CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

APRIL 14, 2025 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 Tracey Messick
- Councilmember Alfred Dixon
- Councilmember Don Dixon
- Councilmember Billy Lester
- Councilmember Asjah Miller
- Councilmember Billy Powell
- Interim City Clerk, Shandrella Jewett
- City Attorney, David Dreyer
- Interim Police Chief, Christopher Cato
- Public Works Director, Marcus Heard
- Community Development Director, Adleasia Cameron
- Downtown Main Street Manager, Andrew Simpson

III. INVOCATION

Invocation by Robert Taylor, Chaplin of Jonesboro Police Department.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

V. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A. Council to consider approval of the amended Agenda.

The following item was added under VI. Mayors' Presentation:

- Letter A. - Council to consider approval of a promotion regarding Interim Police Chief Christopher Cato to the position of Chief of Police with a salary of $120,000.00, effective April 15, 2025.

The following amendments were made under item VII. Presentations:

- Removed the reading of the Proclamation Honoring Dr. C. Harrison Braddy
- Added Academic Recognition of Ashley Cooke

The following items were added under XIII. New Business:

- Item H. Council to consider approval of a Memorandum of Understanding regarding Southern Cities Economic Initiative (SCEI) with National League of Cities (NLC).
- Item I. Tree Removal

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

VI. MAYOR'S PRESENTATION

A. Council to consider approval of a promotion/contract regarding Interim Police Chief Christopher Cato to the position of Chief of Police with a salary of $120,000.00, effective April 15, 2025.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember Lester**
SECONDER: **Councilmember D. Dixon**

VII. PRESENTATIONS

- Proclamation Recognizing ASEZ WAO Young Adult Volunteers of the World Mission Society Church of God.
- Proclamation Recognizing Marilyn Newton of United With Open Arms, Incorporated
- Proclamation Recognizing Pat Daniel regarding United With Open Arms, Incorporated.
- ~~Proclamation Honoring Dr. Carroll Harrison Braddy regarding United With Open Arms, Inc. (Dr. Braddy was not present)~~
- Presentation of an award to Ashley Cooke (student-athlete and rising leader both on and off the tennis court).

VIII. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Public Hearing regarding Alcohol License Application #25-ALC-002 for retail sales at 249 N. Main Street, Jonesboro, Georgia 30236. The legal business name is AHS Kwik Mart. Akshat Shah has requested to be the License Representative.

The applicant, Akshat Shah spoke regarding the request.

Public Hearing Opened

No one came forth to speak

Public Hearing Closed

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

- Akshat Shah (Jonesboro Business Owner) - Spoke in favor of Alcohol License Application #25-ALC-002.
- McKenzie Newlove (JYCG member) - Spoke regarding the Jonesboro Youth City Government 2nd Annual "Let's Roll Skate Party" that was held on April 10, 2025 at Skate Zone. She thanked Mayor, Council, and Attorney Danny Nagel (Nagel Law Firm) for their contributions and said they had a great time.

X. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Council to consider approval of the Minutes from February 3, 2025 Public Hearing #2.

Councilmember A. Dixon stated, "I know for public comments we ask residents for their names and addresses, and we have a public comment sign-in sheet." "Do we make any of these public record, or can we make the minutes reflect if they are a City resident or not?"

Mayor Sartor asked City Attorney Dreyer to find out what the City policy reads regarding the matter. She asked the Council if they were okay with revisiting this matter at the May Council meeting. The Council agreed.

A motion was made to table the item in order to determine if the addresses of those who spoke during public comment time would be captured in the minutes.

RESULT: **Approved (Tabled until 5/12/25 Council Meeting - Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Mayor Sartor**
SECONDER: **Mayor Pro-Tem Messick**

B. Council to consider approval of the Minutes from February 3, 2025 Work Session.

A motion was made to table the item in order to determine if the addresses of those who spoke during public comment time would be captured in the minutes.

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

A second motion was made to move forward with approving the Minutes from February 3, 2025 Work Session since there were no public comments during this specific meeting.

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

C. Council to consider approval of the Minutes from February 10, 2025 Public Hearing #3.

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

D. Council to consider approval of the Minutes from March 3, 2025 Work Session.

A motion was made to table this item in order to determine if the addresses of those who spoke during public comment time would be captured in minutes.

RESULT: **Approved (Tabled until 5/12/25 Council Meeting - Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**
SECONDER: **Councilmember D. Dixon**

E. Council to consider approval of the Minutes from March 10, 2025 Regular Council Meeting.

A motion was made to table this item in order to determine if the addresses of those who spoke during public comment time would be captured in the minutes.

Mayor Sartor said she does not feel that the Council should go back and do it retro and that it should be stated moving forward that a person should be required to tell if they live in the City because it may impact whether someone wants to comment or not. It was brought to the attention of the Council that some people do not provide their complete addresses during public comment, and nothing has been said about it. Mayor Sartor said if the City decides to move forward with listing the addresses for public comments, then it would need to be done via a resolution and not by a vote. The Council agreed.

Mayor Sartor asked the City Attorney and City Clerk to look at the current policy and what is best practice concerning the matter.

Councilmember A. Dixon said he appreciated the insight but would like to know if the person is a city resident or not. Mayor Sartor said if the Council wants to do this, then Council would need to establish a policy/resolution that requires it.

At this time, Mayor Sartor said that Rick Balock had requested on the record that her Letter of Resignation, along with something else, be submitted with the minutes of March 10, 2025. City Clerk Jewett said she would add the document(s) to the minutes.

A motion was made to table this item in order to determine if the addresses of those who spoke during public comment would be captured in the minutes, and to attach the above-mentioned document(s) to the minutes.

RESULT: **Approved (Tabled until 5/12/25 Council Meeting - Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**
SECONDER: **Councilmember Miller**

At this time, Councilmember Powell asked Mayor Sartor for the Minutes of March 6, 2025 Emergency Special Called Council Meeting. City Clerk Jewett had provided the document to Mayor Sartor for review and distribution to the Council.

Also, the January 29, 2025 Public Hearing #1 Minute should have been added to the amended Agenda for review as well. Mayor Sartor said both January 29, 2025 and March 6, 2025 Minutes would be added to the May 12, 2025 Agenda since they were not added to tonight's amended agenda.

XI. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Council to consider approval of Bryan Holmes as a Board Member to the Downtown Development Authority Board.

B. Council to consider approval of a partial road closure on Courthouse Way for "Meet Me on Main Sip and Stroll" event on 4/18/25.

C. Council to consider approval of an invoice (#20250204 for $4,700.00) from the IT Department (Luminary Mediaworks) regarding the Interface, Data Migration, and Hosting fee for archived records within the MinuteTraq portal.

A motion was made for the Council to consider approval of the Consent Agenda.

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

XII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Council to consider approval of Alcohol License Application #25-ALC-002 for retail sales at 249 N. Main Street, Jonesboro, GA. 30236. The legal business name is AHS Kwik Mart. Akshat Shah has requested to be the License Representative.

Community Development Director Cameron led the discussion. She stated the Conditions would remain the same because this was a transfer of business. There was no lapse with the previous owners' license.

Conditions - The proposed premises must meet the following applicable provisions of the zoning code of the City:

- The subject site must be within the areas of the city zoned C1, C2, H1, H2, M1, or within the Tara Boulevard Overlay District.
- The premises cannot be located within 100 yards of any church building or within 200 yards of any school or education building, school ground, or college campus as defined in O.C.G.A. § 3-3-21.
- The premises cannot be located within 100 yards of any school or education building, school ground, or college campus as defined in O.C.G.A. § 3-3-21.

- The premises cannot be located within 100 yards of any alcoholic treatment center as defined in O.C.G.A. § 3-3-21.

Conditions met:

- The subject site is in the C-2 Highway Commercial Zoning District.
- The front entrance of the premises is clearly visible from N. Main Street.
- The nearest church building, Shiloh Baptist Church Annex is approximately 392+/- yards from the subject site.
- Clayton County Public School located at 1058 Fifth Avenue is the nearest school and is at least 1,000 yards from the subject site.
- The nearest drug and alcoholic treatment centers are approximately 260+/- yards away from the subject site.

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

B. Council to consider approval of an annual sponsorship level of $5,500.00 to Arts Clayton with the deduction made from whatever benefit the City would have received for attending Arte' Gra.

Councilmember Miller led the discussion. She mentioned the City could get the funds from salary savings from the previous months, and then going forward (next year), the City could have a budgeted line item for Arts Clayton.

Councilmember Miller stated that she spoke to Kasey of Arts Clayton, and mentioned with a partnership/annual membership, they would be inclined to do the following:

- Provide a complimentary class or two for the community or collaborate on community-building strategies.
- Create a package that would allow for specific tickets for Council Members to attend certain events (up to a specified number of tickets).
- Prominently feature the City's logo with additional community partners.

Mayor Sartor said the City purchased two tables ($1,200.00) and two lovely pieces of art ($275.00 & $450.00), and one piece of art was donated. She wanted to ensure the City supported up to the amount of $5,500.00. She asked Council to allow 30 days for processing to ensure the money is available.

Councilmember Powell asked how much the City spent with Arts Clayton at the Gala for the two tables and the art. Mr. Simpson said it was $1,200.00 per table, and the Downtown Development Authority was to pay $600.00 towards one table. Councilmember Miller said the funds for the table goes into a separate pot from the annual donations.

Mayor Sartor clarified that the $5,500.00 didn't include a discounted table. Councilmember D. Dixon said $5,500.00 is a lot, and to keep in mind, this is the taxpayers' money. She replied, it might cost a little less if Kasey works with the City by deducting the difference of what the tables would have cost if the City was a member.

Councilmember Miller said she understood what Councilmember D. Dixon was saying. However, those funds would be recycled into the community because they would be doing things for their children and seniors, or whatever the City decides as a Council (or specific members of the council) to utilize the space that Kasey is willing to partner with us for the community members. The City wants Jonesboro to be a place where you can live, work, and play, and Arts Clayton would be offering something for the community to come out to so that they're not just home all the time, having to leave the City of Jonesboro in order to participate in events.

Mayor Sartor mentioned that before becoming Mayor, the City had sponsored Arts Clayton in the past, and this was how she got involved. There is just a gap in sponsorship, and the City has a long-standing relationship with Arts Clayton.

Councilmember A. Dixon spoke about the funds being recycled back into the community. Also, he spoke regarding Mr. Collins and his sister (artists who live in Jonesboro) needing art supplies. He said the donations do impact the kids right in our backyard.

A motion was made to approve the annual donation with the difference (if Kasey can provide a difference of what the City paid for the tables) to lower the donation.

RESULT:	**Approved (Vote 5 to 1)**
MOVER:	**Councilmember Miller**
SECONDER:	**Councilmember A. Dixon**
AYES:	**Mayor Pro-Tem Messick; Councilmembers A. Dixon, D. Dixon, Lester, and Miller**
NAYS:	**Councilmember Powell**

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Council to discuss the City's vehicle (Chevrolet Tahoe).

Councilmember Powell led the discussion regarding the lease expiring and his desire to get rid of the Tahoe, but nothing has happened about it. Mayor Sartor said the City is paying an estimated $27 or $35 a month for the Tahoe and the lease is paid off. She said the vehicle is being utilized as a City when attending events. It is not a good investment to return it when the City is paying an estimated $33.00.

Councilmember Powell stated he wants the City to own the vehicle and sell it. Also, he wants to know the cash buyout from Enterprise....do we have a title in-hand. Mayor Pro-tem Messick asked how much does is owed on the vehicle. Mayor Sartor asked Chief Cato to get the information for her.

B. Council to consider approval and adoption of Resolution #2025-005 regarding Georgia Cities Week (April 20-26, 2025)

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

Councilmember A. Dixon requested a second proclamation that would outline community-centered events during the week of April 20-26, 2025. Mayor Sartor asked City Clerk Jewett to move forward with the request.

C. Council to discuss updates regarding Jonesboro Youth City Government.

- Budget Update – Councilmember A. Dixon asked if JYCG Budget was available. City Clerk Jewett provided a copy for Councilmember A. Dixon to review. Mayor Sartor said any questions or concerns would be addressed at the next Council Meeting and that Ms. Mungin could get him the information he needs.

- Acknowledged Isaac Hathaway, a senior of Jonesboro High School for completing 190 community service hours with JYCG while being a senior, having a job in Clayton County, and being a two-time student athlete. Thanked Council and the Jonesboro Police Department for pouring into the scholars of JYCG. Mayor Sartor said all seniors will be recognized at the May 12th Council Meeting.

- IT support during JYCG meetings every third (3rd) Monday – Councilmember A. Dixon requested training on how to successfully run their meetings. Mayor Sartor asked Councilmember A. Dixon to provide the information in order for Mr. Tran to determine if the students/scholar could be trained on.

D. Council to discuss the Beautification Commission.

Mayor Sartor spoke regarding the item. The Beautification Committee is usually held by Code Enforcement. However, both Code Enforcement Officers are currently not working. Once they return, things will resume. Mayor Sartor spoke regarding an aspect of the Beautification Commission, including the cleanup of the seven cities and partnerships.

Councilmember A. Dixon asked, "what are our directions when it comes to the Beautification Commission" and "when are we going to start hosting the meetings along with recruiting people from the community to participate?"

E. Council to discuss Jonesboro's Newsletter.

Councilmember A. Dixon spoke regarding the budget and said he is ready to push the newsletter back out to the community. Also, he wanted to know if the newsletter was on the City's shared drive.

Mayor Sartor said she thought Mayor Pro-Tem Messick and Councilmember A. Dixon were working on finding some templates or companies that do newsletters. She spoke regarding issues with USPS and for the City to invest in this project and do things right. Also, she spoke regarding US Mailing House Service.

Mr. Tran (IT Department) said at the City of Morrow, they provided the database in a pdf format to the Mailing House, and they would run it through their machine. The postage would cost less when compared to what the City would pay for postage. Mayor Sartor asked Mr. Tran to share these options with Mayor Pro-Tem Messick and Councilmember A. Dixon.

F. Council to discuss support during city events such as Juneteenth, 4th of July, etc.

Councilmember A. Dixon spoke regarding the matter and shared concerns regarding past events. He recommended more porta potties at future events to prevent females from having to use the men restroom and to lower the wait time so everyone can enjoy the event(s). Mayor Sartor shared that the City will have a bathroom attendant for the upcoming event(s).

Councilmember A. Dixon asked for an update regarding Juneteenth and 4th of July events. Mayor Sartor said they are still waiting for things regarding the upcoming events. She told Council that they do not have to wait until Council Meeting to get an update.

Mayor Sartor made a personal invitation for Council to attend Juneteenth and the 4th of July events.

G. Council to consider approval of a $50.00 fee waiver regarding Special Event Permit #SE-25-9 for Clayton County Sheriff's Office Road Race event on April 26, 2025.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember Lester**
SECONDER: **Councilmember D. Dixon**

H. Council to approve approval of a Memorandum of Understanding regarding Southern Cities Economic Initiative – National League of Cities $15,000.00 planning grant. (Deadline 05/05/25 and the City Attorney has reviewed the MOU).

The City of Jonesboro was selected as one of 20 cities for the Southern Cities Economic Initiative. The first part is $15,000.00 for the City to develop a plan focusing on inclusive procurement policies, and then the City will have an opportunity to present a proposal...and

from the 20 cities, 15 will be selected. The Memorandum of Understanding was reviewed by City Attorney Dreyer and needs to be approved and signed by May 5, 2025. Mayor Sartor distributed the MOU packet to Council so they could read it at their leisure. The planning phase will start April 24, 2025.

Mayor Sartor thanked staff for bringing this to fruition and agreed to keep Council updated.

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

I. Tree Work Approval -

Council to consider approval of invoice #246218 from Billy's Affordable Tree Service in the amount of $4,000.00 regarding a fallen tree on the roadway. (Location: Fayetteville Road and North Avenue).

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

Council to discuss the three (3) quotes received from Toby Tree Service, Billy's Affordable Tree Service, and Pro Tree regarding the removal of a large oak tree behind the Public Works building located at 100 Gloria Drive.

Mayor Sartor said this would put the Tree Fund in the negative by -$2,400.00 or -$2,500.00, for the record. However, the tree must be removed.

A motion was made to approve Billy's Affordable Tree Service, in the amount of $5,000.00, to remove the large oak tree behind the Public Works building.

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

XIV. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

A. Economic Development Report by Andrew Simpson (Downtown Main Street Manager).

Downtown Development Manager, Andrew Simpson asked Mayor and Council if they had any questions regarding the report.

Councilmember Miller asked Andrew for a list of the business owners that were terminated or added in February 2025.

XV. REPORT OF CITY COUNCILMEMBERS

Comments by Councilmember Powell:

- None

Comments by Mayor Pro-Tem Messick:

- Wished everyone a wonderful week and a happy Easter.

Comments by Councilmember Miller:

- Thanked everyone for attending the meeting and thanked staff for all they regarding the City of Jonesboro.

Comments by Councilmember Lester:

- Thanked all employees for helping out this weekend, as it relates to the storm which caused trees to fall down and power outages.
- Congratulatory remarks extended to Chief Cato regarding his promotion.

Comments by Councilmember A. Dixon:

- Thanked everyone and staff for what they do regarding the City of Jonesboro.
- Thanked Councilmember Miller for representing the City of Jonesboro at Clayton County Day at the Geogia State Capitol.
- The application for the third installment of the Jonesboro Youth City Government opens this week.
- Sundown Cinema Movie Nights will be starting on Memorial Day and every 4th Monday of the summer months.
- Thanked Stat Representative, Eric Bell regarding the April 4, 2025 Sine Die x 404 Day Block Party at the Georgia State Capitol.
- Thanked Danny Nagel of Danny Nagal Law Firm for pouring into the youth at the Skate Zone event and the AKA's of Henry County.
- Thanked Debra and Rich for supporting JYCG and looking forward to their continued service.
- Birthday wishes extended to the JYCG Mayor Pro-Tem, Isaac Hathaway. He will be going to college in a few months.

XVI. REPORT OF MAYOR

- Acknowledge acceptance into the Southern Cities Economic Initiative.
- April 15, 2025 - Quarterly staff luncheon
- April 20-26, 2025 is Georgia Cities Week
- Acknowledgment of an award to Ashley Cooke – A passionate student-athlete and rising leader both on and off the tennis court. Ms. Cooke currently serves as the captain of the Varsity Cross Country and Tennis teams at Elite Scholars Academy and maintains an impressive 4.2 GPA.

XVII. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters.

At 7:51 p.m., a motion was made to enter Executive Session.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember D. Dixon**
SECONDER: **Councilmember Miller**

At 8:15 p.m., a motion was made to reconvene to the Regular Council Meeting.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember Lester**
SECONDER: **Councilmember D. Dixon**

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

Council to consider approval of the modified contract between The Awareness Consultant, LLC with the previous amounts remaining the same.

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

Council to consider approval of the contract with Plante Moran regarding the forensic audit and allowing a $20,000.00 retainer fee (via ACH) to be issued this week.

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

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember Powell**
SECONDER: **Councilmember D. Dixon**

Dr. Donya L. Sartor, Mayor

Shandrella Jewett, Interim City Clerk