

City Council Meeting
City Hall – Council Chambers
July 3, 2025
6:00 P. M – Work Session / 7:00 P.M. – Council Meeting

WORK SESSION

Mayor Matthew J. Santini opened the Work Session at 6:00 P.M. Council Members discussed each item on the agenda with the corresponding staff members.

Mayor Santini closed the Work Session at 6:36 P.M.

OPENING MEETING

Mayor Santini called the Council Meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Invocation by Council Member Cooley.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Council Member Fox.

The City Council met in a Regular Session with Matthew J. Santini, Mayor, presiding, and the following present: Jayce Stepp, Council Member Ward Two; Cary Roth, Council Member Ward Three; Calvin Cooley, Council Member Ward Four; Gary Fox, Council Member Ward Five; Alyssa Cordell, Council Member Ward Six; Dan Porta, City Manager; Julia Drake, City Clerk; and Keith Lovell, City Attorney.

Absent: Kari Hodge, Council Member Ward One

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

1. June 19, 2025, Council Meeting Minutes

Council Member Cordell made a motion to approve June 19, 2025, Council Meeting Minutes. Council Member Stepp seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

PUBLIC HEARING – 2ND READING OF ZONING/ANNEXATION REQUESTS

2. AZ25-01. Annexation and Zoning of Tax Parcel ID 0075-1103-002 Applicant: Switch Ltd.

Randy Mannino, Planning and Development Director, stated Applicant requests annexation of (2) parcels into the City to be combined with the current Technology district and data center campus. Current zoning is County A-1. The proposed zoning is “T” (Technology).

Planning Commission recommended approval of the annexation, 4-0.

Planning Commission recommended approval, 3-1, of zoning with the following (10) conditions:

Zoning Conditions:

1. All minimum zoning development standards for the "T" zoning district are followed per Text Amendment, T23-04.
2. A minimum 100 ft. natural landscape buffer for the purposes of visual screening to remain in place along all adjacent residential use or zoned properties. The 100 ft. buffer may include the building setback.
3. If the minimum 100 ft. natural landscape buffer is disturbed, then the buffer is to be planted with landscape material appropriate to re-establish the buffer and visual screen.
4. Public entrance shall be on Old Alabama Road; no access from Carter Grove Blvd; access from Bates Road, shall be limited to emergency access as required by governmental authorities, construction access until 60 days after GDOT construction on Old Alabama Road is completed, and private access. Upon the completion of GDOT construction on Old Alabama Road, any permitted construction activities on the site shall have a construction entrance that does not require use of Bates Road.
5. Upon submission by the current property owner, Council shall terminate the Carter Grove Development Agreement, to the extent it covers the property which is the subject of this application.
6. Access to landlocked properties is to be negotiated between Switch LTD and affected property owners, as requested by the property owner.
7. Access to the NRCS flood control structures be negotiated between Switch LTD and the NRCS or their representative, as required.
8. All site plans for future development phases after Phase 1 are to be shared with the Paulding County Community Development office.
9. The subject property's principal use shall be limited to data processing, storage, hosting and related services and accessory uses shall include principal uses listed as permitted uses in the Technology district ordinance which are associated with data processing, storage, hosting and related services as well as security and customary accessory uses.
10. No access shall be allowed to or from Etowah Ridge Trail, including access for Switch campus construction activities.

Mr. Mannino added that on condition 10, the applicant is requesting emergency vehicle access only and to build a road to provide access to the back end of the property.

Keith Lovell, City Attorney, stated that some of the online maps had shown 151 Etowah Ridge Trail (Parcel 0075-1104-003) owned by Switch. However, this information had proven to be inaccurate and is owned by RMS Properties and Investments and has been owned by this company since 2002.

Mayor Santini opened the public hearing for the zoning portion of the application.

Karl Lutjens, 114 Old Mill Rd, came forward as the representative for Switch and stated nothing had changed since the first reading. Additionally, Switch agrees to all the zoning conditions except number ten (10) as Switch is requesting an emergency-only access road off Etowah Ridge Trail that would be gated.

Mayor Santini stated that all comments expressed in the zoning portion of the public hearing would be reflected in the annexation portion as well.

David Calhoun, 200 Etowah Ridge Trl., came forward in opposition due to the increased traffic, dust from construction, damage to roads, and increased noise.

With no one else to come forward to speak for or against the zoning, the public hearing was closed.

Mayor Santini opened the public hearing for the annexation portion of the application.

Continuing, Mr. Santini stated that he had met with Commissioner Taylor with Bartow County. Commissioner Taylor stated that any road damage would be repaired by Bartow County.

Don Wright, 65 Etowah Ridge Overlook, came forward and stated that he is not opposed to the annexation or zoning of this property, only opposed to the access road.

Mr. Calhoun returned to the podium to ask what the City of Cartersville gains from annexing this property to city limits.

Mr. Lutjens returned to the podium to clarify that Switch does not own the property at 151 Etowah Ridge Trail and explained the importance of the access road for first responders and utility vehicles that would be responding to utility emergencies.

With no one else to come forward to speak for or against the annexation, the public hearing was closed.

Mayor Santini stated that if Council Members were considering approval, then conditions would be appropriate to construction from the inside of the parcel only and that the access road must be constructed to emergency vehicle standards.

Council Member Stepp made a motion to approve the annexation portion of AZ25-01. Council Member Cordell seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

Council Member Stepp made a motion to approve the zoning portion of AZ25-01 with the tenth condition being edited to allow an Emergency-Only Access Rd off Etowah Ridge Trail. However, the access road must have gated access with a Knox Box and all construction traffic for the access road must access from inside the parcel, and not off Etowah Ridge Trail. Council Member Cordell seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

Reference Ordinance # 21-25 and 22-25

3. Z25-02: Rezoning of 350 N. Erwin St.

Applicant: Barry Springfield

Mr. Mannino stated the applicant requests the rezoning of the property from L-I (Light Industrial) to G-C (General Commercial) for the operation of a used car lot

Planning Commission recommended approval, 4-0.

Mayor Santini opened the public hearing for Z25-02.

With no one to come forward to speak for or against the application, the public hearing was closed.

Council Member Fox made a motion to approve Z25-02. Council Member Roth seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

Reference Ordinance # 23-25

4. Z25-03: 0 Thornwood Dr. (Tax ID: C082-0002-1000) Applicant: ReNew Homes, LLC

Mr. Mannino stated the applicant originally requested a change in zoning from G-C to RA-12 (Residential Attached) to construct forty-eight (48) fee simple, single family detached homes on the 9.2-acre tract. Additionally, the Planning Commission recommended approval (4-0) with five (5) conditions.

Since the first reading, Robby Stewart, applicant, had requested this item to be tabled considering new information being received.

Mayor Santini asked the applicant for Z25-03 to please come forward.

Robby Stewart, 408 Terrell Dr, came forward and stated that it had been brought to his attention that an easement has been recorded that would affect the entrance and several lots of the proposed project. Additionally, to allow further research to be conducted, Mr. Stewart requested the Mayor and Council to table Z25-03.

Council Member Roth inquired why tabling and not pulling the entire application. Mr. Stewart stated that he felt the additional two weeks (until the next meeting), would allow for ample time to research and determine how to move forward.

Council Member Cordell made a motion to deny the request to table Z25-03. Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

Mayor Santini opened the public hearing for Z25-03.

Mr. Stewart returned to the podium with a request to withdraw the application.

Mr. Lovell stated that if the application is withdrawn, the case could not be brought back to Council for consideration for six (6) months. Mr. Stewart stated he understood.

Council Member Fox made a motion to withdraw Z25-03. Council Member Roth seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

BID AWARD/PURCHASES

5. City View Annual Software Maintenance

Mr. Mannino stated Planning and Development requests approval of the annual City View maintenance invoice for 8/1/25 - 7/31/2026 in the amount of \$25,317.84 (5% increase from last year). This will be our last renewal of this maintenance contract. Planning and Development is converting to OpenGov as our software provider and plan to be up and running with the new software by October or November of this year. This is a budgeted item and was recommended for approval.

Council Member Fox made a motion to approve the City View Annual Software Maintenance. Council Member Cooley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

Council Member Stepp made a motion to add two (2) items to the agenda. Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

6. Lexipol Annual Subscription

Terry Ellis, Deputy Police Chief, stated approval was recommended to pay the annual subscription fee for Lexipol, a policy management software that provides law enforcement policies aligned with federal and state laws, as well as law enforcement best practices.

Lexipol continuously monitors and updates content based on changes in legislation, court rulings, certification standards, and emerging best practices to ensure compliance and operational effectiveness. The recurring annual cost is \$22,853.20 and will be covered using federal asset forfeiture funds.

Council Member Cordell made a motion to approve the Lexipol Annual Subscriptions. Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

7. Highland 75 Gas Infrastructure Improvements

Michael Dickson, Gas Department Director, stated Yakult Main Extension and Loop Feed - To support increased natural gas demand and provide service to the Yakult Project within Highland 75 Park, two infrastructure improvements are required: a main extension and the installation of a loop feed to enhance system capacity and deliverability. Proposals for both projects were solicited from three contractors; however, only one proposal was received for each. Southeastern Natural Gas Services of Rome, Inc., based in Lindale, GA, submitted a proposal of \$133,962.27 for the Yakult Main Extension and \$180,321.37 for the Loop Feed installation. Both projects are budgeted expenses, and Council approval was recommended to accept the proposals and authorize execution of the contracts.

Council Member Fox made a motion to approve the Highland 75 Gas Infrastructure Improvements. Council Member Roth seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

8. Public Works HVAC Replacement

Steven Foy, Public Works Engineer, stated the Public Works Office Building at 330 S. Erwin Street has been undergoing renovations over the past several months. Prior to the project's completion, one of the existing HVAC units failed and required immediate replacement to avoid delays in occupancy.

Mike Jones Heating and Air provided a quote of \$10,500 for the replacement and installation of a new 5-ton HVAC system.

Public Works requested Mayor and Council approval for this purchase. The expense will be covered by the 2025 remodeling budget 100-3100-54-1300.

Council Member Cordell made a motion to approve the Public Works HVAC Replacement. Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

9. EPR Systems Records Management Software

Hagen Champion, Fire Chief, stated approval was requested to proceed with the purchase of a new Records Management System (RMS), EPR FireWorks. This change is necessary as the current system, New World, will not be compliant with the upcoming National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS) requirements, which will replace NFIRS effective January 1, 2026.

Implementing EPR FireWorks will ensure compliance with the new federal reporting standards and provide adequate time to transfer our existing records to the new system in an orderly manner.

The total cost of EPR FireWorks is \$31,717.00, and this expenditure has already been included in the FY 2025–2026 budget.

Council Member Cordell made a motion to approve the EPR Systems Records Management Software. Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

10. Vector Solutions Renewal

Chief Champion stated approval was requested for the annual renewal of our agreement with Vector Solutions, the cloud-based software platform that supports our records management for training, supplies, and equipment. The total cost for this renewal is \$13,006.62, and this expense has been budgeted for FY 2025–2026.

Council Member Roth made a motion to approve the Vector Solutions Renewal. Council Member Cooley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

11. GIRMA First Responder PTSD Program Benefit Renewal

Dan Porta, City Manager, stated GMA had provided notice of the six-month premium for the First Responder PTSD Program in the amount of \$11,026.00, which was recommended for approval.

Council Member Stepp made a motion to approve the GIRMA First Responder PTSD Program Benefit Renewal. Council Member Cooley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

12. Arch Workers Compensation Insurance Coverage

Mr. Porta stated after receiving the workers' compensation insurance renewal late last month from our previous carrier, Midwest, the agent was asked about the proposed premium increase and if another carrier had provided a competitive quote. Within a couple of days, a better insurance proposal was received from Arch Insurance, which is \$28,784.00 less than the original proposal from Midwest with the same coverage. After reviewing the proposals, it was recommended to approve the change to Arch Insurance for the city's workers' compensation coverage with their two-year rate guarantee of \$105,989.00.

Council Member Stepp made a motion to approve the Arch Workers Compensation Insurance Coverage. Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

13. Cowbell Cyber Insurance Coverage

Mr. Porta stated after reviewing and discussing the insurance renewal with the local agent, the city was provided some additional options for cyber insurance coverage and my recommendation is to rescind

the approval on the cyber insurance renewal with Travelers Insurance who only had a \$1 million coverage (\$40,816 annual premium) and move to Cowbell with a \$3 million coverage at the annual premium of \$36,410.

Council Member Stepp made a motion to rescind the approval of Travelers Insurance Quote on June 19, 2025. Council Member Roth seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

Council Member Roth made a motion to approve the Cowbell Cyber Insurance Coverage. Council Member Cooley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

RESOLUTIONS

14. Municipal Court Fine Schedule Update

Mr. Lovell stated the Municipal Court fine schedule had been updated to align with current state law. This marks the first update since 2020. This update was presented in accordance with the recommendations of the Chief Judge of Municipal Court and the Chief Prosecutor/City Attorney.

Council Member Cordell made a motion to approve the Municipal Court Fine Schedule Update. Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

Reference Resolution: 15-25

SECOND READING OF ORDINANCES

15. Amendment of Section 13.2 Municipal Court Regular Hours

Mr. Lovell stated this is an ordinance amending Section 13-2 of the City of Cartersville Code of Ordinances to revise the regular session dates for Municipal Court. The proposed amendment adds two new provisions: (1) canceling court sessions on Mondays following a legal holiday that falls on the preceding Thursday or Friday, and (2) canceling court sessions on Mondays when the Chief Clerk of Court or the City Solicitor is attending official seminars or training. These updates aim to ensure administrative efficiency and proper court operation. The City Attorney's Office and Municipal Court requested approval of this ordinance.

Council Member Cordell made a motion to approve the Amendment of Section 13-2 Municipal Court Regular Session Schedule Updates. Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

Reference Ordinance: 25-25

CONTRACTS/AGREEMENTS

16. Certificate of Dedication and Maintenance Agreement

Mr. Lovell stated Harmony Walk Water & Sewer Infrastructure - Windsong Properties has executed a Certificate of Dedication and Maintenance Agreement for the Harmony Walk development, conveying ownership of water and sewer infrastructure to the City of Cartersville. A Maintenance Bond in the amount of \$222,639.41 has been provided. The City is requested to accept the dedication and assume future maintenance responsibilities following the required inspection and maintenance period.

Council Member Cordell made a motion to approve the Certificate of Dedication and Maintenance Agreement. Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

ADDED ITEMS

17. Strategic National Stockpile Point of Dispensing Agreement (FY26)

Mr. Porta stated the City of Cartersville & Bartow County Board of Health - This Memorandum of Understanding establishes a partnership between the City of Cartersville (via the Cartersville Civic Center) and the Bartow County Board of Health to serve as a Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Point of Dispensing (POD) site in the event of a public health emergency. The agreement outlines responsibilities for both parties, including site access, staffing, logistics, and confidentiality. The term of the agreement is July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

Council Member Cordell made a motion to approve the Strategic National Stockpile Point of Dispensing Agreement (FY26). Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

18. Distillery Licensing and Regulations

Mr. Lovell stated this emergency ordinance amends Chapter 4 of the City of Cartersville Code of Ordinances to establish licensing regulations for distilleries in response to recent changes in state policy.

Council Member Stepp made a motion to approve the Emergency Ordinance for Distillery License and Regulations. Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

Reference Ordinance: 26-25

OTHER

Mayor Santini reminded everyone that city offices would be closed on Friday, July 4, 2025. Additionally, he invited everyone to the Annual 4th of July Celebration which would include the parade in Downtown and followed by a fireworks show at Dellinger Park. These festivities are put on by the Rotary Club of Etowah.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to discuss, Council Member Stepp made a motion to adjourn.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:03 P.M.

/s/ 
Matthew J. Santini
Mayor

ATTEST: 
/s/ Julia Drake
Julia Drake
City Clerk

