



Mayor and City Council Work Session
Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at 6:30 PM
City Hall, 875 Main Street, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Minutes

Mayor and Council: Jelani Linder – Mayor | Post 3: Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Smith | Post 1: Council Member Anita Bass | Post 2: Council Member Mark Marianos | Post 4: Council Member Kay Nunez | Post 5: Council Member Hub Jordan | Post 6: Council Member Elaine Vaughn

Staff: Maggie Dimov – Interim 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 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan, Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn and Jelani Linder

I. Public Hearing

1. Public Hearing on the 2026 Comprehensive Plan, requested by Planning Manager Tamaya Huff

Planning Manager Tamaya Huff and Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) representative, Ranata Madison provided a general overview of the 2026 comprehensive plan as outlined in the provided city council packet.

Mayor Linder inquired about the possibility of focusing the Comprehensive Plan to produce more tangible, actionable items. He asked whether the plan could be tailored to address the specific needs of the community and target key areas. Ranata Madison confirmed that the plan would be designed to be actionable and tailored accordingly.

Public Hearing comments

Public Comment 1: Ms. Thomas – Objected to the Comprehensive Plan, stating that the 10-minute public comment period was insufficient for a city of approximately 4,000 residents. The City is not in compliance regarding the audit and referenced several grants received. Expressed concern that a citizen was asked to leave a committee meeting, meetings should be open to the public. Committee members were selected by former Council rather than citizens, limiting fair participation. Two Council members stated they would remain seated until a new Council was in place and referenced Marianos stating he would submit his name only for a temporary position.

Public Comment 2: Joan Monroe – Stated that only five people are allowed to speak at the public hearing, leaving the majority of citizens unheard. Expressed concern that committee appointments were made in a prejudiced manner and that those asking questions were treated with disdain. The public is being locked out while expected to give automatic approval. The meaning of stakeholder has been stretched beyond its municipal intent. This is not a private club and that citizens and businesses must be able to survive. Not observed Council or staff at the SMMA board meetings and highlighted financial concerns. Concluded that the Comprehensive Plan is not being approached with forward-thinking.

Public Comment 3: Susan Taylor – Congratulated the new Council and Mayor and referenced Atlanta Regional Commission representative Ms. Madison’s review of the steps completed under the prior Comprehensive Plan. Taylor suggested that this information be published on the City’s website so citizens can track progress. She also recommended conducting the checklist annually going forward.

II. Adjournment – 6:58 P.M.

ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:58 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 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

III. Call to Order

Mayor Linder called the meeting to order at 6:58 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 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan, and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

V. Invocation and Pledge

Mayor Linder led a 30-second moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

VI. Citizen Comments/Including comments from public/stakeholders

Citizen Comment 1: Ms. Thomas – Comments from the previous meeting were overly summarized. Raised concerns regarding Rockborough Terrace and San Pablo, including issues with A&S related to road damage and property damage. Objected to the proposed transfer of \$150,000 from SPLOST funds to the General Fund, stating this is illegal based on the 2023 audit and that residents want SPLOST funds used for street repairs. A Rockborough contract item was rejected due to lack of funds, despite \$150,000 being allocated to Mardi Gras expenses and DDA legal fees. Raised safety concerns regarding Ridge Road near JRB, citing damaged concrete around a sewer and a large pothole that poses a hazard. Referenced comments from the DeKalb County CEO’s office regarding proper SPLOST use.

Citizen Comment 2: Joan Monroe – Believes the agenda is largely unlawful and that required state procedures are not being followed. Repeated audit failures expose the City to potential lawsuits and referenced prior practices where the City Attorney attended only one meeting per month, expecting Council to follow the City Code. Stated that her deannexation request has passed County GIS and that they will continue the process based on the stamped and notarized petition date - the City should have submitted the petition to GIS but did not, and that the GIS Director dismissed the idea that the property was an island. Expressed a desire to leave the City due to concerns about public safety, harassment, vandalism, and what she described as misplaced priorities.

Citizen Comment 3: Michael Henry – Referenced a pothole on Ridge Road near JBR, stating that he has already contacted the City and completed the required forms, but no action has been taken. He also suggested planting evergreen trees, noting that they do not drop branches and are less likely to interfere with sewer and water lines.

Citizen Comment 4: Tequilla Hunter – Stated that an A&S Paving contractor damaged her mailbox and it still has not been repaired. She reported the incident three months ago, filed a police report, and

103 contacted the City Manager. She was told by the A&S Paving project manager that funds were allocated
104 for property damage. Although Code Enforcement noted no visible damage, the mailbox had been
105 temporarily secured at the time. She was advised to submit a letter to Council by Code, and an A&S
106 Paving representative later confirmed that the repair would be handled.
107

108 **Citizen Comment 5: Marcus Myrick** – Expressed that he is a long-term Stone Mountain resident with
109 concerns about rising crime and how the City plans to address it. He stated that his truck was vandalized
110 on Sunday morning, with the window broken in, and that police informed him of approximately 10 recent
111 break-ins in Stone Mountain. He noted that crime was previously lower and believes it has increased
112 alongside the rise in rental properties.
113

114 **Citizen Comment 6: Cheryl Dudley** – Expressed sympathy for Mr. Myrick regarding the vandalism of
115 his vehicle and wished the Mayor and Council a Happy New Year. She stated that, during discussions
116 on tourism and after reviewing the stakeholders meeting agenda, she believes there should be greater
117 separation between the City of Stone Mountain and Stone Mountain Park. She noted that the City existed
118 before the park and believes that the park's history has deterred visitors.
119

120 **Citizen Comment 7: Dave Thomas** – Thanked the Mayor and Council for the opportunity to speak and
121 welcomed the new members. He noted that most elected officials reside in the northern part of the Village
122 of Stone Mountain and asked that greater attention be given to the southwest, known as the Rockborough
123 area, which currently has no resident representation on Council. He stated that people are naturally more
124 attuned to issues in their own neighborhoods and suggested increasing community engagement in
125 Rockborough through town halls, council member meet-and-greets etc.
126

127 **Citizen Comment 8: Clint Monroe** – Congratulated the new Council members and acknowledged the
128 challenges of serving on Council, noting that he has served in the past. He highlighted a lack of
129 geographic representation on Council and expressed concern about border areas, where celebratory
130 gunfire occurs around New Year's and the Fourth of July and perpetrators leave before police can
131 respond. He also noted the absence of sidewalks in some areas and requested increased police
132 presence in the city's border areas. Additionally, he urged that city funds, particularly SPLOST funds, not
133 be diverted to other projects.
134

135 VII. Review of the Journal (City Clerk)

136 1. Consideration of an action on a request to approve January 6, 2026 Meeting Minutes

137 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE JANUARY 6, 2026 MEETING MINUTES**

138 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Mark
139 Marianos
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141 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor
142 Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub
143 Jordan, Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn
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145 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**

146 VIII. Reading of Communications – None

147 IX. Adoption of The Agenda of The Day

148 **ACTION: MOTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA OF THE DAY AS AMENDED TO INCLUDE AN** 149 **EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS LITIGATION AND PERSONNEL**

150 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Anita
151 Bass
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153 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor
154 Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub
155 Jordan, Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn
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161
162 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**
163

164 **X. Committee Discussion Items**

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166 **1. Stone Mountain Community Garden**
167

168 Columbus Brown gave details and updates and SMCG as outlined in the report provided. It was
169 announced that the next meeting will be on February 19th via zoom.
170

171 **2. Planning Commission**
172

173 Tamaya Huff came forward to give updates on the Stakeholder Committee and Comprehensive Plan,
174 along with public hearing notification requirements. It was noted that in February, the Planning
175 Commission will receive a similar presentation to provide additional opportunities for public
176 participation and comment.
177

178 The Planning Commission also adopted updated bylaws, increasing requirements for public meeting
179 minutes, including the recording of public meetings, and implementing formal public comment
180 procedures as part of the Planning Commission's public comment guidelines.
181

182 **3. Historic Preservation Commission**
183

184 Tamaya Huff provided updates as outlined in the report and noted that the Department of Community
185 Affairs awarded a grant to assess and survey historic properties, also that the Commission calendar
186 has been approved.
187

188 Council asked whether assessments would focus only on historic homes, how historic designations
189 would be disclosed in mixed developments, and whether codes are regulated by the City or the State.
190 Ms. Huff confirmed that the Historic Preservation Commission follows State laws.
191

192 **XI. Staff Reports**
193

194 **1. Public Safety – Police Chief – James Westerfield Jr**
195

196 The Interim City Manager advised that the public safety report was included in the meeting packet
197 and that any questions would be forwarded to Chief Westerfield upon his return on January 21, 2026.
198 Council inquired about the recent increase in break-ins in the area.
199

200 **2. Financials Update – Finance Consultant, Angelia Adediran**
201

202 Angelia Adediran presented an overview as outlined in the agenda packet. Council inquired about
203 the audit, specifically the applicable deadlines. Ms. Adediran explained that the City is subject to both
204 an annual audit and a single audit and provided an update that the audit is currently in the testing
205 phase, with a deadline of no later than February.
206

207 Various inquiries from the governing body were addressed including a balance discrepancy,
208 miscellaneous revenue listed under the General Fund, placing surplus funds into reserves, DOAA
209 compliance and the city audit. Interim City Manager Dimov clarified that this category may include
210 vendor fees and event sponsorships.
211

212 **XII. City Manager's Report**
213

214 **1. Operations Report – Interim City Manager Maggie Dimov**
215

216 Interim City Manager Maggie Dimov provided details and updates as outlined in the written report.
217 Operations report updates included Mike Helton as the City's new Public Works Director, appreciation
218 to Shavala Ames, City Clerk, and Ms. Keturah Hall, Assistant City Clerk, in preparing and organizing

the Mayor and Council Mini Retreat held in the City of Lithonia. She also noted that Ms. Ames, who is now overseeing Human Resources, has initiated an internal employee newsletter to improve internal communication.

Additional updates included reports on VFW Park, McCurdy Park, the outdoor gym damages, and CSX updates.

The Mayor announced the success of the MLK event and acknowledged the attendance of various city mayors, commissioners, and community leaders.

Public Works Director Mike Helton provided an update on the steps the Public Works Department is taking to prepare for potential snow events.

XIII. Council Policy Discussion Topics – None

XIV. Unfinished Business – None

XV. New Business

1. Consideration of an action on a request to approve the Variance Application for 1082 New Gibraltar Square

ACTION: MOTION TO DEFER THE VARIANCE APPLICATION FOR 1082 NEW GIBRALTAR SQUARE TO MARCH 3, 2026

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

Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Smith made a motion to defer the variance application due to the applicant performing work prior to receiving the required approval and expressed that a fine should be imposed. The City Attorney clarified that the violation is a court-related matter with no direct correlation to the zoning procedures.

MOTION WITHDRAWN

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE VARIANCE APPLICATION FOR 1082 NEW GIBRALTAR SQUARE

Motion made by Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

Voting Nay: Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith

MOTION PASSED

2. Consideration of an action on a request to approve Mardi Gras as a city-wide event

Interim City Manager Maggie Dimov gave a general overview and a timeline of the proposed Mardi Gras event which included three options for the execution.

Carmen with Bundos Entertainment came forward with her board to discuss options for hosting the event and explain their reason for requesting funding from the city.

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE MARDI GRAS AS A CITY-WIDE EVENT UNDER OPTION 3 - A CITY PARTNERSHIP EVENT IN WHICH THE CITY OF STONE MOUNTAIN WOULD

277 **RECOGNIZE MARDI GRAS AS AN OFFICIAL CITYWIDE EVENT; THE SELECTED VENDOR**
278 **WOULD SERVE AS THE EVENT ORGANIZER THROUGH AN RFP PROCESS, WITH THE**
279 **CITY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL EVENT-RELATED COSTS AND THE VENDOR**
280 **COMPENSATED FOR ITS SERVICES**

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

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284 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor
285 Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub
286 Jordan and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

287
288 **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**
289

- 290 3. Consideration of an action on a request to approve the 2026 Special Events Calendar
291

292 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2026 SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR REALLOCATE**
293 **\$8,000 FROM THE CARIBBEAN FEST AND MUSIC OF THE SOULS EVENTS TO FUND THE**
294 **MARDI GRAS EVENT**

295 Motion made by Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Mark
296 Marianos

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298 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos,
299 Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post
300 5 Hub Jordan and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

301
302 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**
303

- 304 4. Consideration of an action a request to reallocate funds for (1) new position, Tourism Manager; and
305 (1) previous position Communications Specialist
306

307 **ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE THE REQUEST TO REALLOCATE FUNDS FOR (1) NEW**
308 **POSITION, TOURISM MANAGER; AND (1) PREVIOUS POSITION COMMUNICATIONS**
309 **SPECIALIST**

310 Motion made by Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2
311 Mark Marianos

312
313 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos,
314 Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post
315 5 Hub Jordan and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

316
317 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**
318

- 319 5. Consideration of an action on a request to approve Engineering Services with LBGM Associates
320

321 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE A REQUEST TO APPROVE ENGINEERING SERVICES**
322 **WITH LBGM ASSOCIATES**

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

325
326 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos,
327 Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post
328 5 Hub Jordan and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

329
330 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**
331

- 332 6. Consideration of an action on a request to approve an Intergovernmental Agreement with
333 Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and the City of Stone Mountain
334

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE A REQUEST TO APPROVE AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA) AND THE CITY OF STONE MOUNTAIN

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 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

7. Consideration of an action on a request to initiate a comprehensive review and research of HB 581 to evaluate its potential impacts and benefits for the citizens of Stone Mountain

Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Smith explained that DeKalb County has implemented a property tax freeze similar to HB 581, noting that revenue has increased each year since its implementation. City Attorney Angela Couch clarified that reintroducing this item would require additional funding for Sumter Consulting to properly prepare it with all necessary information. The item will need to be placed back on the agenda.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE A REQUEST TO INITIATE A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND RESEARCH OF HB 581 TO EVALUATE ITS POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND BENEFITS FOR THE CITIZENS OF STONE MOUNTAIN TO THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Motion made by Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Seconded by Council Member 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 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

8. **ACTION: MOTION TO EXTEND THE TIME OF THE MEETING TO DISCUSS NEW ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS AND THE EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion made by Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan, 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 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub Jordan and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)

XVI. New Ordinances and Resolutions

1. Ordinance 1008B Main Street – FIRST READ, requested by Planning Manager Tamaya Huff

NO ACTION TAKEN

XVII. Remarks of Privilege – None

XVIII. Announcements by the Mayor

1. It was announced that the City of Stone Mountain MLK event was a great success. The Chiefs' Meeting, which brought together all DeKalb County chiefs, was held in Stone Mountain. Additionally, a successful MLK event was held at St. Paul AME Church

393
394 **XIX. Executive Session to discuss Personnel, Legal, Cyber Security, and/or Real Estate (if needed)**
395

396 **ACTION: MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 9:54 P.M.**

397 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Mark
398 Marianos
399

400 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor
401 Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub
402 Jordan and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn
403

404 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**
405

406 **ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION AND RECONVENE THE CITY**
407 **COUNCIL MEETING AT 10:46 P.M.**

408 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Mark
409 Marianos
410

411 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor
412 Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub
413 Jordan and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn
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415 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**
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417 **XX. Adjournment**
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419 **ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING 10:47 P.M.**

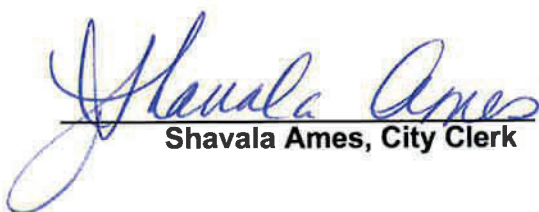
420 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1
421 Anita Bass
422

423 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor
424 Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub
425 Jordan and Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn
426

427 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**
428

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432


Mayor/ Mayor Pro Tem



Shavala Ames, City Clerk