CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

City Council Chambers

Monday, June 8, 2026 at 7:00 PM

MINUTES

Members Present

Mayor Becky S. Smith; Council Members Bill Whitmire, Nellie Floyd, Allen Hook, Brenda Boyd, Manny Tsambouniery and Chris Harmon were present. City Manager Josh Ross and City Attorney, Marshall Walker were also present. A quorum was established.

Call to Order, Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order. Van Spencer, Pastor of Concord United Methodist, led those in attendance in a prayer for the community. Mayor Smith led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adjustment and Approval of the Agenda

By motion of Allen Hook and unanimous vote, the June agenda was approved with no revisions.

Request to Speak/Opportunity for Public Comment

Mayor Smith opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

Consent Agenda

The following items on the Consent Agenda were unanimously approved by motion of Brenda Boyd:

1. **Approval of Minutes:** City Council will consider adopting the Regular Meeting minutes of the May 11, 2026 meeting.

2. **Approval of Minutes:** City Council will consider adopting Special Session Meeting minutes of the May 20, 2026 meeting.

4. **Approval of Minutes:** City Council will consider adopting Work Session Meeting minutes of the May 26, 2026 meeting.

5. **Establish Public Hearing - Proposed Text Amendments for Stormwater Compliance**: City Council will consider establishing a public hearing for Monday, July 13th, at 7:00 PM to receive public comment on a proposed text amendment to the Land Development Code (LDC), Chapter 5, and the Code of Ordinances (COO) Chapter 152, regarding Stormwater Regulation.

6. **Establish Public Hearing Conditional District- Urban Residential (Hidden Valley)**: City Council will consider establishing a public hearing for Monday, July 13th, at 7:00 PM to receive public comment on a conditional rezoning from the Development Solutions Group (DSG) for parcel numbers: 151790, 151791, 151792, 151793, 151794, and 202266 (10.53 acres).

7. **Reschedule June 2026 Work Session:** City Council will consider rescheduling the June 2026 work session from Tuesday, June 30 to Tuesday, June 23.

Public Hearing- 2026 Water and Sewer System Development Fee Study
As required by NCGS 162A-209(c), the City is required to update your System Development Fee (SDF) analysis at least every five years.

Mayor Smith invited Jared Wright of McGill Associates to address the board regarding the study and results.

Mr. Jared Wright of McGill Associates presented an overview of the study and explained the statutory requirements governing system development fees. He stated that House Bill 436 established the framework for local governments to charge system development fees as a means of ensuring that growth contributes toward the infrastructure necessary to serve new development rather than placing the burden solely on existing utility customers.

Mr. Wright explained that North Carolina law requires the fee analysis to be prepared by a qualified professional and updated at least every five years. The study utilizes a "rational nexus" methodology, which evaluates historical planning documents, future capital improvement needs, and the allocation of costs attributable to future development.

Mr. Wright reported that Bessemer City's utility systems are currently in strong condition and capable of supporting anticipated growth. The study included evaluation of existing system capacity as well as projected capital improvements identified within the City's ten-year Capital Improvement Program. Based on those evaluations, the report calculated recommended fees associated with future water and sewer capacity expansion.

He further explained that conversion tables were developed to allow application of the fees to various land-use categories and development types. Mr. Wright reminded Council that state law permits the governing board to adopt any fee amount up to the maximum amount identified within the study.

Council Member Bill Whitmire inquired about the calculations used in determining the fee amounts. City Manager Josh Ross clarified that the fees apply only to new development connecting to the utility system and are intended to ensure that future growth contributes to the cost of infrastructure improvements necessary to serve that growth.

Mayor Smith noted that the public hearing was informational in nature and that no action was required at that time.

By motion of Nellie Floyd and unanimous vote, the public hearing was opened at 7:13 PM.

Mayor Smith asked if there was anyone to speak in favor of the system development fees. No one came forth.

Mayor Smith asked if there was anyone to speak in opposition of the system development fees. No one came forth.

By motion of Chris Harmon and unanimous vote, the public hearing to consider the 2026 system development fees was closed at 7:13 PM.

Ordinance - Proposed FY 2025-2026 Budget
By motion of Allen Hook and unanimous vote, the 2026-2027 proposed budget was adopted. A copy of the budget ordinance is on file at City Hall.

Advisory Board Appointments Discussion
City Clerk, Hydeia Hayes addressed Mayor and City Council regarding all applications received by citizens to serve on an advisory board. City Council made the following appointments:

By motion of Chris Harmon and unanimous vote, Pamela Gladney and Ronald Burleson were reappointed to serve on the Planning & Zoning Board of Adjustments. They will serve as Board Members until June 30, 2029.

By motion of Manny Tsambouniery and unanimous vote, Andrea McLeymore, Stephanie Gee, and Erika Nixon were appointed to serve on the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board. They will serve as Board Members until June 30, 2029.

By motion of Bill Whitmire and unanimous vote, Joe Will was reappointed to serve as a board member on the ABC board until June 30, 2029.

Planning & Zoning Board Chairman and Vice Chairman
By motion of Brenda Boyd and unanimous vote, David Bruce Absher was reappointed to serve as Board Chair and Charlene Hill to serve as Vice Chair until June 30, 2027.

ABC Board Chairman
By motion of Manny Tsambouniery and unanimous vote, Michael Brooks was appointed to serve on the ABC Board Chair until June 30, 2027.

FY 2027 Strategic Plan Update Adoption
City Manager Josh Ross presented the proposed updates to the City's Strategic Plan.

Mr. Ross explained that the revisions reflected discussions and recommendations developed during the City Council retreat and work session process. He noted that the version included in the agenda packet represented the finalized document incorporating Council's feedback.

The updated Strategic Plan retained the City's existing mission, vision, and values statements while updating strategic goals and objectives to align with the recently adopted budget and future priorities. Mr. Ross stated that staff would provide quarterly progress reports during future work sessions to track implementation and accomplishments associated with the plan.

By motion of Allen Hook and unanimous vote, the FY 2027 strategic plan was adopted. A copy is available for public inspection at City Hall.

Resolution – Opposing State Legislation Limiting Local Property Tax Authority
City Council considered a resolution expressing opposition to proposed state legislation and a related constitutional amendment that would limit local governments' authority regarding property taxation.

Mr. Ross explained that the legislation had been discussed during previous work sessions and had advanced through the legislative process. If approved by voters, the constitutional amendment would grant the General Assembly additional authority regarding local property tax matters.

Staff noted that numerous municipalities and counties throughout North Carolina had adopted similar resolutions expressing concern regarding the potential impact on local control, financial planning, and the ability of local governments to respond to community needs.

By motion of Brenda Boyd and unanimous vote, the resolution opposing limiting local property tax authority was approved.

Resolution – Keep Bessemer City Beautiful Board
Community and Economic Development Director, Amber Bridges explained that the Keep Bessemer City Beautiful Board proposal had been discussed during prior work sessions and would support the City's participation in beautification, environmental stewardship, litter prevention, recycling, volunteerism, and public art initiatives. She noted that communities such as Belmont and Cherryville have utilized similar programs as part of their participation in the North Carolina Main Street Program.

Ms. Bridges explained that the board had previously existed but was dissolved several years ago. Reestablishing the board would allow the City to pursue additional grant opportunities and support projects identified within the Strategic Plan.

Council Member Allen Hook inquired about the board composition. Ms. Bridges stated that the proposed board would consist of seven members.

By motion of Bill Whitmire and unanimous vote, the resolution reinstating the Keep Bessemer City Board was approved.

City Manager's Report
Mr. Ross announced that the City would host its 8th Annual Juneteenth Festival, noting that the event continues to grow each year and will feature vendors, entertainment, and community activities.

He provided an update regarding drought conditions, reporting that the City remains under Stage 1 voluntary water conservation measures. While recent rainfall has improved conditions, the region remains classified as being in a severe drought and is still approximately 13 to 15 inches below normal rainfall levels. Mr. Ross stated that conditions are improving and staff will continue monitoring water supplies closely.

Mayor Smith inquired about plans for the upcoming fireworks display associated with the City's Fourth of July celebration scheduled for June 26. Manager Ross stated that the display is still scheduled to happen at this time.

Mr. Ross also recognized City staff for their response to a recent incident at the city swimming pool. He specifically commended lifeguards, fire personnel, and other responding agencies for their professionalism and teamwork in handling the situation.

Concluding his report, Mr. Ross thanked City Council for their support during the budget process. He noted that the adopted budget serves as a roadmap for staff and will allow the City to continue advancing strategic initiatives, capital projects, and community programs. He expressed appreciation for the collaborative efforts of Council and staff in moving the City forward.

Council General Discussion
Council Member Brenda Boyd expressed appreciation for the efforts of Chief Vaughn and public safety personnel in responding to several recent accidents and incidents throughout the community. She noted that concerns brought to her attention by residents had been addressed promptly and professionally.

Adjournment
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM, by motion of Allen Hook and unanimous vote.

_____ _____

Becky S. Smith, Mayor Hydeia Y. Hayes, City Clerk