

Town of Thunderbolt
Council Meeting May 13, 2026
Minutes

Mayor Williams opened the Public Comment at 6:00PM.

Penelope Guild approached Mayor and Council to express her concerns over prorating the STR registration fees. It was explained that the Town incurs administrative fees associated with the registration of the application. Ms. Guild stated she is buying 12 months' worth of licensing and only having 7 months to recoup her fees. Mayor Williams thanked Ms. Guild.

Nick Patrick approached Mayor and Council. Mr. Patrick stated he is actually speaking on behalf of the training he attended along with Councilmembers Ward and Williams and Jan LeViner, Zoning Administrator. A Planning and Zoning conference was held in Pembroke, GA and sponsored by GMA. Monica Callahan Cooker facilitated the training which focused on the Comprehensive Plan as it is considered the road map for the Town as we are not planning for us but for our future. A key topic discussed was the use of variances. It was emphasized that variances should only be granted in extreme situations or for special reasons. To mitigate the risk of legal action, we need to review our ordinances and codes to ensure they are structured so that reliance on variances is minimized. Mayor Williams thanked Mr. Patrick for speaking to the training and Comp Plan.

Mayor Williams asked Mr. Walker about recent postings on social media regarding water shut offs. Ms. Spaulding approached Mayor and Council. Ms. Spaulding explained the process for billing, payments, cutoffs and when the service is restored. Water is never off for more than a couple of hours as long as the resident comes in and pays the bill but water is not restored until payment is made. She continued that Staff will even stay late so water can be restored for those you paid their bill. With the new software, residents will be able to set up their own information and pay their bill online. Mayor Williams thanked Ms. Spaulding for her update.

Mayor Williams closed the Public Comment at 6:30PM.

Mayor Williams called the meeting to order at 6:30PM, May 13, 2026. Those in attendance were Councilmembers Bethany Skipper-Greer, David Crenshaw, Lary Ward, Dr. Edward Drohan, Dawn Williams, and Brooks Barbaree. Also in attendance were Matthew Walker, Town Administrator; Charlie Barrow, Attorney; and Jan LeViner, Town Clerk.

Mayor Williams delivered the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Meeting Agenda. Ms. LeViner stated the agenda is amended by moving 9c, 9d and 9e from the Discussion portion of the agenda to the Consent Agenda. Ms. LeViner also corrected the agenda regarding the Town Administrator and Town Clerk's reports. **Councilmember Crenshaw** made a motion to approve the amended agenda. **Councilmember Skipper-Greer** seconded. Vote was unanimous to approve 6-0.

Councilmember Ward made a motion to approve the minutes of April 8, 2026. **Councilmember Crenshaw** seconded. Vote was unanimous, 6-0 to approve.

Mayor Williams asked Officer Austin McDonald, Captain Runyon and incoming Chief Harley to come forward. Mayor Williams administered the Oath of Office to Officer McDonald, congratulated him on completing the Academy and welcomed him to the Thunderbolt Police Department.

Mayor Williams read the following Proclamations and Resolution:

- Municipal Clerks' Week Proclamation
- Older Americans Month Proclamation

Mayor Williams recognized the following businesses for the Know Local – Go Local:

- Thunderbolt Counseling
- Tortugas Island Grille
- Topsy Turtle Tike Tours
- Thunderbolt Marine

Anna Marie Thomas approached Mayor and Council to give an update on the **Thunderbolt Museum**. Ms. Thomas thanked everyone for helping with the Blessing of the Fleet and especially Councilmember Ward. She continued, they have the yard sale this Saturday and will have vendors at the Museum and is asking everyone to come out and support the Museum and vendors.

Shannon Brett approached Mayor and Council to give the Financial Report for the month of April 2026. Ms. Brett reported on the 2025 Audit and will be submitted to the State by the required date of June 30th. She continued, they are moving forward with the new software, Springbrook. Modules for utility billing, payroll and fixed assets are all being incorporated. The 2027 budget is coming up and there is a meeting in June where department heads are going to be more involved with preparation of the budget. Ms. Brett discussed the financial statement as included in the packet this evening. Mayor Williams thanked Ms. Brett.

Consent Agenda:

- Contract: Civic Plus, STR Processing and Workflow. Initial Term, one year, renewing annually, \$9,931.25.
- Thunderbolt Force Main Replacement Route Study Proposal
- ITB No. 20-1001: Whatley Avenue Sidewalk Improvement
- Bait Shop Lease Renewal
- Purchase new Police Vehicle, Thunderbolt Police Department
- Budget Amendment #2 FY2025. Budget increase will adjust the budget year-to-date actual with the updated projection through 12/31/2025
- Budget Amendment #2 FY 2025: Adjust the budget year-to-date to agree with the updated projection through 12/31/2025

Councilmember Ward made a motion to approve. **Councilmember Williams** seconded. Vote was unanimous to approve, 6-0.

Discussion Agenda

- **Freeman: Permission to create a small dealership to sell no more than three (3) cars at current repair shop. Zoned B. Town Administrator Walker** stated Mr. Freeman is asking for permission to create a small dealership and to sell no more than three (3) cars at the current repair shop located on Shell Road. He currently has a small auto repair shop at that location. Mr. Freeman approached Mayor and Council. He stated he is asking permission to be able to sell no more than three (3) cars at any given time from his repair shop. **Councilmember Drohan** made a motion to approve. **Councilmember Skipper-Greer** seconded. Vote was unanimous to approve, 6-0.
- **First Reading, 2026-01, Sec 15-707.03, Chapter 15: Sewer. Mr. Barrow** stated this is for information only and will be on the agenda for June 10, 2026 for approval.
- **Honey Park Restroom,; Rehab/Replace. Town Administrator Walker** stated he has been looking at repairing or replacing the Honey Park Bathrooms but the cost would be approximately \$350,000 which is very expensive. There is a grant and they will be making application as well as other options and will report back.
- **Long term planning for Water and Sewer, Step One: Dr. Drohan** recommended the Town have Public Hearings or Town Hall Meetings where residents can attend and provide feedback regarding water and sewer. Mr. Walker stated he met with the consultant regarding the Sewer Force Main Study. He continued, this was approved earlier and we will sign the contract for \$27,000 in case it is needed as they are awaiting information from the City of Savannah and Chatham County.

Jan LeViner, Town Clerk, stated she attended online training with Georgia Archives and has scheduled a site visit to ensure the Town is on track with record retention. She also attended the Planning and Zoning training as previously discussed by Mr. Patrick.

Matthew Walker, Town Administrator thanked everyone who came out to the Blessing of the Fleet. It was a wonderful event and great day for everyone. He then recognized Katina Spauling for 19 years of service. Mr. Walker introduced Mr. Wade, the new Code Enforcement Officer and incoming Police Chief, Gene Harley, who will officially start on May 21, 2026. Mr. Walker gave an update regarding the Comp Plan and should have the first draft shortly. He continued, the new cameras at Honey Park should be installed very shortly which should cut down on vandalism. Lastly, he is working on RFP's for debris monitoring and disposal. Mayor Williams thanked Mr. Walker.

Department Head Reports

Captain Runyon, approached Mayor and Council and asked if there were any questions with his report as included in the packet. Captain Runyon stated training was completed for qualification on weapons with no recalls. He also stated the new officer is here tonight and ready to take his oath. Mayor Williams complimented the force and made mention of the increased police presence and night patrols . He believes our citizens have a

stronger sense of security and safety with the added presence. Captain Runyon thanked Mayor and Council.

Chief Boyles, Fire Department, was not in attendance. Town Administrator stated when Chief Boyles and his team were in Brantley County assisting the other fire fighters from across the State he sent pictures of his team. Mr. Walker stated he would like to compliment the Chief and his team for joining with other fire fighters to assist in containing the fires.

Oscar Crosby, Department of Public Works, approached Mayor and Council. Mr. Crosby stated the chlorides are back to normal from where they were when we were on with the City of Savannah. He added, there have been several issues with water pressure or no water at all with no warning and no way to make residents aware. With the new database, when completed, we will be able to reach out and make everyone aware if there are issues.

Legal Reports

No report.

Mayor Williams thanked everyone, Staff, citizens and Ms. Shannon Brett for everything they do for the Town and to Marianne, a special thank you for the Blessing of the Fleet, as it was an overwhelming success.

Council Member Crenshaw stated in the packet are pictures he took of condemned housing and blight property. As we now have a Code Enforcement Officer, he is asking the Town to move forward with addressing these properties. He continued, it is our fiduciary responsibility to clean up the Town.

Council Member Crenshaw made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss personnel, litigation, and real estate. **Council Member Barbaree** seconded. Motion to approve was unanimous, 6-0.

Council Member Crenshaw made a motion to return to regular session. **Council Member Drohan** seconded. The motion to approve was unanimous, 6-0.

Council Member Crenshaw made a motion to adjourn. **Council Member Ward** seconded. Vote was unanimous to approve, 6-0.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20PM.

Jan LeViner, Clerk

Dana Williams, Mayor
Town of Thunderbolt