



Special Called Meeting

February 8, 2025 at 9:00 AM

City Hall, 875 Main Street, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Minutes

1 **Mayor and Council: Dr. Beverly Jones – Mayor | Post 3: Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Smith**
2 **Post 1: Council Member Anita Bass | Post 2: Council Member Mark Marianos**
3 **Post 4: Council Member Gil Freeman | Post 5: Council Member Shawnette Bryant**
4 **Post 6: Council Member Teresa Crowe**

5
6 **Staff: Shawn Edmondson - City Manager | Maggie Dimov - Assistant City Manager | Shavala**
7 **Ames - City Clerk | Jeff Strickland - City Attorney**

8 9 **Call to Order**

10 Mayor Jones called the meeting to order at 9:07 A.M.

11 12 **Determination of Quorum**

13 PRESENT: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro
14 Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette
15 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe, Mayor Beverly Jones

- 16
17 1. Consideration of an action on a request to designate the use of the Lawn on Main as Village
18 Center Mixed Use (VCM), requested by Council Member Mark Marianos

19
20 Councilmember Marianos gave reasons why Lawn on Main should be developed as Village Center
21 Mixed Use (VCM) to allow for additional revenue in the city. Improving and diversifying the revenue
22 is the goal. The previous surveys show that VCM fits the criteria for the Lawn on Main. If
23 designated VCM, watershed issues will be remedied by POND. The city has a lack of revenue, and
24 the state will come in to dictate the use if they have to provide funds to help the city due to the lack
25 of increase our revenue. The city is not in danger of running out of money tomorrow, but we need
26 to buy into the city.

27
28 Council Member Crowe inquired whether the 10-minute time limit had elapsed. The Mayor stated
29 that when time is up, the Clerk will inform the body. The governing body engaged in a discussion
30 regarding the decorum rules, exchanging differing perspectives on the matter.

31
32 Mayor Jones Jones stated citizens would like an amphitheater. Since the lawn has been
33 purchased, events have taken place to draw people in.

34 35 **ACTION: DESIGNATE THE LAWN ON MAIN AS VILLAGE CENTER MIXED USE**

36
37 Motion made by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Seconded by Council Member: Post 6
38 Crowe

39 40 **Motion Withdrawn**

42 City Attorney Strickland gave an overview of designating a zoning change. Rezoning must follow
43 the standard format which includes public hearings; however, the city themselves can use the
44 property however they decide as the title owner.

45
46 The City Manager stated that POND is anticipated to present on March 18th regarding Lawn on
47 Main. City Manager also stated that administration is seeking guidance on the use of Lawn on Main
48 to go after specific grants.

49
50 Councilmember Freeman expressed concern regarding grants that are being pursued.

51
52 **ACTION: SEEK COUNCIL APPROVAL TO DESIGNATE THE USE OF LAWN ON MAIN AS**
53 **MIXED USE**

54
55 Motion made by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Seconded by Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

56
57 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem:
58 Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

59
60 **Voting No:** Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

- 61
62 2. Discussion: Progress update/presentation of amendment to address issues with the directing of
63 staff and retaliation against staff requested by Council Member Mark Marianos

64
65 Attorney Strickland reviewed the drafted ordinance provided in the agenda packet. The City Council
66 will provide suggestions for modifying the ordinance as the presented ordinance is only the initial
67 draft. The ordinance is intended to establish a process if complaints do arise. Members of council
68 added that the HR staff member will need to be involved in the process.

69
70 City Manager addressed comments regarding claims of harassment to follow up on such
71 allegations.

72
73 Mayor Jones expressed improprieties in allegations and suggested a discussion be had in
74 executive session. Council Member Marianos began to comment regarding an allegation, Mayor
75 Jones was not finished talking a requested a police officer for decorum.

76
77 Attorney Strickland advised that if the ordinance is passed, it will be in effect for new/future claims,
78 not past ones.

- 79
80 3. Discussion: Rules of Decorum, requested by Council Member Shawnette Bryant

81
82 Council Member Bryant asked for clarity on why the decorum resolution was adopted.

83
84 Council Member Crowe confirmed that she initially requested a resolution regarding decorum due to
85 the extended meeting times and agenda items. Council Member Bryant stated her concerns with
86 the decorum resolution which included having a set time to deliberate on agenda items; and some
87 council members have abused their political powers.

88
89 Mayor Jones suggested placing a cap on the number of agenda items and spoke on meeting
90 decorum overall. Mayor Pro Tem Smith suggested that the governing body limit items that are
91 requested for the agenda. City Manager Edmondson suggested that the requested items of the
92 Mayor and City Council be placed under Remarks of Privilege to offer uniformity and efficiency of
93 the City Council agenda.

- 94
95 4. Discussion: Audio system, requested by Council Member Shawnette Bryant

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97 Council Member Bryant asked the City Manager about the council chambers audio system; and the
98 City Manager confirmed the audio was good.
99

- 100
101 5. Discussion: Require/create a new ordinance that requires meeting minutes approved before legal
102 documents are signed to ensure city council votes in open records for Open Records Act
103 compliance, requested by Council Member Gil Freeman
104

105 Council Member Freeman expressed concerns regarding complaints he received about what was
106 passed in the meeting also the public does not have access to what was passed and information
107 provided. There is no documentation of the vote and many times the vote in the minutes are wrong.
108

109 Mayor Pro Tem emphasized that staff is doing what they think is best through the attorney. City
110 Attorney stated that he does not recommend withholding contracts until minutes are approved. A
111 contract is approved once done so in a meeting. The mayor shall execute at that time.
112

113 Mayor Jones stated that certain contracts need to be reviewed before executing. The City Attorney
114 stated the process should be where contracts are reviewed prior to consideration by City Council. If
115 approved, there will be a signature by the City Attorney the same evening, and the Mayor should
116 sign the same evening to make the process more streamlined without delay. Regarding the
117 ordinance process, an updated form has been sent out to streamline that process as well.
118

119 Council Member Freeman raised a request for the City Attorney to provide specific citation or legal
120 reference outlining the requirement that meeting minutes must be approved before any legal
121 documents are executed. In response, the City Attorney stated that he was not currently aware of
122 any legal or procedural requirement that necessitates the approval of minutes prior to the execution
123 of legal documents. However, he assured Council Member Freeman and the rest of the Council that
124 he would conduct further research into the matter to determine if such a process exists and to
125 provide a detailed response if requested.
126

127 A question was raised about adjourning the meeting due to the website calendar time. The City
128 Attorney clarified that the website calendar does not dictate the actual meeting length. There is no
129 rule in place that would limit special called meetings. The governing body can modify the decorum
130 resolution to account for special meetings on the weekend. It was again stated that the lengthy
131 agenda is why the meeting items carry over to the next meeting.
132

133 **ACTION: MOTION TO MOVE THE REMAINING AGENDA ITEMS TO THE NEXT MEETING**
134 **OF MAYOR AND COUNCIL SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 18, 2025, WHICH INCLUDES**
135 **REQUEST NEW LOCAL AUDITOR TO AUDIT ALL SPLOST 1 AND 2 DISCUSSION,**
136 **DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY DISCUSSION, AND RELOCATE THE**
137 **CONFEDERATE SIGN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE COLUMNS AT THE 5-WAY INTERSECTION**
138 **DISCUSSION**
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140 Motion made by Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Bass
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142 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem:
143 Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman
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145 Council Member: Post 5 Bryant was not present for the vote
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147 **MOTION PASSED**
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150 **Adjournment**

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152 **ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 11:09 A.M.**

153 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 4 Freeman, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2
154 Marianos

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156 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem:
157 Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council
158 Member: Post 6 Crowe

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160 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**

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164 _____
Dr. Beverly Jones, Mayor

_____ **City Clerk, Shavala Ames**