

TYRONE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

June 18, 2026 at 7:00 PM

Eric Dial, Mayor

Billy Campbell, Mayor Pro Tem, Post 3

Jessica Whelan, Post 1

Dia Hunter, Post 2

Maureen Wheeler, Post 4

Brandon Perkins, Town Manager

Dee Baker, Town Clerk

Dennis Davenport, Town Attorney

Also present:

Kate Chambers, Library Supervisor

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. INVOCATION

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS: *Comments are limited to three (3) minutes. Please state your name & address. Comments that require a response may not be answered during this time. The Council or staff may respond at a later date.*

Mayor Dial clarified the meeting structure, including two 3-minute public comment periods per speaker, a council comment period at the end, and the offer for one-on-one conversations after the meeting. The public comment period was not meant for a back-and-forth conversation.

Carrie Klarl, who lives on Mann Road stated that the council was misled by the Fayette County Development Authority (FCDA) CEO and did insufficient research regarding data centers. She raised concerns about the project's location in a significant groundwater recharge area, risks of well contamination from "atypical wastewater" (containing antifreeze and heavy metals), and noise pollution. She asserted that the risks outweigh the benefits of tax revenue and jobs, and requested baseline studies of noise, water, and air quality from environmental engineers before permitting. She provided a map of the groundwater recharge area to the council.

Eric Larsen, who lives on Kellsworth Way, expressed frustration with the council's lack of transparency, noting the town website incorrectly states a data center was approved when only a rezoning was approved. He criticized the council for not explaining the rationale behind the project and urged them to take care of their constituents.

Ellie Varela, who lives on Mann Road, asked if Microsoft could prove the facility would not overload public water and wastewater systems, and if they would disclose all service and site agreements. She raised concerns about continuous low-frequency noise and asked if emergency services (fire marshal, EMS, police) would receive full emergency response plans prior to permitting to assess town capabilities. She asked the council what could be done to stop the project.

Mollie Larsen, who lives on Kellsworth Way, shared research on Microsoft's closed-loop cooling systems. She noted that a similar facility in a cooler climate (Wisconsin) still requires 350,000 gallons of water per day for evaporative cooling during warmer months. She urged the council to monitor a facility in Phoenix, Arizona, for performance metrics more comparable to Georgia's climate. She raised concerns about cross-contamination from the chemical-filled loops and asked how captured drippings and spills would be treated.

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made to approve the agenda.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Wheeler.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA: *All matters listed under this item are considered to be routine by the Town Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will not be separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the consent agenda and will be considered separately.*

1. Approval of the June 4, 2026, meeting minutes.
2. The Recreation Department is seeking Council approval for Classic Canopies 60' X 30' tent rental contract for the America 250 event. Contract not to exceed \$1350.00.
3. Recreation Department is seeking approval for a pending rental agreement from Marques Amusements for the America 250 event in the amount of \$998.00.
4. Approve the hiring of Ms. Karen Twier for the Library's Children & Youth Services Librarian position.
5. Approval to hire Ms. Katie Swann for the Town's Engineering Specialist position.

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda.

Motion made by Council Member Whelan, Seconded by Council Member Hunter.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

VII. PRESENTATIONS

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

IX. OLD BUSINESS

6. Consideration to approve the FY 2026/2027 General Fund Budget of \$12,770,799.11 and the Other Funds Budget of \$6,069,828.71. Brandon Perkins, Town Manager

Town Manager Brandon Perkins presented the final budget for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. The General Fund budget was initially presented as \$12,770,799.11, representing a \$270,468 (2.1%) decrease from the current year. The budget maintains a millage rate of 2.889 mills for the 19th consecutive year and utilizes \$3,180,446 in fund balance. Key changes include an \$870,000 decrease in Public Works, a \$195,000 increase in Parks & Recreation (for events like "America 250"), and a \$168,734 increase in Administration (primarily IT costs). The budget includes a 3% salary cost-of-living adjustment. Mr. Perkins requested that an additional \$40,000 be added to the Administration budget (bringing the General Fund total to \$12,814,799.11) to fund a comprehensive employee pay study by the Carl Vinson Institute at UGA.

Council Member Campbell sought clarification on the "Other Funds" budget. Mr. Perkins explained it includes SPLOST, Sewer, Museum, Tree, Confiscated Asset, and Founders Day funds. Council Member Wheeler confirmed the \$40,000 pay study would be drawn from the fund balance and asked if a step-based pay system was considered. Mr. Perkins clarified that the study will address the step system. Council Member Wheeler asked about Parks & Recreation programming, and staff noted efforts to attract new classes and speakers. Council Member Whelan praised staff for effective budget management. Council Member Campbell expressed a desire to postpone the SPLOST dam-related projects due to financial uncertainties, though they remain in the budget.

A motion was made to approve the adoption of the Fiscal Year General Fund Budget of \$12,814,799.11

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Hunter.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

A motion was made to approve the Other Funds Budget of \$6,069,828.71.

Motion made by Council Member Hunter, Seconded by Council Member Campbell.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

7. Consideration to approve the 2027 Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. Brandon Perkins, Town Manager

Mr. Perkins presented the proposed list of citizen members for the 2027 Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, formed from 50 applications. The committee represents diverse professional backgrounds and a geographic cross-section of the town. Council Member Jessica Whelan is the proposed council representative.

Mayor Dial asked Mr. Parnell (in the audience) the correct spelling of his first name, which was Isiah Parnell. Council Member Wheeler asked if council representation was mandatory and declined to join to avoid overcommitting. Council Member Hunter confirmed committee meetings will be open to the public.

A motion was made to approve the 2027 Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Wheeler.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

X. NEW BUSINESS

8. Consideration to approve updates to Article VIII of Chapter 22 of the Town's Code of Ordinances regulating massage establishments. Brandon Perkins, Town Manager

Mr. Perkins presented proposed updates to the massage establishment ordinance (last updated in 2004) to proactively prevent illicit activities. Proposed changes included requiring state licenses, shifting fees to the official schedule, requiring floor plans, prohibiting residential occupancy, authorizing business-hour inspections, and updating appeal procedures. Mr. Perkins initially proposed permitted operating hours of 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Mayor Dial and Council Member Wheeler questioned if 10:00 p.m. was too late. Town Attorney Dennis Davenport confirmed that council has legal authority to mandate specific business hours. Police Chief Randy Mundy recommended 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., noting a local reputable chain operates within those hours. Council Member Wheeler determined 10:00 p.m. was too late. Council Member Hunter confirmed with staff that the new hours would retroactively apply to existing businesses. The hours of operation of 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. were agreed upon by Council.

A motion was made to approve updates to Article VII of Chapter 22 of the Town's Code of Ordinances regulating massage establishments.

Motion made by Council Member Wheeler, Seconded by Council Member Campbell.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

9. Consideration to approve a Resolution requesting the General Assembly for the State to pass local legislation calling for a referendum determining whether to impose a Local Homestead Option Sales Tax (LHOST) for Fayette County. Brandon Perkins, Town Manager

Mr. Davenport provided everyone an update on the Local Homestead Option Sales Tax (LHOST) legislation. He explained that Fayette County had submitted its local act to the General Assembly and that council's action would allow Tyrone to do the same. He stated that the legislation not only authorizes an LHOST but also changes the definition of homestead.

If approved by voters in a November referendum, LHOST revenues would be used to offset homestead property taxes, potentially resulting in significant tax reductions for homeowners.

Mr. Davenport explained that because the legislation changed the definition of homestead, each taxing jurisdiction must obtain its own local act from the General Assembly.

The resolution before the Council requested that the legislature adopt a local act for the Town of Tyrone to allow a future referendum on the tax.

He also discussed the proposed implementation date, noting that the draft resolution listed January 1, 2028, based on guidance from the Georgia Municipal Association. However, he recommended changing the date to January 1, 2027, consistent with Fayette County's resolution, to avoid missing any opportunity for earlier implementation if permitted by future legislation. Mr. Davenport concluded by noting that, if approved, the resolution would be delivered to the General Assembly the following week and would require approval by both the House and Senate. He added that many other cities and counties are pursuing similar local legislation.

A motion was made to approve a Resolution requesting the General Assembly for the State to pass local legislation calling for a referendum determining whether to impose a Local Homestead Option Sales Tax (LHOST) for Fayette County, with the change from 2028 to 2027.

Motion made by Council Member Hunter, Seconded by Council Member Whelan.

Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

10. Consideration to Award the 2026 Stormwater Inspection Services project number PW-2026-10 to Integrated Science and Engineering (ISE) in the amount of \$15,350.00. Jake Canter, Environmental Specialist

Mr. Canter shared that the town is required by EPD to inspect 20% of its MS4 inventory annually. ISE will use specialized remote-controlled cameras to inspect catch basins and pipes, provide maintenance summaries, and update GIS mapping. Council Member Campbell asked about previous in-house work and camera equipment. Mr. Cantor explained that the volume of structures (1,700+) makes in-house work time-consuming and ISE possesses superior camera equipment. Council Member Campbell confirmed the cost covers 254 pipes and 366 structures, and that next year's cost should be lower as the town gets ahead of schedule. Council Member Hunter commended Mr. Canter for his responsiveness and coordination.

A motion was made to award the 2026 Stormwater Inspection Services project number PW-2026-10 to Integrated Science and Engineering (ISE) for \$15,350.00.

Motion made by Council Member Whelan, Seconded by Council Member Campbell.

Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS: *The second public comment period is for any issue. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes. Please state your name & address. Comments that require a response may not be answered during this time. The Council or staff may respond at a later date.*

Mr. Lewis, who lives on Ashmere Court, shared his concern regarding the ongoing work on the Adams Lake Dam project and a 2023 overgrowth inspection.

As a homeowner who owns part of the dam property, he requested that the town not postpone the project and effectively communicate their plans, as he needs to know whether to conduct his own maintenance and anticipates losing privacy in his backyard.

Eric Larsen addressed the contrasting golf cart registration fees, noting Tyrone residents pay \$250 to register in Peachtree City, while Peachtree City residents pay \$60 to register in Tyrone. He requested that the council contact Peachtree City officials to negotiate a more reasonable fee.

Ellie Varela shared concerns regarding the massage ordinance amendment, stating that reducing operating hours harms small business owners. She also highlighted a Microsoft email document lacking specific technical data regarding water usage, discharge temperature, decibel levels, and disturbed acreage, pointing out heavy projected traffic (500-600 worker vehicles) during construction.

Carrie Klarl stated that residents were informed Project Rita is a done deal but argued the council should work to eliminate risks. She emphasized the groundwater recharge area location and complained that residents were kept uninformed until the annexation and rezoning were already in place, urging the council to find a solution rather than claim their hands are tied.

Mr. Manfred Klarl, who lives on Mann Road, referenced a past council statement about ensuring a state-of-the-art facility as a fallback plan B, and urged council to instead focus on plan A to entirely prevent the construction of the data center.

XII. STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Perkins announced that the America 250 Celebration would take place at Shamrock Park on July 4th from 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. He encouraged everyone to come and enjoy fireworks, two bands, food trucks, and vendors. He reminded everyone that Town offices would be closed on July 3rd.

XIII. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Hunter read a statement he had prepared. I was recently notified that there was a post about members of the town staff and even disparaging comments about their families. On behalf of the town council, I would just like to apologize to Phillip (Trocquet) for having to endure such baseless comments. That's where I'm going to stop that conversation. I want to say what I personally think. *I personally would like to say that it is our town's best practice not to make comments on unofficial platforms.*

If we have to make a comment, we'll make it on our website or other official channels. However, when you talk about people and their families, I want to address those individuals or whoever directly. Not only Tyrone, but the world is a better place because of people like Phillip and the rest of the staff who dedicate their careers to public service. It takes a tremendous amount of integrity, dedication, and time to serve our local community. We are small but we are mighty.

It makes me sick to my stomach when people who don't lift a finger to improve, add value or contribute in any meaningful way, harshly judge and spread falsehoods about our staff members who have made it their priority to serve our citizens. To all of our staff, I appreciate you and the joy you have brought to our community.

As far as I am concerned, we owe you more than we are able to provide. Now for the skeptics, I challenge you to get involved and to help improve the lives of others in our community through service.

Council Member Campbell inquired about the Shamrock Industrial Park emergency exit. Mr. Perkins stated that he would email council an update soon.

Council Member Whelan began a conversation regarding the data center. Council discussed the distinction between the zoning and annexation approvals and Microsoft's future site development plans. Town Manager Brandon Perkins explained that the Mayor and Council approved the annexation, rezoning to Business Technology Park, and the associated development plan, thereby authorizing a data center use on the property. Town Attorney Mr. Davenport clarified that the approved development plan establishes key site elements, such as building locations, roadway access, and overall site layout. Any significant changes to that plan would require additional review and approval by the Town.

Mr. Perkins noted that many questions regarding noise, environmental impacts, and operational details remain unanswered because Microsoft has not yet submitted final engineering and design plans. Once submitted, those plans will undergo the Town's technical review process to ensure compliance with all applicable regulations and standards.

Council Member Maureen Wheeler inquired about the Town's authority during the review process and whether the Town could later change the zoning. Mr. Davenport explained that rezoning approved property would be difficult and could result in legal challenges. Mr. Perkins also stated that staff is engaging residents with technical expertise in engineering and environmental matters to provide input during the review process.

Council Member Whelan emphasized that while the zoning and development plan approvals are complete, the Town remains committed to thoroughly reviewing future submissions and advocating for residents if plans differ from what was originally presented. She further clarified that Microsoft approached the Town with the proposal and that the Town did not actively seek the project.

Mayor Dial thanked Ms. Beach for her hard work on the budget. She often would work thirteen-hour days.

XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made to move into Executive Session for one item of threatened litigation.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Hunter.

Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

A motion was made to reconvene.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Whelan.

Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn.

Motion made by Council Member Hunter.

Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

By: _____
Eric Dial, Mayor

Attest: _____
Dee Baker, Town Clerk