TYRONE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES
July 02, 2026 at 7:00 PM

Eric Dial, Mayor
Billy Campbell, Mayor Pro Tem, Post 3

Jessica Whelan, Post 1
Dia Hunter, Post 2
Maureen Wheeler, Post 4

Brandon Perkins, Town Manager
Dee Baker, Town Clerk
Dennis Davenport, Town Attorney

Also present:
Sandy Beach, Finance Manager
Randy Mundy, Police Chief

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. INVOCATION

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS: *Comments are limited to three (3) minutes. Please state your name & address. Comments that require a response may not be answered during this time. The Council or staff may respond at a later date.*

Ellie Varela, who lives on Mann Road, urged the Town to hire an independent acoustical engineering firm to establish baseline ambient sound levels (day/night, low-frequency, vibration, infrasound) before the Microsoft data center proceeds. She highlighted unique noise characteristics of data centers and public health concerns. She questioned the lack of documentation on ordinance changes allowing buildings up to 300,000 sq. ft. and data center-specific ordinance beyond parking requirements. She requested objective measurements and safeguards prior to construction.

Eric Larsen, who lives on Kellsworth Way, compared data center building sizes (~250,000 sq. ft.) to a Super Walmart. He discussed heat generation from data centers and estimated computing power (~96 MW) equating to significant thermal output. According to his research, the buildings would generate enough heat to equal a thermal energy of thirty-two thousand idling SUV's, the space of sixty-five football fields. Mr. Larsen cited studies on increased land surface temperatures and urged Council to conduct multiple independent impact studies prior to construction.

Mollie Larsen, who lives on Kellsworth Way, detailed three data center cooling options. The closed-loop primary systems with secondary cooling via air-cooled "radiator" (low water, high power; low-frequency noise), evaporative "hot skillet" (high water use; estimated ~700,000 gallons/day on hot days), and "monster AC" (DX chillers; high power, compressor noise). She emphasized uncertainty about Microsoft and Ms. Vanderslice's cooling plans. She warned of resource strain and noise.

Carrie Klarl, who lives on Mann Road, raised risks from potential spills (cooling fluids, diesel, chemicals, maintenance wastewater) affecting wetlands and Trickum Creek. She asked if Microsoft must pre-treat sewage. She cited groundwater recharge area protections under Georgia law and urged that a noise containment be designed before construction. She argued that data centers warrant industrial zoning and requested a specific, comprehensive data center ordinance be formed, referencing examples (Troup County, GA; Fayetteville, AR).

Rachel Lane, who lives on Zelkova Drive, sought answers on whether council members signed nondisclosure agreements and what studies were done. She expressed frustration over email communications. Mayor Dial reiterated that public comment was not for Q&A and offered post-meeting discussions.

Ms. Brown, who lives in Tyrone, asserted that council approved rezoning and site plan, effectively making Tyrone a "data center town". She urged the council to act given environmental, infrastructure, and health concerns. She stated other communities have slowed or stopped projects post-approval and asked the council to demand independent studies and protect town resources before permitting. She implored council to use its authority to stop or slow development.

Stephanie Pugh, who lives on Westbourne Drive, described impacts from Georgia Power's Ashley Park–Warnsley transmission line construction. Placement of the poles was affecting community plans, creating lawsuits, and Tyrone residents would be affected. Decisions to approve the data center helped to bring the transmission line through the Line Creek community and into Tyrone. She urged stringent ordinances to protect residents inside and outside Tyrone.

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made to approve the agenda with a change to item # 4; the date should be September 18th.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Whelan.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA: *All matters listed under this item are considered to be routine by the Town Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will not be separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the consent agenda and will be considered separately.*

1. Approval of the June 18, 2026 minutes.

2. Consideration of a proposal from the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government to conduct a classification and employee salary study at a cost not to exceed $20,233.00.

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda.

Motion made by Council Member Hunter, Seconded by Council Member Campbell.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

VII. PRESENTATIONS

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

3. Public hearing regarding a front yard setback variance from applicant Ashley Dickie for the property at address 541 Senoia Road. Phillip Trocquet, Assistant Town Manager

Mr. Trocquet stated that the property is zoned R-12. The existing dwelling predates the town's zoning and is legally nonconforming, sitting approximately 24 feet within the 80-foot setback. A lot division would make this an illegal encroachment without a variance. The applicant proposes no expansion of the dwelling's footprint. He added that the Planning Commission had unanimously recommended conditional approval on June 11 of the current year. The conditions included the removal of an accessory pole barn (which was completed) and a well house. He shared that staff and the Town Attorney did not believe approving the variance would set a negative precedent due to the unique circumstances of a pre-existing home and government action (increasing setbacks over time) creating the nonconformance.

Applicant Ashley Dickey explained the purpose of the subdivision is to allow a family member to build a home on the new lot so they can raise their families together near other family members currently on Senoia Road.

Mayor Dial opened the public hearing for anyone who wished to speak in favor of the item. No one spoke.

Mayor Dial opened the public hearing for anyone who wished to speak in opposition to the item. No one spoke.

Council Member Dia Hunter questioned whether this would set a precedent but was satisfied with staff's explanation. Council Member Billy Campbell confirmed details about the new home's location and driveway access. Council Member Jessica Whelan expressed concern about setting a precedent, but staff reiterated that variances are handled on a case-by-case basis.

A motion was made to approve the 24-foot front yard setback variance from Ashley Dickie for the property at 541 Senoia Road.

Motion made by Council Member Whelan, Seconded by Council Member Wheeler.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

X. NEW BUSINESS

4. Consideration to approve a "Night Market" event sponsored by the Tyrone Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to include off-premises sales of alcohol at Shamrock Park on Friday, September 11th, 2026. Phillip Trocquet, Assistant Town Manager.

Mr. Trocquet presented a request for consideration to approve a Night Market event sponsored by the Tyrone Downtown Development Authority, to be operated by Night Market. The request included the off-premises sale of alcohol at Shamrock Park.

A motion was made to approve the Night Market event sponsored by the Tyrone Downtown Development Authority with the inclusion of off-premises sales of alcohol at Shamrock Park on Friday, September 18th, 2026.

Motion made by Council Member Hunter, Seconded by Council Member Campbell.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler
Voting Nay: Council Member Whelan.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

The second public comment period is for any issue. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes. Please state your name & address. Comments that require a response may not be answered during this time. The Council or staff may respond at a later date.

Eric Larsen - Expressed frustration with traffic of dump trucks, cement trucks, and semis on Dogwood Trail due to the data center construction. He requested the town install a "No Jake Brake" sign. He also demanded a public explanation from the council on why they approved the data center rezoning, highlighting the negative impact on residents' lives and property.

Heather Tharp, who lives on Montego Trail, accused the council of hypocrisy for showing significant concern over a 24-foot property variance and alcohol in a park, while seemingly dismissing resident concerns about the much larger impacts of the data center. She questioned what kind of legacy the data center would be for the town's families.

Mollie Larsen - Questioned the council's decision to amend the Business Technology Park (BTP) code to increase the maximum building size from 200,000 to 300,000 square feet to accommodate the data center. She argued this was a major change from the town's comprehensive plan that was done without public discussion and significantly increased the project's scale, noise, power consumption, and cooling infrastructure.

XII. STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Perkins reminded everyone of the America 250 Celebration, Saturday at Shamrock Park from 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm with bands, food trucks, vendors, and fireworks.

Mr. Perkins announced that the Citizen Police Academy registration was open. It would begin on August 25th through October 13th, every Tuesday from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm. Register at tyronepd.org/cpa.

He also announced the registration for the Tyrone 101 program beginning on September 8th through October 27th, every Tuesday from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. You can register at tyronega.gov/tyrone101.

XIII. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Hunter recalled attending a Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) conference and proposed changing the agenda to have the first public comment period for agenda items only and the second for any topic. He cited trends from a recent conference and proposed that the Town develop a comprehensive ordinance specific to data centers, like those in Fayetteville, AR, to address issues like noise. Staff were directed to research and gather policies from other jurisdictions for Council review. He asked about the timing for a new golf cart crossing with flashing lights. Town Manager Perkins reported the project was delayed by land acquisition issues. Council Member Hunter also sought clarification on the timeline for new Georgia Power lines. Town Manager Perkins confirmed the project was in a 2022 strategic plan and predates the Microsoft data center approval by at least two years. Council Member Hunter also posed a moratorium on data centers and what that would look like. Mr. Davenport explained that a moratorium is a complex legislative action requiring deliberate identification of the issue, the scope of the restriction, and a clear timeline. He emphasized that a moratorium could not be enacted during an informal comment period.

Council Member Wheeler expressed support for Council Member Hunter's proposal regarding the public comment period structure. Mayor Dial recalled that in the past, he believed that we only had one public comment section. One was added to the agenda to have people speak before an item was voted on, and then the last public comment was for anything that was not on the agenda. She asked for the status of the "share the road" six-foot signs. Assistant Town Manager Trocquet confirmed a set had arrived and would be installed, with more to be ordered in the new fiscal year.

Council Member Campbell preferred keeping both public comment periods open to any topic. The council agreed to table the discussion. He recalled an ordinance being passed years ago to ban engine brakes within town limits. He requested a copy of the Fayetteville, Arkansas data center ordinance.

Council Member Whelan thanked the public for their engagement and assured them the council is listening to concerns about the watershed and noise. She added that she had already requested Environmental Specialist Jake Canter to work with staff on recommendations for ordinance changes.

XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made to move into Executive Session for one item of pending litigation and to review the Executive Session minutes from June 18, 2026

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Wheeler.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

A motion was made to reconvene.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Whelan.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler

A motion was made to approve the Executive Session minutes from June 18, 2026.

Motion made by Council Member Hunter, Seconded by Council Member Campbell.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell.

Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Whelan, Council Member Hunter, Council Member Wheeler.

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm.

By: _____ Attest: _____

Eric Dial, Mayor Dee Baker, Town Clerk