



Mayor and City Council Work Session
Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at 6:30 PM
City Hall, 875 Main Street, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Minutes

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

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5 **Staff: Maggie Dimov – Interim City Manager/Economic Development Director/DDA | Shavala**
6 **Ames - City Clerk | Angela Couch - City Attorney**

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

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

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14 **I. Public Hearing**

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16 1. Public Hearing Consideration to opt in – Statewide Floating Homestead Exemption

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18 Mayor Pro Tem Smith gave a general overview of the proposed Statewide Floating Homestead
19 Exemption and his support of the exemption.

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21 Mayor Linder opened the public hearing regarding the statewide floating homestead exemption.

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23 **Public Hearing comments**

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25 **Public Comment 1: Joan Monroe** – Does not think that the Statewide Floating Homestead Exemption
26 will serve the general public well.

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28 **Public Comment 2: Clint Monroe** – Has seen similar legislation adopted in other jurisdictions and
29 believes it has led to tax increases to maintain city revenue. Expressed support for the City's initial vote
30 to opt out to preserve local control of the millage rate. Limiting the City's flexibility could result in service
31 reductions if the budget is significantly constrained and that annual increases in property values may
32 expand the tax digest, enabling the City to build financial reserves, which are important in preparing for
33 potential future economic downturns.

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35 **II. Adjournment – 6:37 P.M.**

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37 **ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:37 P.M**

38 Motion made by Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2
39 Mark Marianos

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

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45 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**

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III. **Call to Order**

Mayor Linder called the meeting to order at 6:37 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: Vanessa Walls – Thanked the community and announced completion of the final phase of the school renovations, including carpet installation, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony scheduled for Tuesday February 24th at 10:30 a.m. Also announced a pilot after-school program at Stone Mountain Methodist Church and requested volunteers, noting that background check fees will be waived by the Stone Mountain Police Department. Appreciation was expressed to Kay Nunez and others for donating toiletry bags to local schools.

Citizen Comment 2: Dijon Dacosta – District 6 member of the DeKalb County School Board addressed the proposed closure of 27 schools, stating that the Board of Education has not yet made a final decision and is encouraging community members to attend meetings and share their input. The speaker noted that the school system was originally built to serve approximately 110,000 students, but enrollment has declined since COVID-19. It was stated that, under current recommendations, Stone Mill Elementary would merge with Stone Mountain Elementary at the Champion Middle School site, and that approximately \$4 million has been invested in renovations at Champion Middle School. Upcoming Board meetings were announced for February 23 at 12:00 p.m. and February 23 at 6:00 p.m. at 1701 Mountain Industrial Boulevard.

Citizen Comment 3: Cordero Vigil – The City of Stone Mountain has returned to a moment in history where state-sanctioned violence is present. Noted that the DeKalb County Commission withdrew its resolution condemning ICE and referenced the City of Stone Mountain's complex and, at times, violent history. Expressed hope that the Stone Mountain Village will be on the right side of history and noted that elected officials ran on platforms supporting citizens' rights to protest.

Citizen Comment 4: Joan Monroe – Stated that, despite rhetoric about transparency and community involvement, she believes those commitments are just an illusion by Council. Also notes violation of open meetings laws, citing residents being locked out of two public meetings. Mentioned financial mismanagement and a lack of consideration of public input. Raised concerns about potential staff conflicts of interest and urged the Council not to change the status of the City Manager, expressing the opinion that current leadership is not effectively performing its duties and that the City is not serving the broader community.

Citizen Comment 5: Cheryl Dudley – Encouraged residents to visit the state's My Voter Page website to confirm their voter registration. Some residents may receive notice that their polling location has temporarily changed to St. Michael's in Stone Mountain due to renovations at Champion Middle School. Referenced attending a District 7 town hall meeting where a discussion was held regarding the implementation of a new 911 system under which calls would be routed directly to a police vehicle. Inquired whether a plan would be in place should ICE personnel appear at polling locations.

Citizen Comment 6: Ms. Thomas - Before permanently hiring a City Manager, outstanding issues should be addressed, including repayment of \$8.7 million in SPLOST funds, and the status of the 2024 and 2025 audits. Noted that her street is listed in a statement of work for A&S Paving but that the City

104 has indicated there is a lack of funding to complete the repairs. Expressed concerns regarding the quality
105 of completed work, alleging that the City Manager allowed the contractor to define quality standards
106 without considering resident input. Referenced a mass exiting of city staff from the City of Stone Mountain
107 and requested that the matter be reviewed.

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109 **Citizen Comment 7: Ginger Criswell** – Expressed concerns about traffic congestion on Forest during
110 rush hour and stated that the roadway needs improvements and possible widening due to safety hazards,
111 including trees encroaching into the area and the risk of vehicle collisions. Referenced a pothole covered
112 with a metal plate and inquired whether permanent repairs are planned. Reported several abandoned
113 and boarded-up homes on James B. River Memorial Drive that have allegedly been broken into and
114 occupied by squatters. Has submitted photos to Code Enforcement but has not received a response.
115 Requested consideration of an ordinance requiring property owners to properly secure vacant properties
116 to prevent unauthorized occupancy.

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118 **Citizen Comment 8: Clint Monroe** – The State Legislature frequently preempts county and municipal
119 authority and expressed that he does not support a one size fits all approach. Opting into the statewide
120 floating homestead exemption could result in the City losing local control, which believes is important to
121 the citizens of Stone Mountain. Noted that if the millage rate remains the same, it can be adjusted as
122 needed to break even, and that increases in the property tax digest are also manageable. He suggested
123 alternatives, including utilizing the property tax appeal process. Recognized and praised volunteers at
124 Stone Mountain Elementary School.

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126 **VII. Review of the Journal (City Clerk)**

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128 1. Consideration of an action on a request to approve January 29, 2026 Meeting Minutes

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130 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE JANUARY 29, 2026 MEETING MINUTES**

131 Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 4 Kay
132 Nunez

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

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138 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**

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140 2. Consideration of an action on a request to approve the February 3, 2026 Meeting Minutes

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142 **ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 3, 2026 MEETING MINUTES**

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

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

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150 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**

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152 **VIII. Reading of Communications**

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154 1. Employee of the Month recognition was awarded to Dantavious “Dante” Calloway

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156 **IX. Adoption of The Agenda of The Day**

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158 **ACTION: MOTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA OF THE DAY**

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

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162 **Voting Yea:** Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Mayor
163 Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Kay Nunez, Council Member: Post 5 Hub
164 Jordan, Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn
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166 **MOTION PASSED (UNANIMOUSLY)**
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168 **X. Committee Discussion Items**
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170 Committee discussion items were included in the Council packet for review prior to the meeting. Mayor
171 Linder requested and received consensus from Council to proceed with the agenda as presented in the
172 interest of meeting efficiency.
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- 174 1. Stone Mountain Community Garden – Overview provided in meeting packet
- 175 2. Planning Commission – Overview provided in meeting packet
- 176 3. Historic Preservation Commission – Overview provided in meeting packet
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180 **XI. Staff Reports**
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- 182 1. Public Safety – Police Chief – James Westerfield Jr
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184 Chief presented the crime statistics as outlined in the meeting packet and also presented the Officer
185 of the Year award for the City of Stone Mountain to Detective Mary Swisher.
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187 Following the presentation, Council members encouraged residents to participate in the
188 Neighborhood Watch via the Ambassadors Program. Residents were also invited to attend a meeting
189 on Thursday, February 19, at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall to get additional information and become involved.
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- 191 2. Financials Update – Finance Consultant, Angelia Adediran
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193 Members of Council inquired about the status of the 2024 and 2025 audits. Ms. Adediran confirmed
194 that the first draft of the 2024 audit has been presented to the City Manager for review and that the
195 2025 audit process is scheduled to begin in March.
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197 Angelia Adediran presented an overview as outlined in the agenda packet. Council also asked about
198 the City's labor costs and whether blight tax revenue has been separated into a distinct revenue line
199 item. Ms. Adediran confirmed that it has been separated and recommended that blight tax revenue
200 be maintained as a separate fund. Additional questions were raised regarding reserve funds, and it
201 was clarified that this information is included in the draft audit and will be formally presented by the
202 auditors.
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- 204 3. SPLOST I & SPLOST II Updates – Finance Consultant, Angelia Adediran
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206 Angelia Adediran gave an overview of the history of SPLOST I as outlined in the meeting packet.
207 Members of Council inquired about the variance of \$772,005.29, and Ms. Adediran clarified that the
208 variance falls within the actual balance of \$823,437.59. She explained that the \$772,005.29
209 represents expenditures that may be adjusted in the 2024 numbers, which are allowed to be carried
210 forward. Ms. Adediran also noted that additional information regarding adjustment entries will be
211 presented by the auditors once the audit is finalized.
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213 Council members asked whether the second part of SPLOST II had been allocated, and it was
214 confirmed that it has not yet been allocated, but the remaining funding is expected to carry forward.
215 They also inquired about the \$2 million designated for the Small City Fund and whether it needed to
216 be separated from the regular SPLOST II funds. It was recommended that the \$2 million be set aside
217 in a separate bank account from the \$1.2 million to better track expenditures.
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219 **XII. City Manager's Report**

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1. Operations Report – City Manager Maggie Dimov

City Manager Maggie Dimov provided details and updates as outlined in the written report.

Council raised questions regarding the lights on Main Street, and it was confirmed that the Public Works Director is working on the programming to get them operational as promised. Council also inquired about issues with the security cameras, and Mike Helton clarified that the Public Works Department is working closely with DeKalb County to get additional security cameras on Main Street and West Mountain Drive.

XIII. Council Policy Discussion Topics – None

XIV. Unfinished Business

1. Consideration of the appointment of Miglena (Maggie) Dimov as City Manager and authorization for the Mayor to execute the agreed-upon employment agreement on behalf of the City

City Attorney Angela Couch came forward to discuss the draft agreement

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF A CITY MANAGER AND AUTHORIZATION FOR THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE THE AGREED-UPON EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY

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

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

XV. New Business

1. Consideration of an action on a request to approve City investment opportunities, requested by the City's Finance Department

Finance Consultant Stephen Mayer discussed the e-resolution regarding moving idle funds to a pool investment fund with competitive interest rates

Council inquired whether the account with Truist Bank would be closed as a result; it was clarified that the account could remain open. The council also inquired about the type of investments to be made, the number of accounts to be opened (four), and whether any penalties would be applicable. It was clarified that the investments are subject to government regulation. Council Member Smith suggested waiting until all funds and accounts are fully settled within the budget before proceeding.

ACTION: MOTION TO AUTHORIZE MAYOR LINDER TO SIGN AN E-RESOLUTION ON BEHALF OF THE CITY TO ALLOW THE OPENING AND FUNDING OF 4 INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS

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

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- 2. Consideration of an action on a request to enter negotiations with a selected consultant for a Historic Preservation Fund grant

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE A REQUEST TO ENTER NEGOTIATIONS WITH A SELECTED CONSULTANT FOR A HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND GRANT

Motion made by Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass, 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

- 3. Consideration of an action on a request on the appointment of an alternate/backup Council Member to the Stakeholder Committee

ACTION: MOTION TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL MEMBER HUB JORDAN AND COUNCIL MEMBER KAY NUNEZ AS ALTERNATE/BACKUP COUNCIL MEMBERS ON THE STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE

Motion made by Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos, Seconded by Council Member: Post 6 Elaine Vaughn

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** – None

XVII. **Remarks of Privilege** – None

XVIII. **Announcements by the Mayor** – None

XIX. **Executive Session** - None

XX. **Adjournment**

ACTION: MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING 10:47 P.M.

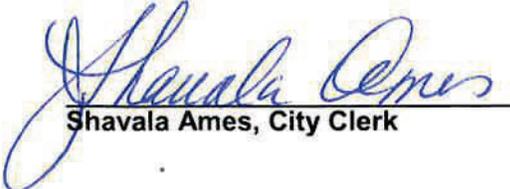
Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass

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)



Jelani Linder, Mayor



Shavala Ames, City Clerk