



Mayor and City Council Work Session

Tuesday, October 15, 2024 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 - Interim City Manager - City Clerk | Danny Mai - Assistant 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 06:36 PM ET.

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 (3 minutes per comment)

Comments from the Public

The public comments are reserved exclusively for comments from the public and not for immediate reply. The purpose of public comment is to allow the public to voice city related requests, concerns or opinions only during the public comment portion of the City Council meeting. I. The Mayor and City Council reserves the right to extend or limit the length of public comments based on: (1) the issue under discussion; (2) the number of items on the agenda; and (3) the extent to which the speaker remains constructive in their comments and questions. II. The public may not directly confront the public speaker but must direct all comments and questions to the Mayor and City Council. III. Public harassment of or confrontation with a public speaker will not be tolerated. Members of the public violating tenets two or three will be asked to sit down or leave the premises.

Citizen Comment #1

The citizen expressed gratitude for the GA Power briefing on September 19, 2024, and the Empowerment Line resource event on October 5, 2024. They noted that both events were extremely empowering and provided valuable support to the community

Citizen Comment #2:

The citizen remarked that Main Street is looking well and acknowledged the city's improvements. They requested an update on a split pad located at 750 Stonedraw Court, stating that the split pad poses a hazard and needs attention.

Citizen Comment #3:

The citizen highlighted that early voting in Georgia began on October 15, 2024. They emphasized the significance of this election and encouraged the public to vote.

Citizen Comment #4:

The citizen expressed opposition to the proposed Ordinance 2024-08, citing potential risks and hazards associated with it. They stressed the importance of prioritizing the needs of the people over profit.

Citizen Comment #5:

The citizen thanked Council Member Bryant for hosting the GA Power event. They noted that if GA Power had not been aware of the trees in the area, the aftermath of the recent hurricane could have

been much worse. The citizen also mentioned that the public was not invited to attend a meeting regarding the proposed Ordinance 2024-08 and requested an update on SPLOST I and II.

Citizen Comment #6:

The citizen commended the city on its recent landscape improvements and suggested that it would be important to ensure that trashcans are regularly monitored and emptied. They also pointed out that other cities are utilizing ARPA funds to provide grants for beautification projects, particularly for main streets.

Review of the Journal (Assistant City Clerk Mai)

1. Request Minutes from City Council Meeting [10.01.2024] be approved (Assistant City Clerk Mai) (Pages 4-8)

City staff requested that the minutes be postponed until the next meeting due to necessary corrections.

Reading of Communications

Adoption of The Agenda of The Day

MOTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA OF THE DAY

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 4 Freeman.

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

Committee Discussion Items

2. Stone Mountain Community Garden (Pages 9-12)

Chairman Brown spoke on behalf of the committee. Chairman Brown thanked Assistant City Clerk Danny Mai on the great work that he has been doing regarding the city website.

Chairman Brown provided an update and described the Community Garden to Council & Staff.

CM Freeman asked for a status on the beehives.

COMMITTEE REPORT FOUND IN THE AGENDA PACKAGE

3. Planning Commission (Page 13)

N/A

COMMITTEE REPORT FOUND IN THE AGENDA PACKAGE

4. Economic Development/Downtown Development Authority (Pages 14-15)
DDA Director Dimov spoke on and provided updates regarding the DDA.

COMMITTEE REPORT FOUND IN THE AGENDA PACKAGE

5. Historic Preservation Commission (Page 16)

N/A

COMMITTEE REPORT FOUND IN THE AGENDA PACKAGE

6. Parks and Recreation Committee

Chairperson Parker spoke to council and provided updates on various projects. Chairperson additionally mentioned other Parks and Recs departments within other municipalities, noting that the City of Stone Mountain has great potential.

Chairperson noted that the Parks and Recs committee is looking to host a fall festival.

No Committee Report was provided, and as such are not in the package.

Staff Reports

7. Public Safety- Police Chief- James Westerfield Jr (Pages 17-19)

Chief Westerfield mentioned the importance of Breast Cancer awareness month & Domestic Violence awareness month. Chief Westerfield thanked the community for a successful faith in blue.

STATISTICS FOUND IN AGENDA PACKAGE

8. Administration- Assistant City Clerk - Danny Mai (Pages 20-22)

City Manager Edmondson spoke on Administrative statistics.

REPORT FOUND IN THE AGENDA PACKAGE.

City Manager's Report

9. Interim City Manager - Shawn Edmondson

City Manager's Report can be found on the City Website & in the Agenda Package.

Council Policy Discussion Topics

Unfinished Business

10. Discussion regarding the process in applying and receiving a bond for SPLOST II. (Interim City Manager Edmondson)

The Interim City Manager spoke on the benefits of bonding and addressed questions raised by the council. The Interim City Manager also noted that the administration is reviewing various bond quotes.

The Mayor suggested that a public meeting be scheduled regarding bonding to allow for community input. Additionally, Council Member Bryant requested that the Storm Water Department be able to attend the next council session.

11. Discussion regarding the "Small Cities IGA" (Inter-Governmental Agreement) between the City of Stone Mountain and DeKalb County (Interim City Manager Edmondson & City Attorney Strickland)

The City Attorney provided the council with information regarding the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). The City Attorney noted that this item will be placed on the next agenda, scheduled for November 6, 2024, as a voting item.

12. Discussion on DDA (CM Freeman)

CM Freeman postponed this until the next City Council Session.

New Business

13. **1ST READING:** Discussion and review of Staff Recommendations for Variance at 844 Sheppard Way (Parcel ID: 18 073 01 135) to allow for the construction of a wooden fence within the stream buffers, with the condition that the fence be at least 50% open to allow for water flow. (City Planner Edwards) (Pages 23-30)

No Action

14. **1ST READING:** Discussion and review of Staff Recommendations for Variance Denial at 844 Sheppard Way (Parcel ID: 18 073 01 135) to deny the request for a fence in the front yard to

exceed 4 feet in height, as recommended by staff and the Planning Commission. (City Planner Edwards) (Pages 30-37)

No Action

- 15. 1ST READING:** Discussion and review of Staff Recommendations for Variance Denial at 6204 East Ponce de Leon Ave (Parcel ID: 18 125 03 014) to deny the request for a curb cut exceeding 24 feet in width, as recommended by staff and the Planning Commission. (City Planner Edwards) (Pages 38-46)

No Action

16. Discussion and approval of Open Containers for the "Day of the Dead" celebration and all other major festivals and parades. (CM Marianos)

Council Member Marianos spoke on the benefits of hosting events like Dia de Los Muertos, emphasizing the positive impact such events would have on local businesses, particularly stores and restaurants in the city.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE USE OF THE LAWN ON MAIN FOR THE DIA DE LOS MUERTOS EVENT

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 TO APPROVE THE AMENDMENT TO THE RESOLUTION TO INCLUDE THE MAP DETAILING THE BOUNDARIES OF OPEN CONTAINER AND RESOLUTION AS PRESENTED

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 6 Crowe

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

New Ordinances and Resolutions

17. 1ST READING: Ordinance 2024-08 to amend Chapter 5, Article 6, Division 12 – Community Redevelopment Tax Incentive Program of the City of Stone Mountain Code of Ordinances. (City Planner Edwards) (Pages 47-55)

No Action.

Remarks of Privilege

Announcements by The Mayor

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

Adjournment