CITY OF STONECREST, GEORGIA

CITY COUNCIL BUDGET RETREAT

The Kimpton Brice Hotel, 601 E. Bay Street, Savannah, Georgia 31401

Sunday, June 28, 2026

Mayor Jazzmin Cobble

Mayor Pro Tem Tara Graves - District 1 *District 2 – Vacant*

Council Member Alecia Washington - District 3 *Council Member George Turner – District 4*

Council Member Karmesha W. Smith - District 5

MINUTES

The Stonecrest Mayor and Council met on June 28, 2026, for a budget retreat. The retreat was designed to help the Mayor, Council, and staff build common understanding around the City's current financial condition, clarify governance roles and expectations, and translate Council priorities into a realistic FY2027 budget framework. A central theme was moving from a budget that is balanced on paper to one that is structurally sustainable, transparent, and tied to measurable priorities. The meeting took place at the Brice Hotel in Savannah, Georgia.

Attending:
Councilmembers: Tara Graves, Alecia Washington, George Turner, and Karmesha Washington Smith
Staff: City Manager Cathy Turner, Finance Director Keisha Franklin, City Engineer Hari Karikaran, City Attorneys Winston Denmark and Alicia Thompson,
Facilitators: Terrell Jacobs

Introduction
The day opened with a review of the agenda, ground rules, expectations for the day, and check-in, followed by reports from the city manager on the state of the city and reflecting on 2025. (Agenda

City Manager Cathy Turner provided the state of the city and reflected on 2025. The Information provided included:

Governance and Organizational Alignment:

The facilitator Terrell Jacobs reinforced the importance of clear governance roles, effective communication, and shared expectations among the Mayor, Council, City Manager, and staff. Council's role was framed around setting vision, adopting policies, approving the budget, overseeing management performance, and representing the community. The City Manager's role centered on day-to-day

operations, policy implementation, fiscal responsibility, staffing, agenda support, compliance, and coordination across the organization.

Financial Condition and Audit Status

Finance Director Keisha Franklin provided an update on the financial condition and audit status. These two sessions addressed the City's fiscal health as the pivot point for the budget and pathway to address outstanding audits.

Capital Improvement Program:

City Engineer Hari Karikaran provided an update on all capital improvement projects. He covered the following topics regarding the Capital Improvement Program:

- Current capital projects
- Infrastructure priorities
- Funding sources
- Project delivery challenges
- Future capital needs

FY27 Council Initiative Requests

The council put together some initiatives or priorities that they will need to flush out and provide staff with more detail or specifics on some of the items. Here are these initiatives or priorities in no order and include some district priorities that were given as well:

- More Retail in District 1
- More lighting
- Budget for Youth Council Academy
- Develop Resource Center for Community
- Start on Phase 2 of Botanical Garden
- Streetscaping Improvement
- Street sweeping
- Public Safety
- Community Engagement
- Improving Housing Condition "Fairington"
- Address illegal dumping
- Address data center
- Sponsor monthly senior event
- Increase should access
- More Recreation (putt putt)
- Panola Shoals Road Improvement
- Beautification
- Liaison with Dekalb on work order issues
- Transparency with policies
- Place penalty provisions in policies and review for their intent every year
- Unhoused policies
- Sponsorship policies
- Filming policies

- Develop policies for illegal vendors on private property

The facilitator Terrell Jacobs led a vision discussion with the Council and staff to determine where Stonecrest will be in five years. The Council and staff determined three categories to develop their vision for Stonecrest:

Community Identity:
- Desirable
- Engaged
- Community Orientated
- Metropolis

Economic Growth:
- Booming Business
- Live, Work, and Play
- Thriving

Infrastructure Improvement:
- Futuristic (Increasing Technology)
- Walkable neighborhoods
- Well Lit communities
- Internet connectivity
- Safe Roads
- Improve MARTA stops

The Council prioritized their focus for the upcoming year to be included in the upcoming FY2027 budget. Here are the five focuses that the Council agreed upon in no order:

- Financial Sustainability
- Customer Service
- Public Safety
- Infrastructure Improvements
- Economic Development and Growth
- Due to the time constraints, we didn't have enough time to develop five goals for FY2027 so the facilitator gave the Council and staff homework to develop five goals for the City of Stonecrest.

City Manager and Finance Director discussed the budget development and approach with the Council.

The facilitator Terrell Jacobs reviewed the action items with Council and staff and updated the information for Stonecrest to act on.

Action Item #1: Review and send financial management policies
Assigned to: City Attorney
Timeframe: Within two months

Action Item #2: Review external audit contract
Assigned to: City Attorney
Timeframe: one month

Action Item #3: Research and find the answer regarding if a local government used ARPA funds as revenue replacement can they obligate and unobligated funds by December 31, 2024.
Assigned to: City Attorney
Timeframe: one month

Action Item #4: Research and determine what laws address illegal dumping and determine if new laws need to be developed.
Assigned to: City Attorney
Timeframe: 3 months

Action Item #5: Research and determine laws that address vendors on the roadside selling products
Assigned to: City Attorney
Timeframe: 3 months

Action Item #6: Research and determine how the city enforces noise ordinance within the City of Stonecrest
Assigned to: City Attorney
Timeframe: 3 months

Action Item #7: Review and develop IGA for the following services regarding GCIC, police and public works
Assigned to: City Attorney
Timeframe: 6 months

The City of Stonecrest wanted to discuss an issue that occurred with the Mayor and staff around June 25, 2026. It appears that incident escalated to the point that a complaint was submitted by the Finance Director Keisha Franklin against the Mayor. The Council discussed the next steps to address the complaint and consider the process of censorship.

Closing Statement

The June 28, 2026, Budget Retreat provided the Mayor, Council, and staff with an opportunity to openly discuss the City of Stonecrest's financial condition, governance expectations, capital needs, and priorities for the FY2027 budget. The discussions reinforced the importance of aligning limited resources with clearly defined priorities, improving transparency, strengthening communication, and ensuring that budget decisions support long-term financial sustainability.

Council identified key focus areas for the upcoming year, including financial sustainability, customer service, public safety, infrastructure improvements, and economic development and growth. These focus areas will serve as a foundation for further goal development and will help guide staff as the FY2027 budget is prepared. The retreat also highlighted the need for Council and staff to continue refining proposed initiatives, identifying funding sources, and developing measurable goals that can be implemented and tracked throughout the year.

Moving forward, the city will need continued collaboration between elected officials and staff to turn the retreat discussions into actionable budget recommendations. By maintaining a shared commitment to accountability, fiscal responsibility, and community-centered decision-making, Stonecrest can continue building toward a more sustainable, responsive, and forward-looking future.

[SIGNATURES ON THE FOLLWING PAGE]

As approved on the 28th Day of September, 2026

Mayor Jazzmin Cobble

Sonya Ulsom

City Clerk