CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

FEBRUARY 02, 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
- Councilmember Chelsey Curney
- Councilmember Alfred Dixon
- Councilmember Cameron Dixon
- 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
- Operation/Human Resource, Maria Wetherington
- Police Chief, Christopher Cato
- Public Works Director, Marcus Heard

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

New Item E. was added to Old Business – FY26 Proposed Budget.

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

IV. MAYOR'S PRESENTATIONS

None

V. PRESENTATIONS

None

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

- Dave Raudabaugh (Marietta, GA 30062) (Grassroots Association) – Spoke in favor of decriminalization of marijuana and a cannabis legislation to stop criminalizing people and putting people in jail over the plant.
- Devin Franklin (Atlanta, GA 30303) (Senior Movement Policy Counsel at the Southern Center for Human Rights) – Spoke in favor of amending ordinance code section 46-8 and the decriminalization of marijuana.
- Hunter Knight (Lawrenceville, GA 30043) – Spoke in favor of decriminalization of marijuana.
- Ms. Aviva (Decatur, GA 30031) (Grassroot Education Organization called Georgia Hemp Economic Revival Organization) – Spoke in favor of decriminalization of marijuana. Said it was unamerican to lock someone up for smoking a joint.
- Chris Quidort (Riverdale, GA 30274) – Spoke in favor of decriminalization of marijuana. Also, spoke regarding people who suffer from opioid addiction and chronic pain.
- Sherita Cherry (Jonesboro Business Owner) – Spoke regarding a conflict between requirements from the Georgia Secretary of State and the City of Jonesboro regarding her business license in Jonesboro. In order to get her business license in Jonesboro, the Secretary of State requires a sign to be posted outside. She said she receive funding from the VA and Workforce Georgia which requires a sign. In order to get a business license with the City of Jonesboro, she cannot have a sign outside. Therefore, she is not passing her inspection because her sign is not outside. She mentioned that she received a fine from the City of Jonesboro as well.
- Marion Mitchell, III – Spoke in favor of decriminalization of marijuana and his experience while working at a dispensary that provided support to those in pain daily.
- Georgia State House of Representative Eric Bell (District 75) – Spoke in favor of decriminalization of marijuana.
- Yolanda Bennett (Austell, GA 30168) (Georgia Medical Cannabis Society) - Spoke in favor of decriminalization of marijuana and how the society works with patients and families across Georgia who are navigating an extremely limited medical cannabis program.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Council to discuss 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.

Community Development Akuta led the discussion. Staff recommended denial but will recommend a modified approach.

RESULT: PUBLIC HEARING 02/09/2026

B. Council to discuss Variance Application **#25-VAR-003** submitted by Max Kovtoun for properties located at 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.

The applicant withdrew the request for the two pinch points. Andrew said this was related to the fire area.

RESULT: PUBLIC HEARING 02/09/2026

C. Council to discuss 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.

Community Director Akuta led the discussion. Staff recommended approval.

RESULT: PUBLIC HEARING 02/09/2026

D. Council to consider approval and adoption of a Comprehensive Nuisance Abatement Ordinance 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.

RESULT: CONSENT AGENDA

E. Council to discuss FY26 Proposed Budget.

Councilmember A. Dixon requested $15,000.00 for JYCG, not to include the Audio/Visual as part of this number. He wants the Audio/Visual to be separated in their budget. Mayor Sartor mentioned there should be some buy-in of fundraising and family support.

Councilmember Curney shared we have to think about the Contingency Funds. Said noted that some of the JYCG members do not live within the City limits. Other departments had to cut items from their budget along with working with limited resources.

Mayor Pro-Tem Miller said she is for the children and that the $12,000.00 is a great compromise for JYCG Budget. The Council and the City can find other ways to come up with more funds.

Councilmember C. Dixon said he thinks the experiences for JYCG are very important.

Mayor Sartor said there are nine (9) members of JYCG. However, there needs to be an investment in the Senior Program.

Councilmember Messick said "we need to support the youth (volunteer hours, financial means) which is an important job." She would like to see JYCG fully funded and will assist with any fundraising to make up the difference.

Councilmember Fox said there's so many things the youth could be doing, but they are invested in government. She would like to see JYCG fully funded at $15,000.00.

Mayor Sartor replied about Christmas Decoration, staff pay, etc. Mayor Sartor said she would give them $15,000.00. $174,000.00 in Contingency.

Councilmember Miller asked how Public Works staff can start getting back overtime. Mayor Sartor said it would need to be in Springtime. $15K is in the budget now for overtime. During the summer, the cemetery takes more time and concerts. Mayor Sartor said she

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Council to discuss Variance Application **#26-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 approval to allow encroachment into the required stream buffer to accommodate the proposed development.

Director Akuta led the discussion. Staff requested that the item be tabled.

RESULT: Approved to Table (Date TBD) (Vote was unanimous)

MOVER: **Councilmember Curney**
SECONDER **Mayor Pro-Tem Miller**

B. Council to discuss and/or consider Ordinance 2026-02 regarding a Proposed Amendment to Ordinance Code Section §46-8 (Possession of Marijuana – Less Than One Ounce). At maximum civil fine of $150.00.

Councilmember Curney led the discussion and showed a PowerPoint Presentation regarding Decriminalization of Marijuana. Jonesboro would be the 22nd City in the State of Georgia if it is approved by Council. For less than one ounce, the police can destroy it on the scene, and a citation would be issued.

Clayton County Police Chief spoke regarding Decriminalization of Marijuana. He said he supported the proposed ordinance and thanked Councilmember Curney for a great presentation.

Ms. Cori Lowe (former police officer of Dekalb County) – Peachtree – Spoke in favor of the proposed ordinance.

State Representative Eric Bell – Yield speaking since he spoke during Public Comment time.

Councilmember Curney said she would like to see the ordinance approved. If approved tonight, the ordinance would take effect immediately.

Councilmember Fox said she would like to see the fine increased to $150.00 instead of $100.00. Councilmember Curney said Jonesboro Ordinance mirrors Clayton County's ordinance with the exception of the fine. Councilmember A. Dixon asked if the civil fine could go up past $150.00 and used the funds towards the Seniors and Veterans.

Mayor Sartor said she would like to see Community Service be done in the City of Jonesboro.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was 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**

Discussion: Councilmember Messick spoke in opposition of decriminalizing marijuana and stated that local ordinances do not override State law. She read a statement.

Councilmember Curney amended her motion to change the fine to $150.00.

C. 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.

Brian Haines spoke regarding the item. No retainer involved in the contract.

RESULT: CONSENT AGENDA

D. 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.

The following language was stricken from the agreement: Contingent upon employment (Section 3 page 125). The goal is for Mr. Thompson to go into homeownership.

RESULT: CONSENT AGENDA WITH SAID CHANGES.

E. Council to discuss the City's Procurement Policy.

In order to implement the proposed draft, the policy would need to be adopted.

City Attorney Wiley provided a presentation regarding City Code Sections 2-155 (competitive bidding) through 2-157 (contracts and procedures). The policy would go with the revised ordinance that would track and follow the new policy.

- Purchase Level 1: Under $2,500.00
- Purchasing Level 2: $2,500 = $9,999.99 (Approval by Department Director and City Manager)
- Purchasing Level 3: $10,000 - $49,999.99 (Approval by Department Director and City Manager and City Council must be notified)
- Purchasing Level 4: $40,000 and Above (City manager and City Council must approve contract)
- Can hold back others RFP until the award is made or rejected
- No Splitting
- Amendments and Change Orders
- Petty Cash Requisitions – Not to exceed $50.00 per transaction
- Purchase Orders (PO) – For anything over $2,500.00
- PO Amendments
- Section 7 - Sole Source Purchases – Must have documentation
- Section 8 – Competitive Biding
- Publication Requirements
- Section 8 - Informal Bids ($2,500 - $50,000)
- Emergency Process (Emergency Operations Center Activation)
- Section 11 – Local Vendor Preference
- P-Card Controls & Enforcement (Training Required)

Mayor Sartor told Council if they have any questions to put it in writing by 12 noon tomorrow.

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

RESULT: CONSENT AGENDA

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Executive Session for the purpose of discussing litigation.

At 8:28 p.m., a motion was made to go into Executive Session to discuss litigation.

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

At 9:06 p.m., a motion was made to reconvene the Work Session.

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

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

None

C. Council to consider approval of the Executive Session Affidavit dated 02/02/26.

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

D. Council to consider approval of the Executive Session Minutes dated 02/02/26.

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

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

RESULT:	**Approved (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER:	**Councilmember Fox**
SECONDER:	**Councilmember Cameron**

Dr. Donya L. Sartor, Mayor

Shandrella Jewett, City Clerk