CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

FEBRUARY 09, 2026 AT 6:00 PM

COUNCIL CHAMBERS - 1859 CITY CENTER WAY, JONESBORO, GA 30236

MINUTES

I. CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Mayor Sartor.

II. ROLL CALL

The roll was called by City Clerk Jewett.

- Mayor Donya L. Sartor
- Mayor Pro-Tem Asjah Miller (Arrived at 6:05 p.m.)
- Councilmember Chelsey Curney
- Councilmember Alfred Dixon
- Councilmember Cameron Dixon (Left meeting at 7:31 p.m. and returned at 7:34 p.m.)
- Councilmember Santia Fox
- Councilmember Tracey Messick
- City Attorney, LaTonya Wiley
- City Clerk, Shandrella Jewett
- Community Development Director, Faith Akuta
- Economic/Downtown Development Authority Director, Blue Cole
- Finance Director, Karen Slaton-Dixon (Absent)
- Operation/Human Resource, Maria Wetherington
- Police Chief, Christopher Cato
- Public Works Director, Marcus Heard

III. INVOCATION

Invocation by Pastor Michael Bridge of First Baptist Jonesboro.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

V. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A. Council to consider approval and adoption of the amended Agenda.

Old Business:

- Added letter C. – Discussion/update regarding the Forensic Audit by Attorney Wiley.

New Business:

- Added letter B. – Discussion/update regarding emergency repair at Nouveau.

Economic Development Report:

- Added letter B. – Council to consider approval of a Memorandum of Agreement regarding a Local Comprehensive Plan Update Assistance

RESULT: **Amended Agenda Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**
SECONDER: **Councilmember C. Dixon**

VI. MAYOR'S PRESENTATION

Congratulatory remarks were extended to Councilmember A. Dixon for being a part of the 2026 Young Gamechangers program hosted by GeorgiaForward.

The GeorgiaForward Young Gamechangers program is a leadership initiative that empowers young professionals from across the state to develop actionable solutions regarding persistent challenges faced in communities.

VII. PRESENTATIONS

Proclamation Recognizing Black History Month.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS (PLEASE LIMIT COMMENTS TO THREE (3) MINUTES)

- Terry Mitchell (Morrow, GA 30260) – Mr. Mitchell thanked Mayor and Council for providing an opportunity to work as an intern for the City of Jonesboro.
- Kendra Emeruem (Unincorporated Jonesboro) – Spoke regarding JYCG budget, JYCG membership (non-residents), leadership, and learning how to compromise.

IX. PUBLIC HEARINGS & CONSIDERATIONS

A. Public Hearing regarding Variance Application **#25-VAR-001** submitted by Max Kovtoun for properties located 262 and 294 South Main Street (Parcels #06032A B002, 06032A B002Z, & 06032A B006), Jonesboro, Georgia 30236 within the MX (Mixed Use) District and the G (Gateway South District). The properties consist of 29.14 +/- acres. The request seeks relief from the Gateway South District's exterior architectural design and material standards specifically related to porches and balconies.

Director Akuta led the discussion. A correction was made to the Condition.

Public Hearing Opened

No one came forth to speak

Public Hearing Closed

Council to consider Variance Application #25-VAR-001 with the following Condition.

The development shall be constructed in substantially conformance with the conceptual rendering presented to the City Council on February 2, 2026. The total number of dwelling units shall not exceed 196 (consisting of 147 units with balconies, 29 units with patios, and 20 interior units without patios). Any modifications to the building elevations or unit configuration shall require additional approval from the Mayor and Council.

RESULT: **Approved with Condition (Vote 5 to 1)**
MOVER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**
SECONDER: **Councilmember Curney**
AYES: **Mayor Pro-Tem Miller; Councilmembers Curney, A. Dixon, C. Dixon, and Fox**
NAYS: **Councilmember Messick**

B. Public Hearing regarding Variance Application **#25-VAR-003** submitted by Max Kovtoun for properties located 262 and 294 South Main Street (Parcels #06032A B002, 06032A B002Z, & 06032A B006), Jonesboro, Georgia 30236 within the MX (Mixed Use) District and the G

(Gateway South District). The properties consist of 29.14 +/- acres. The request seeks relief from the Gateway South District's exterior architectural design and material standards specifically related to sidewalks.

Director Akuta led the discussion.

Public Hearing Opened

No one came forth to speak

Public Hearing Closed

Council to consider Variance Application #25-VAR-003 with the following Condition.

The site plan now includes parcels 06032A B006 and 06032A B003, which were not part of the original Conditional Use approval. A concurrent Conditional Use permit has been submitted to include these parcels and ensure compliance with applicable MX zoning and Gateway South Overlay District standards. Staff recommended approval of the applicants' request to reduce the landscape strip between the curb and sidewalk with the following condition: The project design shall be substantially consistent with the plans presented to Council. Any changes require Council approval.

RESULT: **Approved with Condition (Vote 5 to 1)**
MOVER: **Councilmember Curney**
SECONDER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**
AYES: **Mayor Pro-Tem Miller; Councilmembers Curney, A. Dixon, C. Dixon, and Fox**
NAYS: **Councilmember Messick**

C. **Public Hearing** regarding Conditional Use Permit Application **#25-CUP-009** submitted by Max Kovtoun for properties located at 262 and 294 South Main Street (Parcels # 06032A B002, 06032A B002Z, 06032A B003, & 06032A B006), Jonesboro, Georgia 30236 within the MX (Mixed Use) District and the G (Gateway South District). The properties consist of 29.14 +/- acres. The request is for a multifamily development. (Staff recommended approval with two (2) Conditions.)

Director Akuta led the discussion.

Public Hearing Opened

No one came forth to speak

Public Hearing Closed

Council to consider Conditional Use Permit Application #25-CUP-009 with the following Conditions.

1. Development must comply with Section 86-205 (Multi-Family) and Section 86-101 (R-M Standards), except as modified by the concurrently approved variances.
2. All structures must follow Section 86-118 (Gateway South Overlay) design standards, except as modified by the approved variances.

RESULT: **Approved with Conditions (Vote was 5 to 1)**
MOVER: **Mayor Pro-Tem Miller**
SECONDER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**
AYES: **Mayor Pro-Tem Miller; Councilmembers Curney, A. Dixon, C. Dixon, and Fox**
NAYS: **Councilmember Messick**

X. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Council to consider approval of the Special Called Council Meeting Minutes dated 12/16/2025.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**
SECONDER: **Councilmember Curney**

B. Council to consider approval of the Work Session Minutes dated 01/05/2026.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember Curney**
SECONDER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**

C. Council to consider approval of the Council Retreat Minutes dated 01/09/2026.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was 5 to 1)**
MOVER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**
SECONDER: **Councilmember Curney**
ABSTAINED: **Councilmember Messick (Abstain due to not being present at the Retreat.)**

D. Council to consider approval of the Regular Council Meeting Minutes dated 01/12/2026.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember Curney**
SECONDER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**

XI. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Council to consider a Professional Services Agreement with Falcon Design Consultants, LLC for full-service civil engineering services, including site planning, water and sewer systems, transportation, stormwater management, construction oversight, GIS, and code compliance.

B. Council to consider approval and adoption of the Comprehensive Nuisance Abatement Ordinance 2026-03 and Repeal of Existing Nuisance and Unsafe Building Provisions currently codified at Chapter 36, Article III (Nuisances), Sections 36-81 through 36-81-120, in their entirety; and Chapter 16, Article IV (Unsafe and Dilapidated Buildings), Sections 16-71 through 16-91.

C. Council to consider approval of a Residential Lease Agreement for City-Owned Property at 173 Cloud Street, Jonesboro, GA 30236 between the City of Jonesboro and Clifford Thompson.

D. Council to consider approval of a contract between Luminary Mediaworks and the City of Jonesboro, Georgia regarding Audio/Visual & Livestreaming Services for JYCG Meetings.

Council to consider approval of the Consent Agenda.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**
SECONDER: **Councilmember Curney**

XII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Council to consider the City's revised Procurement Policy and Ordinance 2026-04.

The updated Procurement Policy was distributed to Mayor and Council.

City Attorney Wiley led the discussion. She spoke regarding the change (page 9) that was made during the February 2, 2026 Work Session to the column that reads $2,500.00 - $9,999.99. The approval entities are the Department Directors and the City Manager, instead of City Council.

City Attorney Wiley noted in the absence of a City Manager and per the Ordinance, the Mayor would be the Chief Procurement Officer due to her being the CEO. Mayor Sartor stated nothing can be approved for any amount if there is no allocated funding in the line item.

Councilmember Messick recommended the following changes:

Section 4: Purchasing Levels and Processes - $10,000.00 to $49,999.99.

City Council to be added as an approver. Council discussed and agreed on the changes below.

- Approval entities would be Department Directors, City Manager, and Council's approval for $10,000.00 to $49,999.99 when outside of the scope of the budget.

  Mayor Sartor noted the above is okay since there is a clause regarding emergencies wherein the City may go over the above-mentioned amount.

Section 3: Administrative Structure & Authorities.

- The City Council to be consulted for approvals over $10,000.00 (seeking consistency through the policy and the ordinance).

Section 6: Purchasing Orders (PO).

- Add City Council's approval, if over $10,000.00.

Section 16: Purchasing Card Program:

- Clarification was provided by Mayor Sartor to Councilmember Messick on how the program would work. Councilmember Messick requested an updated list of who's holding the P-Cards. Also, she asked if the purchase activity would be included in the monthly financial report. Mayor Sartor advised that it is open recordable, but some of the information would have to be redacted, such as the card number. City Attorney Wiley stated that the P-Card activity is not normally a part of the monthly financial report.

Training:

- Councilmember Messick wanted to know if there would be any training provided online or in-person for staff and City Council regarding the procurement system. At this time, a date was not determined.

Section 19: Risk Management and Internal Controls:

Councilmember Messick recommended a change to the last sentence under Section 19.1 Segregation of Duties. She said the City Manager should present to Mayor and Council any changes or delegations regarding processes and procedures. Councilmember Messick stated that it currently reads as if the City Manager can make changes without consulting the Mayor or the Council. Recommended better verbiage. Mayor Sartor clarified that this sentence does not mean the City Manager would change something. The City Manager would have authority to implement processes and procedures to ensure compliance with this section. A person would have to be on site to implement and follow the processes. Council agreed. Therefore, no changes were made to this section.

Councilmember Messick asked if the Procurement Policy and Procedures have been shared with the Finance Director, Karen Slaton-Dixon, and does this fall in line with her current contract. Mayor Sartor said this is consistent with her current job description. City Attorney Wiley said the policy is to put guardrails and processes in place which will make her job easier.

Councilmember Fox recommended tabling the item in order to allow more time to review the policy. She recommended that Council be more involved in the process due to the absence of a City Manager. Councilmember Messick asked if Councilmember Curney could amend her motion to table the item until Council have time to review the policy along with the suggestions. Councilmember Curney replied "No."

Councilmember Curney amended her motion for any Bids/Proposals & Forms that's between $10,000 to $49,999.99 (#2.) to read Contract as appropriate and approved by City Manager and City Council. This motion included all of the above recommended changes as well.

RESULT: **Approved with noted changes (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember Curney**
SECONDER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**

Mayor Sartor stated, "next week I will be attending a three-day training along with Director Akuta and look forward to the City getting a really good procurement system so the City can move forward, especially since it's going to be funded initially by the grant."

B. Council to consider approval and adoption of Ordinance 2026-01 To Adopt FY 2026 Budget For Each Fund To The City of Jonesboro.

At this time, no one made a motion to approve the budget.

Mayor Sartor asked again if anyone wanted to make a motion to approve FY26 Budget. City Attorney Wiley noted that "the City's Charter requires that you approve a budget each year." "It's in your Charter and in the event one is not approved, you continue operating under an expired budget." "I will remind Mayor & Council that you had the Public Hearing preceding today's requested action."

Councilmember A. Dixon made a motion to add an additional $3,000.00 to JYCG (line-item 10) which would make it a total of $15,000.00. He included in his motion for the $3,000.00 to be taken from City Events (line-item 58).

Mayor and Council had discussion regarding JYCG line-item and a few other line-items. Councilmember A. Dixon amended his motion to include all of Mayor and Council's changes mentioned below:

- JYCG (line-item 10) increased from $12,000.00 to $15,000.00 per Councilmember A. Dixon
- City Events (line-item 58) decreased from $70,000.00 to $68,000.00 per Mayor Sartor
- Economic Development Main Street (line-item 87) decreased from $15,000.00 to $12,000.00 per Mayor Sartor.
- Newsletter (line-item 9) increased from $3,000.00 to $10,000.00 per Councilmember Fox
- Special Events (line-item 73) decreased from $20,000.00 to $15,000.00 per Mayor Sartor

Councilmember Miller asked if the following items were included in the budget along with a 4% raise for staff:

- Overtime issue with Public Works Department
- Increase in pay for staff members that accomplished certain certifications in their field or increased their level of education on their subject matter

Mayor Sartor stated, "this is a starting point and when there is a need for additional purchases or account for promotion, we'll just come back before Council and look at cost savings across the budget and make those adjustments/budget amendments."

RESULT: **Approved with noted changes (Vote was 5 to 1)**
MOVER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**
SECONDER: **Mayor Pro-Tem Miller**
AYES: **Mayor Pro-Tem Miller; Councilmembers A. Dixon, C. Dixon, Fox, and Messick**
NAYS: **Councilmember Curney**

C. Council to discuss updated information regarding the forensic audit.

City Attorney Wiley led the discussion regarding a $15,000.00 bill the City paid to Plante & Moran, PLLC for phase one of the audit. Recently, the City received a bill for phase two in the amount of $45,000.00. The invoice was not paid because there was no itemization (for transparency purposes) of how the $45,000.00 was accumulated. City Attorney Wiley said she

was told by Plante Moran that they do not give itemized bills and that they stop doing itemized bills about 10 years ago. Plante Moran said the City would get a report at the end of the audit. Mayor Sartor said in November 2024, she asked Michelle McHae-Adams of Plante Moran to provide an itemized copy. Therefore, she believes that Michelle knew the City's expectation was to receive an itemized copy of the bill. The bill stated 92 hours = $45,000.00. However, if you multiply the medium rate times 91 hours, it still does not equal $45,000.00.

City Attorney Wiley further discussed the following matters:

- No itemized billing provided to explain the work corresponding with the amount that the City is being charged.
- Billable hours explanation vs. retainer fee
- Scope of Work. Developing the scope vs. talking to individuals, elected officials and getting their concerns, and from this point the auditor develops a Plan of Action
- Forensic Audit projected to end around February 26, 2026
- Will probably receive an additional $45,000.00 to $60,000.00 to finish phase three...totaling over $100,000.00 (Per Mayor Sartor, prior Council only agreed to allocate $30,000.00 more in funds)
- Attorney Client Privilege Information vs. Audit is not privileged and is open recordable

Councilmember Messick asked City Attorney Wiley to send Council a copy of Plante Moran's original agreement. Also, she requested that Michelle from Plante Moran come to the March Council Meeting to present her findings. It was further noted that monthly updates were not being provided on a regular basis to Council.

Lastly, City Attorney Wiley said she would speak with Plante Moran about the report. Mayor Sartor asked Council if they wanted to approve the unitemized $45,000.00 bills. No action was taken at this time.

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Council to discuss FY23 Audit Report.

Financial Auditor, Mr. Lee Tab of Tab & Tab (Certified Public Accountants) introduced himself and gave a presentation on the following:

- Highlights of the 2023 Annual Financial Statements
- Reportable Findings and Recommendations
- Letter to Governance

Mr. Tab highlighted the importance of understanding governmental accounting. The audit consisted of 97 pages (full disclosure) of all of the City's finances for 2023. He said the City had a really good year in 2023.

Councilmember C. Dixon left the meeting at 7:31 p.m. and returned at 7:34 p.m.

Councilmember Messick asked for a copy of the FY23 Audit Report.

In conclusion, there were three (3) findings, in which one of them was the City being late on completing the FY23 Financial Audit. Mr. Tab said it is important to have people in place who can understand how to do government accounting and book transactions correctly.

Mayor Sartor said the procurement policy that the City is currently working on will be very beneficial along with the assistance of the Finance Director Slaton-Dixon. The audit report should be ready for distribution in the next 14 days. Lastly, Mr. Tab has already been approved to work on FY24 Financial Audit.

B. Council to discuss updated information regarding Nouveau repairs.

Mayor Sartor said the emergency repair regarding the 2020 water heater cost the City $1,000.00. Director Cole spoke to the repair person on Wednesday, and they came out on Thursday. The water heater was repaired on Friday, February 6, 2026. Councilmember Messick asked if the repair of the water heat was the responsibility of the City? Mayor Sartor said she made the decision to pay for it because Nouveau needed hot water. However, if Council want Nouveau to be responsible for the $1,000.00, it would be at the Council's pleasure. City Attorney Wiley agreed to look over the lease to see who would be responsible for the cost of the water heater repair (the City, DDA, or Nouveau). Mayor Pro-Tem Miller said going forward, she prefers clarity on the front end as to who would be responsible.

City Attorney Wiley highlighted the importance of having a formal Intergovernmental Agreement vs. the gentleman's handshake. This is necessary to have so it is clear on how it operates. However, there may be some overlapping due to Council being the governing authority. Mayor Sartor said when it is time to clean it up, it will have to be cleaned up 100%. For example: Public Works have been cutting the grass of the DDA building.

Councilmember Fox said according to the lease, the City and the DDA were not responsible for paying the invoice of $1,000.00. If the City is going to step outside of the lease agreement, then there should be some provisions in place going forward.

XIV. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

A. Economic Development Report by Community Development Director Akuta.

Directors Akuta and Cole led the discussion regarding their reports. (See Agenda Packet)

B. Council to consider approval regarding a Memorandum of Agreement regarding The Local Comprehensive Plan Update Assistance (ARC) subject to legal review.

Director Cole led the discussion. It was later noted that Attorney Wiley reviewed the agreement on January 29, 2026. A copy of the agreement will be sent to Mayor and Council.

RESULT: **Approved with Conditions/Legal Review (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Mayor Pro-Tem Miller**
SECONDER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**

XV. REPORT OF CITY COUNCILMEMBERS

Comments by Councilmember Fox:

- Thanked staff for everything they do for the City
- February 21, 2026 – Join Councilmember Fox at the Swint's Feed & Garden Supply Store regarding "The Growth Series"
- February 23, 2026 – Can meet with Councilmember Fox during her mobile office hours between 12:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Comments by Councilmember Messick:

- Thanked staff for everything they do for the City
- Black History Month – Encourage everyone to participate in the events that celebrates our heritage and culture
- Happy Valentines Day – Know that you are loved

Comments by Councilmember C. Dixon:

- Thanked everyone for being present at the meeting
- Looking forward to Mr. Mitchell being an intern for the City of Jonesboro
- Thanked City staff for everything they do

- Shout-out to some of the members of JYCG and the Young Democratic Party of Clayton County for attending the meeting
- Beautification Committee is looking for three (3) members to join the board. Shout-out to Keven for being one of the members
- March 7, 2026 - Jonesboro 1st Annual Trash Wars event at 9:30 a.m. Check in at Lee Street Park

Comments by Councilmember A. Dixon:

- Thanked everyone for attending the meeting, watching online, and for staying locked in with what's going on in City
- Thanked Council for approving FY26 Budget
- Thanked Mr. Terry Mitchell for participating in tonight's Council Meeting
- February 23, 2026 to March 1, 2026 - Clayton State University (Legends of the Lake Homecoming 2026)
- February 27, 2026 – Annual Heritage Gala hosted by Georgia Legislative Black Caucus

Comments by Councilmember Curney:

- Thanked staff for everything they do for the City
- Thanked Council for approving FY26 Budget
- Thanked Council and everyone for supporting Ordinance 2026-02 regarding Possession of Marijuana Less Than One Ounce (Decriminalization of Marijuana). Thanked the media, advocacy groups, and Young Democratic Party of Clayton County for coming out and spreading the word regarding this matter
- Looking forward to advancing the City of Jonesboro and the initiative the City has planned

Comments by Mayor Pro-Tem Miller:

- Thanked staff for everything they do for the City
- Thanked the Young Democratic Party of Clayton County, residents, and JYCG for coming to the meeting
- March 7, 2026 - Jonesboro 1st Annual Trash Wars – Can sign up by scanning the QR Code on the website. Can pick which Councilmember you would like to help
- Black History Month – Please go out and support a black owned business

XVI. REPORT OF MAYOR

- Thanked Council for approving FY26 Budget
- Spoke regarding the "push for real gratitude to be shown to employees by way of a comparable compensation package at the market rate. The budget does not include bringing the minimum wage up to $22 per hour, which I will be pushing for, as well as looking at cost savings in the first quarter to give a substantial raise across the board. It's time to show staff we appreciate them by providing them with a livable wage to take care of their families and to have some savings"
- February 21, 2026 - Divine 9 Historically Black College and University Day – Black History Trail Tour. The tour will include Rosenwald School, Arts Clayton, the Train Depot, the Quilt Show, and a Scavenger Hunt
- March 7, 2026 - Jonesboro 1st Annual Trash Wars event at 9:30 a.m.
- March 26, 2026 - Clayton County Day at the Capitol will be held at the Georgia State Capitol from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
- Mayor Sartor's Mobile Hours are listed on the Facebook page – Can meet in person or virtually
- Southern Cities Economic Initiative (SCEI) Grant – Three staff members will be in Birmingham, AL working with Atlanta Federal Reserve Bank. This is an additional $38,000.00 grant to help with the City's procurement process
- American Beverage Foundation for Healthy America was on site today videotaping

- April 9-10, 2026 – African American Mayor's Association Conference. Will be recognized as one of four cities across the country to receive this grant
- Congressional Community Project Funding - As of two days ago, all 15 community projects funded by Congressman David Scott have been signed into law. This marks the first time in the City of Jonesboro's history that the City has received congressional community project funding. The City received two out of the fifteen. $3 million dollars for the Pedestrian Improvement Project and $1 million for Enhancing Law Enforcement and Public Safety Project
- This year's goal is to apply for congressional community funding or appropriations with Senators Ossoff and Warnock. Looking for additional funding for blight, demolition, and economic development
- July 4, 2026 - America's 250th Birthday – Looking for ideas on what the City can do the entire month

XVII. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Executive Session for the purpose of discussing litigation and a personnel matter.

At 8:35 p.m., a motion was made to go into Executive Session to discuss litigation and a personnel matter.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**
SECONDER: **Councilmember Messick**

At 8:55 p.m., a motion was made to reconvene the Work Session.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember Curney**
SECONDER: **Councilmember Messick**

B. Consider any action(s), if necessary, based on decision(s) made in Executive Session.

None

C. Council to consider approval to amend the Executive Session topics to include a personnel matter along with litigation.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember Curney**
SECONDER: **Councilmember C. Dixon**

D. Council to consider approval of the Executive Session Affidavit and Minutes dated February 9, 2026.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Mayor Pro-Tem Miller**
SECONDER: **Councilmember C. Dixon**

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember Fox**
SECONDER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**

Dr. Donya L. Sartor, Mayor

Shandrella Jewett, City Clerk