used to have a
thriving Main St. so focus on downtown; okay with keeping Millage Rate the same.

Public Comment 4: Ms. Thomas - 95% of budget is from the citizens; not getting anything from
SPLOST funds; 100k spent on cemetery; 75k on parties; need to cut back in those areas; 6 million
generated from taxpayers, go back shrink administration budget; citizens are being robbed.

Public Comment 5: Kay Nunez – is for maintaining the Millage Rate; excited about the changes in the city and wants to keep moving forward; tariffs are just growing; also have to budget at home.

Public Comment 6: Tony Thomas - rollback Millage Rate but doesn't mean anything; there are 6 council members - only 4 control the city, never a legitimate vote; hijacked by 4 council members and the City Manager; large companies are cutting back, the City Manager doesn't want to cut back; wait to spend money on pet projects; tried everything to dishonor the Mayor by the four council members.

Public Comment 7: Clint Monroe - economic situation – in 5 months, we will be in a recession; one person destroy economy by himself; can't treat taxpayers like a personal ATM – it's not time to add new stuff; Millage Rate needs to go lower; consider taxpayers.

Public Comment 8: Jodi Norwood - how much is the investigation adding to the deficit; what are the citizens getting out of the budget; lived here for over 30 years and would like to see something done.

II. Adjournment

ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:13 P.M.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 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)

III. Call to Order

Mayor Jones called the meeting to order at 7:15 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: Mike Nunly – mentioned growing concerns of the safety in the city and explained a situation he experienced; respect for officers doing work but need more help; asking for more control of neighborhoods.

Citizen Comment 2: Ms. Thomas – agreed with previous comments; increase presence; spoke about the cemetery; should not delete audio recordings without council approval; Clerk said video/audio was deleted; 3/18 minutes need to be corrected.

Citizen Comment 3: Anthonia – what progress did we make on zoning; need more police presence; City Manager talked about tariffs but how will that affect us; promised sidewalks 8-9 years ago

Citizen Comment 4: Joan Monroe – ran a smear campaign against the mayor; failed 2 audits; investigation needs to be on the city and 4 council members; a felon said Mayor stole, took Council

to ethics board; felon is using Leila Mason; parks cleaned up on Saturday – trashed on Sunday; the City Solicitor was made new City Attorney, stop milking the public; acting above the law.

Citizen Comment 5: Cheryl Dudley – attended council meetings the last 2 years and used to be great - 2024 came and it's a lot different; three council members and City Manager decided to attack Mayor, one City Council member went to the media, discussed votes in the city; City has failed audits – don't get how 800k is missing; need investigation of entire City.

Citizen Comment 6: Denise Phillips – spoke on DDA banking – Mayor took over DDA bank accounts on April 2nd, no documentation of cyber breach.

Citizen Comment 7: Jelani Lender – doesn't think its right to throw out allegations; Charter need to be looked at; excited about the mural and positive things in the city; commended staff and council on fire inspections on Main Street and filming ordinance.

Citizen Comment 8: Kay Nunez – doesn't agree how the Mayor handled things with banks, did not use chain of command; takes all to move the City forward and team effort; the four to two – work hard to sell the point; may not agree but still respect each other.

Citizen Comment 9: C. Monroe – agrees with comments of needing more police patrol on Ridge Avenue; interpret Mayor's actions – high tech lynching to damage her politically; recall petition because it's a waste of time; more energy to focus on audit; auditor did not get any record for fraud, if there is fraud you will never see it; the bank came to the Mayor.

Citizen Comment 10: Vanessa Walls – problematic for the Mayor to take over 12 bank accounts – we do have the receipts; make commitment to share findings of the investigation; taxpayers should not have to pay; comments about credit card were made; Mayor filed for unemployment with the City.

Citizen Comment 11: Gina Cox – City wide clean-up was wonderful; thanked everyone involved with speed brackets installed on Fourth Street; city cemetery where parents and black/white people are laid, bought plots because it was city property; Klan over there are dead; get back on board with making the entire city look better, it's election time.

VII. Review of the Journal (City Clerk)

1. Consideration of an action on a request to approve April 7, 2025 Special Called Meeting Minutes, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE APRIL 7, 2025 SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES, AS AMENDED

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, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

MOTION PASSED

2. Consideration of an action on a request to approve April 15, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE APRIL 15, 2025 CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES, AS AMENDED

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 6 Teresa Crowe

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

MOTION PASSED

3. Consideration of an action on a request to approve May 6, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE MAY 6, 2025 CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES, AS AMENDED

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 6 Teresa Crowe

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

MOTION PASSED

4. Reconsideration of an action on a request to approve March 18, 2025 Meeting Minutes

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE MARCH 18, 2025 SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES, AS AMENDED

Motion made by Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, 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

IX. Adoption of The Agenda of The Day

City Clerk Shavala Ames, requested to add to the agenda Item #1 Consideration of an action of request to Robert Jack Wilson, PC to conduct an investigation on allegations against Mayor Beverly Jones, Item #2 Consideration of an action of request to approve the RFQ for fiscal year 2024 audit services with CKH CPA advisors, requested by Finance Director Adam Kurt, and Item #3 Discussion of the status of the parking lot, requested by Council Member Shawnette Bryant.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE AMENDED AGENDA OF THE DAY

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, Post 5, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

Mayor Beverly Jones took a moment to recognize and commend former city intern Mr. Braxton prior to proceeding with the Committee Discussion Items. She highlighted the valuable contributions he made during his time with the City, noting his dedication to a variety of tasks that significantly supported municipal operations.

X. Committee Discussion Items

1. Stone Mountain Community Garden

Columbus Brown gave details and updates on SMCG as outlined in the provided report.

2. Economic Development/Downtown Development Authority – No updates

3. Planning Commission – No updates

5. Historic Preservation Commission

Elaine Vaughn provided an update on the progress of housing improvements throughout the City, outlining recent work completed on various properties. Additionally, she reported that a meeting was held on April 26th, during which several Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs) were reviewed and approved. Next HPC is May 21st and it is open to the public. She also commended the success of the Saturday Clean-Up Event, recognizing the collective effort and community involvement despite the rain and the Red Team filling twenty bags of trash.

6. Parks and Recreation Committee

Joan Monroe provided updates on behalf of Rev. Parker, who was unable to attend. She addressed matters related to contracts and records and expressed concern over the City Manager's decision not to produce the records for the \$800,000 designated for handicap-accessible improvements in the parks restrooms. Ms. Monroe further explained that, over the past two years, the committee has faced significant limitations in its efforts, citing a lack of recognition and support from the administration.

XI. Staff Reports

1. Public Safety- Police Chief- James Westerfield Jr.

Police Chief Westerfield gave an overview of activity statistics and crime statistics from January 2025 to April 2025, provided in the agenda packet. Police Chief Westerfield gave recognition to Major Shirlene Parks for her graduations from Northwestern University School Police Staff and Command; City Manager Shawn Edmondson was acknowledged for graduation from University of Georgia certified Public Manager's Program.

2. Finance and Budgeting Update - Finance Director Adam Kurt

Finance Director Adam Kurt provided a detailed explanation of the account figures included in the agenda packet, highlighting key areas of financial activity and the notable progress made in recent months. He also addressed ongoing efforts to respond to requests for information regarding wire transfer discrepancies. Following his presentation, several Council Members requested additional clarification, which was subsequently provided by City Manager Shawn Edmondson, who offered further context and insight into the matters discussed.

XII. City Manager's Report

1. City Manager - Shawn Edmondson- Shawn Edmondson, City Manager

It was recommended that Code Enforcement be added to the discussion agenda, as Code Enforcement Officer T.D. Johnson was present. During the discussion, Council Members posed several questions, including whether Officer Johnson operates on a set schedule, and sought updates on

issues such as Hurby Curby placement violations, dilapidated properties, and matters relating to eminent domain.

It was suggested to skip the City Manager's Report out of the respect of time for the remaining agenda items.

The City Manager stated that any resident that has questions regarding any matter, a meeting can be scheduled to discuss as the office is an open door. The City Manager's Report is also available online. It was also stated that soil samples were done as the next step in the process of the parking lot which could take about 3-4 weeks.

ACTION: MOTION TO NOT DISCUSS THE CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Motion made by Council Member Marianos, Seconded by Council Member Crowe

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

XIII. Council Policy Discussion Topics

XIV. Unfinished Business

XV. New Business

1. Consideration of an action of request to approve Robert Jack Wilson, PC to conduct an investigation on the allegations against Mayor Beverly Jones regarding city bank accounts, requested by City Attorney Angela Couch

City Attorney Angela Couch provided an overview of the work conducted by Mr. Jack Wilson in his previous experience, including his background and role in the broader investigation efforts. She outlined the scope of his involvement, detailing the specific responsibilities and objectives assigned to him. Additionally, the proposed resolution to authorize continued investigative services was discussed.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE ROBERT JACK WILSON, PC TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION ON THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MAYOR BEVERLY JONES REGARDING CITY BANK ACCOUNTS

Motion made by Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe, Seconded by Council Member: Post 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: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

MOTION PASSED

It was recommended that a list of three qualified attorneys be presented for consideration, allowing for a selection among multiple candidates. Following this recommendation, a substitute motion was introduced to address the proposed change in procedure

ACTION: MOTION TO SEEK THREE MORE ATTORNEYS FOR THE BANK ACCOUNT INVESTIGATION

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

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman, 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

2. Consideration of an action of request to approve the RFQ for fiscal year 2024 audit services with CKH CPA advisors, requested by Finance Director Adam Kurt

City Manager Shawn Edmondson briefly introduced the agenda item, emphasizing the urgency of the matter by noting that the 2024 audit is due by June 30, 2024. He reiterated the critical importance of timely action to ensure compliance with reporting deadlines and to maintain the City's financial accountability.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE RFQ FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 AUDIT SERVICES WITH CKH CPA ADVISORS

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

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman

MOTION PASSED

XVI. New Ordinances and Resolutions

1. Ordinance No. 2025-02 - Council's Interference with Administration – (SECOND READ)

Members of the governing body emphasized the importance of ensuring that the ordinance applies equally to all individuals, promoting fairness and consistency. In response, Mayor Jones expressed concern that the current language of the ordinance may invite confusion or conflict, and suggested that it be revisited for further review and clarification.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-02 TO SET ORDINANCE NO. 2025-02 COUNCIL'S INTERFERENCE WITH ADMINISTRATION

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

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

MOTION PASSED

XVII. Remarks of Privilege

1. Discussion: Call the Question Resolution, requested by Council Member Teresa Crowe – NO DISCUSSION/ACTION

XVIII. Announcements by The Mayor

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

XX. Adjournment

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ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING 10:02 P.M.

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