CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

OCTOBER 13, 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 by Mayor Sartor at 6:04 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

The roll was called by City Clerk Jewett.

- Mayor Donya L. Sartor
- Mayor Pro-Tem Asjah Miller (Arrived at 6:09 p.m.)
- Councilmember Chelsey Curney
- Councilmember Alfred Dixon
- Councilmember Cameron Dixon (Absent)
- Councilmember Santia Fox
- Councilmember Tracey Messick (Left meeting at 10:15 p.m.)
- City Attorney, LaTonya Nix-Wiley
- City Manager, Blue Cole
- City Clerk, Shandrella Jewett
- Code Compliance Officer, Derry Walker
- Community Development Director, David Allen (Absent)
- Downtown Development Authority Director, Blue Cole
- Economic Development Director - Faith Akuta
- Finance Director, Karen Slaton-Dixon
- Operation/Human Resource, Maria Wetherington
- Police Chief, Christopher Cato
- Public Works Director – N/A

III. INVOCATION

A. Invocation by Pastor Richie Howard of First Baptist Jonesboro.

Pastor Richie Howard was unable to attend. Therefore, Pastor Sokhom Khim did the invocation.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

V. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

Public Hearing Closed

RESULT: **Approved with the following five (5) Conditions. (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**
SECONDER: **Mayor Pro-Tem Miller**

Conditions:

1. All exterior renovations, including signage and color schemes, shall be subject to review and approval by the Design Review Commission and the Historic Preservation Commission.
2. All fire and life-safety requirements identified by the Clayton County Fire & Emergency Services and the Building Official shall be satisfied prior to issuance of any Certificate of Occupancy, including any required fire suppression system, emergency exits, egress windows, fire-rated assemblies, alarms, and/or exterior fire-escape equipment. Any required fire escape ladders shall be concealed from view along South Main Street.
3. Floor plans at time of permitting shall remain as per the floor plans approved by Mayor and Council. Any significant changes to floor plan shall require further approval from Mayor and Council.
4. The loft apartments are not approved for short-term rental (Air BnB) use.
5. Development is approved for the three dwelling units shown. Any future proposal for an increase in the number of dwelling units shall require further approval from Mayor and Council.

B. Public Hearing regarding **Variance #26-VAR-004** for a property located at 129 Key Street, Parcel No. 12016C A003, Jonesboro, Georgia 30236. The subject property is zoned R-4 (Single-Family Residential District). The property consists of approximately 0.23 acres. The request is for a reduction in the minimum dwelling size standard for a single-family detached dwelling.

Council to consider Variance #26-VAR-004.

Public Hearing Opened

Tiffany from Southern Crescent Habitat for Humanity spoke in favor of the request.

Public Hearing Closed

RESULT: **Approved with the following three (3) Conditions. (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Mayor Pro-Tem Miller**
SECONDER: **Councilmember Messick**

Conditions:

1. All exterior renovations, including color scheme, shall conform to Historic Preservation Commission approval on September 21, 2026.
2. All Building Official requirements shall be implemented prior to a Certificate of Occupancy being issued.
3. The dwelling is not approved for short-term rental (Air BnB) use.

C. Public Hearing regarding **Variance #26-VAR-005** for a property located at 0 Key Street, Parcel No. 12016C A004, Jonesboro, Georgia 30236. The subject property is zoned R-4 (Single-Family Residential District). The property consists of approximately 0.27 acres. The request is for a reduction in the minimum dwelling size standard for a single-family detached dwelling.

Council to consider Variance #26-VAR-005.

Public Hearing Opened

No one came forth to speak

Public Hearing Closed

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

X. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Council to consider approval of the Resolution and Phase II SCEI Grant Consulting Agreement, authorizing the consultant to proceed with the proposed procurement training and implementation support.

B. Council to consider approval of a Resolution Adopting a Surveillance, Video, and Audio Monitoring Policy.

Council to consider approval of the above Consent Agenda.

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

XI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Council to consider **26-REZ-003 Map Amendment (Rezoning)** for the property located at 0 Tara Blvd, Parcel No. 05239 241002, Jonesboro, Georgia 30236. The subject property is proposed to be rezoned from C-2 (Highway Commercial) to RM (Multi-Family) for an age-restricted, senior apartment community. The property consists of approximately 6.15 acres and is also located in the Gateway South Overlay District. (This item was tabled from 9/14/26.)

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

B. Council to consider **Conditional Use Permit #26-CUP-006** for the property located at 0 Tara Blvd, Parcel No. 05239 241002, Jonesboro, Georgia 30236. The subject property is proposed to be rezoned to RM (Multi-Family). The property consists of approximately 6.15 acres and is also located in the Gateway South Overlay District. The request is for an age-restricted, senior apartment community, which requires a conditional use permit in RM zoning. (This item was tabled from 9/14/26.)

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

C. Council to consider **Variance #26-VAR-002** for the property located at 0 Tara Blvd, Parcel No. 05239 241002, Jonesboro, Georgia 30236. The subject property is proposed to be rezoned to RM (Multi-Family). The property consists of approximately 6.15 acres and is also located in the Gateway South Overlay District. The request is for a reduction in the minimum apartment unit sizes for the proposed age-restricted, senior apartment community and other miscellaneous R-M zoning standards. (This item was tabled from 9/14/26.)

RESULT: **Denied (Vote 5 to 1)**
MOVER: **Councilmember Curney**
SECONDER: **Councilmember Messick**

Director Akuta led the discussion.

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

I. Council to consider approval of invoice #9861 ($31,750.00) from Tabb & Tabb for additional hours related to the 2024 Annual Financial Statement Audit.

Council considered Tabb & Tabb's $31,750.00 invoice for 127 additional hours related to the FY2024 audit. The work included capital assets, debt disclosures, financed purchases, property-tax receivables, cash-pool equity, SPLOST budgeting, and correcting journal entries.

Council raised concerns that:

- The additional work and cost were not authorized in advance.
- Staff received no prior notice that Tabb & Tabb would exceed the contracted scope.
- The invoice lacked an itemized breakdown.
- Some schedules potentially could have been prepared internally.
- Council had not received the contract, relevant authorization provisions, work products, or sufficient background to assess the charges.

Staff explained that the work was necessary to complete FY24 and proceed with FY25 but acknowledged that Tabb & Tabb did not request the needed schedules from Finance or provide advance notice of the extra charges.

Mayor Sartor stated that she had questioned the invoice and told them that the additional charges were not preapproved due to it being above the threshold of spending. She agreed this should have been presented to Council before the work proceeded.

The discussion became contentious over whether Council had previously received adequate information. Councilmember Fox raised a **point of order** (7:43 p.m.) requesting that order be maintained and to allow others to speak. Councilmember Fox asked if she could finish her comment and Mayor Sartor replied, "no". At this time, City Attorney Wiley provided procedural guidance and advised Mayor to address the point of order. City Attorney asked Councilmember Fox to clarify her point of order.

Councilmember Fox told Mayor Sartor that this was not coming from an accusatory place and once Councilmember Curney finishes her comment, then she would restate her point in regard to the lack of information concerning the invoice.

City Attorney Wiley asked Mayor Sartor to make her ruling on Councilmember Fox's point of order and if she wanted to allow Councilmember Curney to continue speaking uninterrupted. Mayor said she would allow Councilmember Curney to speak, but not from a point of accusing and connecting this to something in the past as though something is wrong. Councilmember Curney stated, "Mayor, I don't think that you can tell me to do that."

At this time (7:45 p.m.), Councilmember Curney said the following, "as I was stating, I'm establishing a pattern, and this isn't me trying to be accusatory." "This is establishing that this is now and has been a pattern that I would like us to rectify and fix in the future." Mayor Sartor, told Councilmember Curney, "so do another reprimand." Councilmember Curney said she would defer to Councilmember Fox but still wanted to talk later about budget transfers.

Councilmember Fox stated that Mayor had the invoice since August and that they communicate frequently via email, but Council still did not know about this matter. She said, "the reason why I'm saying that is although you had an opportunity or you were taking some time to communicate with them (Tabb & Tabb) before you even bought it to us to rectify this..... because again, y'all didn't know until I asked Mrs. Karen to come up here or she

The Newsletter budget (Year to date expenditure is $1,276.64 and the remaining balance left is $8,723.36.) Mailer one would be to identify the companies and the next mailer would advise residents on what company the City chooses. Councilmember Messick said that there was a transition plan where the service provider would pay for notifying the residents.

Mayor Pro-Tem Miller mentioned that Director Akuta was working on the Harvest Fest mailer which includes information about Jonesboro. She said there could be a one-liner added to the mailer in regard to sanitation services.

Mayor Sartor agreed that the second mailer expenses could be covered by the service provider.

A motion was made to send out two (2) mailers regarding the Sanitation Services (not to exceed $3,000.00). The first mailer would come from the Newsletter budget and the second mailer to be paid by the service provider.

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

RFP 26-02 — Employee and Organizational Survey

- The scoring rubric is complete, and staff will select three to five employees—potentially including department heads—to evaluate the proposals.
- Evaluators will review the vendors and proposed services, not the employee survey itself.
- Eight or nine proposals were received. Scoring is expected to begin immediately and conclude around the middle or end of the following week.
- Staff intends to present its recommendation to Council in November.
- Council requested the RFP and rubric for review and urged staff to prioritize the project.

K. Council to consider acceptance of FY26 Byrne Discretionary Grant Award for additional body & dash cams for Jonesboro Police Officer and PD fleet vehicle. (This item was tabled from 10/13/26 4:30 p.m. Meeting)

Jonesboro received two (2) fully funded awards out of the 15 grants awarded through the late Congressman Scott's office. The City identified body and dash cameras as its first priority and police vehicles as its second. Mayor thanked the Police Chief and department for their work securing the grant. The synchronized camera systems were identified as the top funding priority, with any remaining funds potentially used toward a police vehicle. Staff explained that the grant is not reimbursement-based, includes 54 compliance conditions, and requires applicable policies and procedures. The City Attorney and Police Chief will assist with compliance, training, documentation, and implementation.

Councilmember Fox said she did not feel comfortable approving this item until she could see the resolution. She requested language about "monthly reporting to Council" being included in the resolution and want Council to have time to review the resolution along with the 54 conditions. Mayor Sartor said the only reason why she wanted this to be heard is so that the portal could be access for training which is scheduled for October 20, 2026. Mayor requested that language be included in the resolution regarding Council attending training on federal funding. She invited Council to attend the October 20th training as well.

Chief Cato said they can't start the training until the City accepts it. Mayor said they could start the training but won't have access to the portal.

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

L. Council to consider approval of Human Resources Director position and resolution.

City Manager Cole presented the job description and resolution to Mayor and Council.

Council reviewed the proposed Human Resources Director job description and resolution. Discussion focused on payroll responsibilities, benefits and pension administration, employee investigations, disciplinary recommendations, reporting authority, confidentiality, supervision, and annual appointment.

Council agreed that payroll processing would remain with Finance, while the HR Director would coordinate with Finance on payroll-related matters. The HR Director would oversee employee benefits and retirement matters, advise on personnel issues, investigate workplace complaints, recommend appropriate action, and exercise professional judgment within applicable law and City policies.

The position would initially operate as a department of one, with future staffing determined through the budget and organizational chart process. Councilmember Curney and Mayor Pro-Tem Miller asked if Maria would be working under the HR Director. Mayor and City Manager said they were not sure. Mayor Pro-Tem Miller asked if the Director would supervise one person. Mayor said it is based on, "if the director supervises a person or not and how many." She said Council could discuss adding a payroll technician as an option.

Council unanimously approved creating and funding the full-time position within Administration, with a salary range of $88,000–$100,000, up to $35,000 for the remainder of FY2026, subject to annual appointment. The motion was amended to approve the resolution and job description with the discussed changes.

Councilmember Fox left the meeting at 9:11 p.m. and returned at 9:13 p.m.

Mayor Pro-Tem Miller left the meeting at 9:22 p.m. and returned at 9:25 p.m.

City Manager Cole left the meeting at 9:32 p.m. and returned at 9:34 p.m.

Councilmember A. Dixon left the meeting at 9:32 p.m. and returned at 9:39 p.m.

A motion was made for Council to consider funding a full-time HR Director's position within Administration with approved salary range of $88,000.00 - $100,000.00 subject to annual appointment and funding for FY27; And up to $35,000.00 to be allocated from 1500-51-1100 for the remainder of FY26.

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

The motion was amended to add approval of the resolution with noted changes.

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

M. Council to consider the communication/marketing position and resolution.

A motion was made to approve the job description of the Communication/Marketing position.

RESULT: **Approved (Vote was unanimous)**

A **Point of Order** was made by Mayor Sartor at 10:58 p.m., so that Mayor Pro-Tem Miller could complete her sentence. Mayor Pro-Tem Miller stated, "I did not say who did it, I'm just saying let's not use Harvest Fest as an example anymore."

RESULT: **Approved to table for a Special Called Council Meeting (Vote was unanimous)**
MOVER: **Mayor Pro-Tem Miller**
SECONDER: **Councilmember A. Dixon**

C. Council to discuss updates regarding the Department of Public Works.

Councilmember Curney stated that she reached out to Bernard and was waiting for him to reply. She mentioned that Council is in full support of staff and if there's anything that staff need to please reach out to them. Council has an open-door policy, and their phone numbers can be found on the City's website.

Council reviewed Public Works updates, including the appointment of a Public Works Director, equipment assessments, and matters planned for the November work session. Council discussed scheduling, operational oversight, and unbudgeted expenses as it relates to the Public Works Department. The City Attorney advised that the governing body must approve unbudgeted expenditure. Staff also agreed to address trash on Watterson Street and provide a follow-up by email.

She spoke about an appreciation event being held for Public Works and Police Department on October 28th in the Community Room in observation of National First Responders Day. American Public Works Association uses it to honor public works professionals, police, fire, EMS, and other responders for their vital service. Mayor stated she was in charge of the day-to-day operations concerning the time of the event and for Councilmember Curney to write up something regarding the date, time, location, and budget for the event. There was a disagreement regarding this matter.

D. Council to consider a Cell Phone Policy.

Council discussed providing City-issued phones to Public Works employees who currently use personal phones for official duties. Discussion included open-records compliance, first-responder phone plans, prospective application, and clearer agenda summaries. Members clarified that the phones would reimburse a work-related expense, not serve as an employee incentive or perk. Mayor Sartor said this cannot be used legally as an incentive for Public Works.

Mayor Pro-Tem Miller would like for the Agenda Item Summaries to be clearer to avoid questions by Councilmembers during the meeting.

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

E. Council to consider approval of a resolution regarding the Deputy City Clerk position along with noted format/layout.

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

F. Discussion regarding Procedure for Elected Officials and Resolution of April 2019 Policy Revision 2025-06.

Council discussed the "Procedure for Elected Officials Policy" and related Resolution 2025-006. Members described the policy as vague, poorly written, and inconsistently applied, and proposed rescinding it entirely rather than amending it. The Mayor noted that the policy

XVI. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

A. City Attorney's Report by City Attorney Nix Wiley.

City Attorney Wiley provided her report.

Ethics Board:

- All three training sessions were completed; the board selected officers and adopted hearing procedures. The City will publish complaint procedures online.
- Recommended appointing an independent attorney—or panel of attorneys—with public-sector and administrative-hearing experience because the City Attorney cannot participate once a complaint is filed.
- Council will later consider funding legal support and possible per diem compensation for board members during hearings. Comparable practices and candidate names will be provided for a future meeting.

Urban Redevelopment Agency:

- Reported that the URA is considering expanding its current Broad Street area to support economic development and address blight. Its October 19 meeting will be virtual and publicly accessible.

Destination Marketing Organization:

- The City's 2018 agreement with See Clayton expired five years ago and must be replaced. An updated agreement is anticipated for November.
- Explained that Jonesboro retains 37.5% of hotel/motel tax revenue, while the remainder supports tourism marketing and designated historic entities, including the Train Depot and Stately Oaks.
- She will review whether the designated recipients can be changed, verify required allocations, and confirm that funds are being distributed properly.

XVII. REPORT OF CITY COUNCILMEMBERS

Comments by Councilmember Fox:

- Councilmember Fox announced another Business Growth Exchange following the previous event's success, which attracted more than 40 businesses. The event will be held tomorrow from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Jonesboro Virtual Offices, 127 Jonesboro Road, and will feature podcasting, professional headshots, lunch, networking, and collaboration with businesses and content creators. Additional information is available on her social media.

Comments by Councilmember A. Dixon:

- Recognized Jonesboro High School's boys' cross-country championship and six Elite Scholars Academy seniors who earned advanced international certificate of education diplomas.
- Thanked GMA for reappointing him to its Children and Youth Advisory Council.
- Reported that Jonesboro youth attended the Georgia Forward Youth Symposium and are preparing for the National League of Cities Summit.
- Announced the HYPE youth event this Saturday, 9:00 a.m. – noon, at Serene Spine Wellness off Battle Creek Road.
- Announced a youth town hall on November 7th at 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., at Jim Huie Recreation Center.
- Shared that the GeorgiaForward Young Gamechangers cohort will graduate October 29.
- Thanked Ashley Brown and Councilmember Fox for supporting the Heart to Cart initiative with Jonesboro Middle School.
- Recognized Domestic Violence Awareness Month and reminded residents that help is available.

Councilmember Fox left meeting at 12:55 a.m. and returned back at 12:58 a.m.

XVIII. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Council to consider entering Executive Session for the purpose of discussing pending litigation, and deliberation regarding a personnel matter.

At 1:14 a.m., (October 14, 2026) a motion was made to go into Executive Session for pending litigation, and deliberation regarding a personnel matter.

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

B. Council to consider reconvening the Public Session.

At 2:11 a.m., Council reconvened the Public Session.

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

C. Council to consider approval of the Executive Session Affidavit and Minutes from October 14, 2026.

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

D. Council to consider any action(s), if necessary, based on decision(s) made in Executive Session.

A motion was made to take administrative action against the City Manager's performance and conduct for failing to follow directions and communication regarding a personnel directive.

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

A discussion took place in regard to who would sign the document.

A motion was made to authorize and execute the document related to the personnel action.

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

XIX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:14 a.m.

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

Dr. Donya L. Sartor, Mayor

Shandrella Jewett, City Clerk