



Mayor and City Council Work Session
Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 6:30 PM
City Hall, 875 Main Street, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Minutes

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

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

**City of Stone Mountain, GA Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/CityofStoneMtn/>
Link to join Webinar: [\[LINK\]](#)**

Call to Order

Mayor Jones called the meeting to order at 6:37 P.M.

Determination of Quorum

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

Invocation and Pledge

Mayor Jones led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the Invocation.

Citizen Comments – Including comments from public/stakeholders

Citizen Comment 1: Kay Nunez – Discussed the Lawn on Main and expected uses. Lawn on Main should be utilized as mixed use to include arts and music.

Citizen Comment 2: Susan Taylor – Discussed not changing the green space and Lawn on Main .

Citizen Comment 3: Sean Minton – See the good things that council is doing with Homestead, Georgia Power presentation and Citizen's Academy. Lawn on main is a huge asset and all concerns regarding the use are valid. using citizen assets to benefit the citizens.

Citizen Comment 4: Cheryl Dudley – Discussed the success of having businesses that succeed. CSX does not need money regarding the pay for parking downtown. The downtown businesses struggle to pay for parking. Sterman Bakery needs help. The sign for the cemetery does not need to move to be more visible.

Citizen Comment 5: Shani Linder – Read an open letter on behalf of residents, businesses and constituents regarding the use of Lawn on Main.

Review of the Journal

1. Consideration of an action on a request to approve the October 1, 2024 City Council Meeting Minutes, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames.

It was discussed that the presented minutes should have more of a description of the motion. City Clerk Ames stated that hopefully there can be a median to meet the expectations of Councilmember Freeman's expectations. Councilmember Freeman read an example of expected minutes from a 2010 City of Stone Mountain Council meeting. Councilmember Marianos argued that the minutes are descriptive as required. City Attorney Strickland read the Georgia Code on what the minutes should entail.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE OCTOBER 1, 2024 CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.
Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Voting No: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

MOTION PASSED

2. Consideration of an action on a request to approve the October 15, 2024 City Council Meeting Minutes, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE OCTOBER 15, 2024 CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.
Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Voting No: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

MOTION PASSED

3. Consideration of an action on a request to approve the January 7, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE JANUARY 7, 2025 CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.
Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Voting No: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

MOTION PASSED

4. Consideration of an action on a request to approve the January 14, 2025 Special Called Meeting Minutes, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE JANUARY 14, 2025 CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.
Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Voting No: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

MOTION PASSED

Reading of Communications

Adoption of The Agenda of The Day

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA OF THE DAY

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Bass.
Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem:
Post 3

Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member:
Post 6 Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

Committee Discussion Items

5. Stone Mountain Community Garden
Columbus Brown gave an overview of the Stone Mountain Community Garden Committee (SMCG). The SMCG contributed over 15,000 fresh produce to 291 families in 2024 and donated 984 pounds of produce to the pantry (agenda packet pages 30-35).
6. Planning Commission – None
7. Economic Development/Downtown Development Authority – Economic Development Director Maggie Dimov gave updates on the Downtown Development Authority to include the installation of a mural at 901 Main Street. The DDA was awarded \$25,000 to which funds were used to support Frozen Yogurt, Distillery. There were 16 concerts held in 2024 and over 4000 participants at the Mardi Gras parade.
8. Historic Preservation Commission – None
9. Parks and Recreation Committee – None

Staff Reports

10. Public Safety- Police Chief- James Westerfield Jr
Chief Westerfield reviewed the 2024 statistics for the Police Department. A presentation was held for the following: Major S. Parks - Completion of Chief Executive Training with GACP; Detective Amy Hall - Officer of the Year; Officer Elizabeth Hilton - Promotion with City of Clarkson, Pinned by her brother Officer; Detective Swisher, Detective Hall, Officer Jabir, Officer Shedeke - Special Recognition.
11. Administration- City Manager- Shawn Edmondson
City Manager Edmondson reviewed the administrative reports for the month of December.

City Manager's Report

12. City Manager - Shawn Edmondson
City Manager Edmondson discussed key topics that include the City Hall parking lot project – which funds are left over to fund another paving project. CSX parking lot meeting was held, and concerns were explained. Councilmember Freeman would like to see code violations. Councilmember Bryant noted that she does not see a strong code enforcement presence in the City. City Manager was instructed to send See Click Fix link to Council.

Council Policy Discussion Topics

Unfinished Business

Mayor Jones invited guests on the agenda to move at the top of the New Business section. Whitaker Accounting Firm was not contacted to present findings on the 2024 audit, nor was Attorney Walker to

discuss blighted properties. City Manager Edmondson advised the 2023 audit has not been complete and the 2024 audit is in RFP status. City Manager Edmondson will follow up on audit and blighted properties.

New Business

1. Consideration of an action of a request to set and advertise the Qualifying Fees for the 2025 City of Stone Mountain Municipal Election, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames

City Clerk Ames corrected the election year of the municipal election to 2025, and corrected the qualifying amount of Mayor to state \$720 and for Council Members to state \$360 (agenda packet page 46).

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE QUALIFYING FEES FOR THE 2025 CITY OF STONE MOUNTAIN MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

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

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

2. Consideration of an action on a request to authorize the purchase of JustFOIA, an Open Records Management Software in the amount of \$8,464.50, requested by City Clerk Shavala Ames

City Clerk Ames gave an overview of the JustFOIA open records software (agenda packet pages 47-67). Mayor asked if the item is budgeted, City Clerk Ames confirmed the item is budgeted.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE PF THE JUSTFOIA OPEN RECORDS MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$8,464.50

Motion made by Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith.

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

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

3. Consideration of an action on a request to set a Special Called Meeting date for the purposes of establishing a third Public Hearing Meeting date for the Homestead Exemption, requested by City Manager Shawn Edmondson.

City Manager Edmondson informed Council on their options if they chose to opt-in or opt-out of the Homestead Exemption Tax (agenda packet page 76-78). City Attorney Strickland gave an overview of both options and what will take place if they choose to opt out. It was noted that a decision must be made on public hearing advertisements to satisfy state regulations.

ACTION: MOTION TO SET PUBLIC HEARING DATES FOR THE HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION ON FEBRUARY 13, 2025 AT 10:00 A.M., FEBRUARY 13, 2025 AT 6:30 P.M., AND FEBRUARY 18, 2025 AT 6:30 P.M.

Motion made by Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

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

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

4. Consideration of an action on a request to authorize the purchase of Verkada, a citywide camera system in the amount of \$149,889.11, requested by City Manager Shawn Edmondson. City Manager Edmondson discussed the Alscan Verkada city-wide camera system and noted to refer to the workshop session held on December 17, 2025 where representatives introduced the platform (agenda packet page 79-85). Council Member Bryant stated that she was not in attendance at that meeting, therefore she needs more information before making an informed decision.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE AUTHORIZATION TO PURCHASE ALSCAN VERKADA CITY WIDE CAMERA SYSTEM IN THE AMOUNT OF \$149,889.11

Motion made by Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

Voting Yea: Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: 6 Crowe, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

5. Consideration of an action on a request to approve the Financial Advisory Committee, requested by Mayor Dr. Beverly Jones.

City Attorney Strickland reviewed the previously submitted memorandum regarding the establishment of City committees in accordance to the Charter.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CITIZENS FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Motion made by Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Seconded by Council Member: 5 Bryant.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Post 4: Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

Voting No: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION FAILED

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR SPLOST I AND SPLOST II

Motion made by Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Seconded by Council Member: 5 Bryant.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Post 4: Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

Voting No: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION FAILED

6. Consideration of establishing regulation guidelines when obtaining an Occupation Tax Certificate (Business License) with the City of Stone Mountain regarding business hours, requested by Councilmember Teresa Crowe.

Councilmember Crowe noted that many businesses do not display their operation hours and would like to know the legal ramifications to withhold their business license if hours of operations are not provided. City Attorney Strickland stated the City could require that operation hours be provided on the business license application, but it would not go into affect for old businesses, only new businesses if adopted.

[Due to the adoption of Resolution 2024-01, the meeting will end at 10:00 p.m. and any remaining items will be moved to the next available meeting]

Adjournment

ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 10:01 P.M.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 5 Bryant.

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

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)