



Mayor and City Council Regular Session
Tuesday, June 03, 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/Economic Development Director/DDA | Shavala Ames - City Clerk | Angela Couch - City Attorney

Public Hearing was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

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

I. Public Hearing

1. Public Hearing - Millage Rate #2

City Manager Shawn Edmondson gave an overview of the meeting and guidelines and discussed the rollback rate of maintaining the rate the city has. The City Manager also gave an overview of Millage Rate document presented by DeKalb County. Public hearing proceeded after the City Manager overview.

Public Hearing Comments

Public Comment 1 : Kay Nunez – fine with the 16 mill rate.

Public Comment 2: Joan Monroe – needs to get rolled way back; City cannot tell the citizens what is being spent; millions down the toilet.

Public Comment 3: Clint Monroe – consider a tax reduction – not just to the rollback rate; heading for a recession, do not need a tax increase; property tax appraisal meeting on June 25th from 6-8 pm.

Public Comment 4: Teresa Thomas – go do our finance reports and let us see how we are doing; last real budget was in July 2024; show us our budget – stop making us pay GORA; last year was supposed to get a close out of budget by law; help the seniors

Public Comment 5: Joy Lesure – appreciate everyone concerned about the citizens; ashamed of the City of Stone Mountain; taxed and Millage rate to death with no service – concerned with developments; was once a joy in City of Stone Mountain.

Public Comment 6: Jelani Linder – nothing has changed from 2024-2025; need to look at diversifying revenue sources; Millage Rate hasn't changed, and we haven't changed as a city; Council needs to be accountable to the people; only positive change is the filming revenue; put together a plan.

II. Adjournment

ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:51 P.M.

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

Voting Yea: 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

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

III. Call to Order

Mayor Jones called the meeting to order at 6:53 P.M.

IV. 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

V. Invocation and Pledge

Mayor Jones led the pledge, followed by Dr. Orea Parker led the invocation.

VI. Citizen Comments – Including comments from public/stakeholders

Citizen Comment 1: Carl Wright – flowers downtown; commended City Manager, Council Member Crowe, and DDA; Council Member Freeman runs out of anything to say, he screams DDA; material in Depot does not belong to DDA, belongs to Main Street, Stone Mountain, LLC.; pointed out inconsistencies in the Mayor's statements

Citizen Comment 2: Cherly Dudley – last year it was mentioned that City of Stone Mountain has failed audits; restroom funds – work has not been done; two people have asked for audits, don't know four people are avoiding forensic audit; what is the reason to reestablish the Parks & Recreation Committee; Mayor has the right to have public hearing and an impartial investigation.

Citizen Comment 3: Teresa Thomas – McCurdy Park – literally cried regarding conditions of the bathrooms, the media needs to look at it; state gave \$2 million to fix the sewers, it's a 4/2 situation - vote on fixing the park; signature cards resolution – citizens should see the resolution; asked if City Council has not seen it unredacted – urge council to go back and get it; 5.16 Ordinance being redone is overstepping ethics committee - if Council is in there, the City Manager should be in there; where do you go if it is a problem with the City Manager - it is not in the charter; be consistent and fair.

Citizen Comment 4: Kay Nunez – thanked service members, City failed to get flags up for Memorial Day – make sure that is not missed next year; revive the City – the dead in the cemetery is not affecting the city; go to different DDA meetings and Village Forward meetings to move us forward; we have a diverse council – we need to bring life back to downtown and businesses.

Citizen Comment 5: Joan Monroe – too many crooks running the town; if anyone was truly guilty, would be calling GBI not a real estate attorney to investigate; illegal use of City Charter when appointing City Attorney; Mr. Wright's compliant - doesn't have a clue or thinks hate crimes are okay; Council Members husband who stalks and tries to intimidate after a TRO – the judge warned him; there are witnesses willing to testify and two police reports; grow up, stay away or go to jail.

Citizen Comment 6: Jelani Linder – commends Public Works – new path trail; push on gazebo and clear a few trees to make area pop; 4/2 voted to approve the roads in Rockborough – actually doing good work in the community; look at zoning code all together, has not been updated; forensic audit – scope of work was never defined; want to see council work together for the community.

Citizen Comment 7: Vanessa Walls – read a spiritual word to towards the City of Stone Mountain.

Citizen Comment 8: Clint Monroe – double standards, should be fair and equitable; citizens would like to see unity; name calling in open session no one wants to hear that; auditor stated he never tested for fraud – basic audit did not require a fraud audit; crime to say basic audit is not required; if the parameters are set to not look for fraud, it will not be found.

VII. Review of the Journal

VIII. Reading of Communications

IX. Adoption of The Agenda of The Day

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA OF THE DAY

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

Voting Yea: 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

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

X. City Manager's Report

City Manager Shawn Edmondson reviewed the City Manager's report and recognized Ahmad Jabir as Employee of the Month for his outstanding contributions. He provided updates on the inspection of city properties, including McCurdy and Medlock Park, and discussed ongoing and upcoming paving projects also noting that the restrooms have been locked at McCurdy while it remains unfunctional. It was also noted that the current toilets are not commercial-grade, emphasizing the need for more durable, industrial fixtures.

The soil testing came back for the parking lot and will provide updates once those results are provided. Additional topics included the implementation of a paid parking system and details regarding a new film production taking place in the city. Staff are actively preparing for the upcoming city events.

Council Member Bryant requested an update from the City Manager regarding the ongoing storm drain issues on JBR. The City Manager confirmed that the matter is being taken seriously and has already been escalated to the county for further action. He noted that the City is actively working toward viable, long-term solutions. Additionally, Council Member Bryant pointed out that the storm drains are not being thoroughly cleaned, emphasizing the need for more effective maintenance efforts.

Council Member Freeman expressed sincere appreciation to all who participated in the recent KaBoom Design Day, commending their dedication and strong community spirit. He also noted that opportunities to volunteer for the KaBoom project at Medlock Park remain available and encourage continued community involvement in bringing the project to life. The City Manager is awaiting some correspondence from the Project Manager to push out the volunteer information.

XI. Council Policy Discussion Topics

XII. New Business

1. Consideration of an action on a request to clean out the Train Depot for facility rental purposes, requested by Council Member Anita Bass

Council Member Bass noted that this request had been previously addressed by the former Code Enforcement Officer. City Manager Shawn Edmondson provided an overview of the necessary steps to clear out the Train Depot, which includes securing extermination services as a first measure. It was further suggested that, once the building has been properly cleared and cleaned, a structural engineer should be engaged to assess the condition of the facility.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE REQUEST TO CLEAN OUT THE TRAIN DEPOT FOR FACILITY RENTAL PURPOSES

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

The motion was withdrawn by Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass.

It was the consensus of Mayor and Council to bring the item back at a later meeting with three quotes for consideration.

2. Consideration of an action on a request to veto Ordinance 2025-02 Council Interference, requested by Mayor Beverly Jones

City Clerk Shavala Ames formally read the Mayor's veto into the record. City Attorney Angela Couch then provided clarification on Ordinance 2025-02, addressing differing interpretations of the language within the proposed ordinance. She noted that the City Charter does not specifically define the phrase "shall deal with," which has led to varied understandings. Attorney Couch emphasized that, under the proposed ordinance, City Council is not authorized to issue directives to city employees. Instead, the authority to manage and direct staff lies solely with the City Manager, in accordance with the Charter's intent to place the City Manager in charge of day-to-day operations and administration of the City.

It was noted that the ordinance is being viewed by some as politicized and potentially used as a tool for leverage, effectively bypassing the established process involving the Ethics Committee. The City Manager confirmed that staff members have expressed concerns about receiving direction from elected officials, raising questions about the appropriate chain of command. Additionally, while some Council Members believe the City Clerk reports directly to the Council, there was not unanimous agreement on this interpretation.

It was also mentioned by a member of Council that disturbances in the audience may need to be removed from the meeting.

ACTION: MOTION TO OVERRIDE THE VETO OF ORDINANCE 2025-02 COUNCIL INTERFERENCE

Motion made by Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Seconded by Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

MOTION PASSED

3. Consideration of an action on a request for the City Attorney to draft resolutions impartially, without bias or favoritism, requested by Council Member Gil Freeman

Council Member Freeman noted there has been a sense of tension and a perceived lack of support since the beginning of his term even during a time when he had the four votes. He emphasized that the City Attorney's role is to serve the interests of the City as a whole, not individual Council Members. There was expressed concern about the importance of maintaining neutrality as new rules and ordinances are being established.

In response, City Attorney Angela Couch affirmed her commitment to representing the City in its entirety. She clarified that all legal guidance and decisions are made with the City's best interests in mind, and not on behalf of any specific individual or group.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE REQUEST FOR THE CITY ATTORNEY TO DRAFT RESOLUTIONS IMPARTIALLY, WITHOUT BIAS OR FAVORITISM

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

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

MOTION FAILED

4. Consideration of an action on a request for the City Manager to ensure that all council members are equally and promptly informed about all matters, requested by Council Member Freeman

Council Member Freeman emphasized the critical importance of transparency and equal access to information for all members of the governing body. He voiced concern that the City Manager has not consistently provided updates to the entire Council, stressing the need for timely and equitable communication to ensure all Council Members are fully informed and able to make sound decisions.

In response, City Manager Shawn Edmondson clarified that any discussions held with him, regardless of the nature or participants, must ultimately be presented to the full Council for formal consideration and a vote. He noted that it remains the Council's collective discretion to determine how to proceed on matters brought before them.

ACTION: MOTION TO MOVE TO THE NEXT ITEM #5 PURCHASING POLICY

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

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman and Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant were absent for the vote

MOTION PASSED

5. Consideration of an action on a request to update the Purchasing Policy, requested by Council Member Anita Bass

City Manager Shawn Edmondson provided an overview of the Purchasing Policy, acknowledging that several sections require revision and updates. Following a brief discussion, the governing body reached a consensus to table the item and revisit it once the necessary policy revisions have been completed and once the current attorney has an opportunity to review.

XIII. New Ordinances and Resolutions

1. Ordinance No. 2025-03: Ordinance to Establish Regulations Governing Special Events and Permits (SECOND READ), requested by Assistant City Manager & DDA Director Maggie Dimov

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2023-03: ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH REGULATIONS GOVERNING SPECIAL EVENTS AND PERMITS

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

Voting Yea: 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

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

2. Ordinance 2025-04 - Stone Mountain Parks and Recreation Committee (FIRST READ)

No Action Taken.

3. Resolution No. 2025-10: Resolution to Set Permit Fees for Special Events, requested by Assistant City Manager & DDA Director Maggie Dimov

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 2025-10: RESOLUTION TO SET PERMIT FEES FOR SPECIAL EVENTS

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

Voting Yea: 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

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

4. Resolution 2025-09 Rules of Decorum Amendment

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-09 RULES OF DECORUM

Motion made by Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

MOTION PASSED

XIV. Remarks of Privilege

1. Discussion: Draft a proposal to be included in the State Budget, requested by Council Member Mark Marianos

It was recommended that the City of Stone Mountain pursue inclusion in the State of Georgia's budget, citing the substantial number of visitors who travel through the city's streets to access Stone Mountain Park. This continuous flow of tourism places a significant burden on the city's infrastructure and public services, despite the park being managed at the state level. Council Members recognized the need for additional support to help offset these impacts and reached a consensus to move forward with contacting the State of Georgia to explore the possibility of being included in future state budget allocations.

2. Discussion: Change the City's budget calendar year to a fiscal year from July to July, instead of December to December, requested by Council Member Mark Marianos

City Manager Edmondson explained funds typically come during the 4th quarter so more adventitious for the city. The Council Members came to a consensus to look into the process.

3. Discussion: Update on outdoor gym classes, requested by Council Member Anita Bass

Council Member Bass provided updates on the proposed programming for the outdoor gym, highlighting a range of potential offerings including fitness classes, general wellness activities, and boxing sessions. She noted that three formal proposals to utilize the gym space have been submitted to the City. Once the review process is complete and the proposals are finalized, they will be shared with the Council and the public at a later date.

XV. Announcements by The Mayor

XVI. Executive Session to Discuss Personnel, Legal, Cyber Security and/or Real Estate (if needed)

1. Personnel

Executive Session item was requested to be moved to the next meeting.

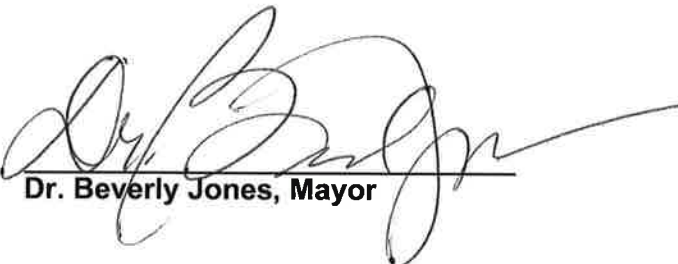
XVII. Adjournment

ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING AT 9:47 P.M.

Motion was made by Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Seconded by Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bas, 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

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)



Dr. Beverly Jones, Mayor



Shavala Ames, City Clerk

