



CITY OF STATESBORO
COUNCIL MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 15, 2026

Regular Meeting

50 E. Main St. City Hall Council Chambers

5:30 PM

1. Call to Order

Mayor Jonathan McCollar called the meeting to order

2. Invocation and Pledge

Councilmember Tangie Johnson gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jonathan McCollar	Mayor	Present	
Tangie Johnson	Councilmember	Present	
Vacant	Councilmember	Vacant	
Ginny Hendley	Councilmember	Present	
John Riggs	Councilmember	Present	
Shari Barr	Mayor Pro Tem	Present	

Other staff present: City Manager Charles Penny, Assistant City Manager Jason Boyles, Public Affairs Manager Layne Phillips, City Attorney Cain Smith and City Clerk Leah Harden

3. Recognitions/Public Presentations:

A) Presentation of a Proclamation recognizing September 15th – October 15th as Hispanic Heritage Month.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar read a proclamation recognizing September 15, 2026 through October 15, 2026 as Hispanic Heritage Month, honoring the contributions of Latino Americans. Eduardo Delgado, with Migrant Equity Southeast accepted the proclamation and expressed gratitude to the Mayor and Council.

4. Public Comments (Agenda Item): None

5. Consideration of a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda

A) Approval of Minutes

- a) 09-01-2026 Council Minutes
- b) 09-01-2026 Executive Session Minutes
- c) 09-08-2026 Public Hearing Minutes 2026 Millage Rate – 12:00 p.m.
- d) 09-08-2026 Public Hearing Minutes 2026 Millage Rate – 6:00 p.m.

B) Consideration of a motion to approve the due date of December 21, 2026 for the City of Statesboro property tax bills.

A motion was made to approve consent agenda.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

6. Public hearing and consideration of a motion to approve Resolution 2026-37: A Resolution setting the millage rate for Ad Valorem (Property) Taxes for the 2026 calendar year for the City of Statesboro, Georgia.

A motion was made to open the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember John Riggs
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

City Manager Charles Penny presented the FY 2027 budget background and millage rate recommendation. He outlined the key budget objectives, which included an emphasis on public safety, retaining and recruiting exceptional employees, addressing material infrastructure needs, and growing the tax base and revenues. He noted that the total budget reflected a 5 percent increase from FY 2026, with a combined 5 percent increase in the general fund and fire fund. A particularly significant driver of the budget increase was the transfer from the general fund to the fire fund, which rose from \$3.2 million to approximately \$7.4 million. He clarified that no new personnel positions were added in any department as a result of the budget proposal.

On compensation, Mr. Penny reported that the federal inflation rate had tracked from 2.8 percent in March 2025 to 3.3 percent in March 2026, and the city's compensation consultant recommended a 3.5 percent pay adjustment for all employees; however, given budget constraints, staff could only recommend a 2 percent pay adjustment. The city's pay-for-performance program, in place for approximately five years, was recommended for continuation. In addition, for the first time in seven years, employees would be required to increase their health insurance premium contributions by 15 percent.

Mr. Penny provided a detailed explanation of how the city arrived at its budget shortfall. In December 2024, the Bulloch County Commission voted to cancel the fire service agreement under which the city had provided fire protection to 96 square miles of the county, covering a five-mile radius around the city. The city had previously added nine firefighters to its fire department to fulfill the agreement and subsequently received a SAFER grant that funded an additional twelve positions. The county had been informed of these additions and the long-term financial commitments, yet the agreement was cancelled. This action eliminated \$2.7 million in county revenue and the SAFER grant—which had provided \$700,000 annually—expired in August 2026, creating a combined \$4 million shortfall for the city to absorb. The prior

fiscal year, the city had borrowed approximately \$3 million from its enterprise fund to cover the loss, a measure Mr. Penny described as unsustainable.

Mr. Penny also noted that the City Council had elected in April not to implement a fire service fee due to pending court challenges in Georgia communities, despite the fact that approximately 25 percent of properties in Statesboro—including churches, schools, the county, and Georgia Southern University—are tax-exempt and do not contribute to the general property tax base while still receiving city services.

Regarding the millage rate, Mr. Penny explained that the tax digest growth projected at 8% during the budget process actually came in at 13%. Additionally, Senate Bill 33 made Floating Local Option Sales Tax (FLOST) revenue available to the city for five months this year, generating an unexpected \$1.4 million. FLOST distributions were not originally projected to begin until July 2027. Together, these factors helped reduce the projected millage increase.

City Manager Penny outlined the following rate context for comparison: Bulloch County's current millage rate is 10.260 (reduced from 11.35 the prior year); the Bulloch Board of Education's rate is 10.125; and the city's current rate is 8.625. Under the Taxpayer Bill of Rights rollback formula, accounting for digest growth and the FLOST revenue, the revenue-neutral rollback rate would be 7.165 mills. The city's proposed rate of 9.60 mills represents a 33.9 percent increase over the rollback rate and an 11 percent increase over the current rate of 8.625 mills. On a \$250,000 home, this would translate to an annual city tax increase of approximately \$95.55, or \$7.96 per month.

The last item Mr. Penny addressed was the fund balance reporting that the current general fund balance stands at approximately \$6.5 million, or 20 percent which is below the Council's 25 percent policy threshold of approximately \$8.8 million. The shortfall was not the result of mismanagement, but rather the growth of the general fund itself from \$16 million in 2019 to \$32 million in 2026. He stressed that the fund balance is a non-recurring resource. Drawing it down instead of increasing the millage rate would necessitate either service reductions or a larger rate increase in the future to replenish the funds. Looking ahead, Mr. Penny projected that a full-year of FLOST revenue beginning in July 2027 would be approximately \$3.4 to \$3.5 million and should allow the city to reduce the millage rate by approximately 2.52 mills next year, resulting in a projected FY 2028 rate of approximately 7.08 mills.

Public comment – against the proposed millage rate

Sarah Thompson, raised constitutional concerns about the council's ability to conduct business, arguing that the absence of a District 2 representative rendered the body improperly constituted and its actions potentially null and void. She also contended that a recent intergovernmental contract with the Development Authority of Bulloch County was unconstitutional, and urged the council to use its authority under the city's 1866 charter to appoint a District 2 representative from among citizens present.

Kenneth Jackson, a local realtor and business owner, spoke on behalf of the business community. He noted that approximately 25 percent of the city's tax digest is composed of exempt properties, reducing the revenue base. He drew the Council's attention to the difficulty of being a business owner and taxpayer when property taxes are layered across city, county, and school board levies. Mr. Jackson stated he had reviewed property records on QPublic and discovered that the city holds real property in Screven County, including a parcel in the Rocky Ford area, characterizing the city as acting as a real estate developer. He proposed that the city sell off city-held real estate to generate revenue and reduce the need to raise property taxes. He also suggested the city examine its hotel occupancy tax rate to ensure competitiveness with neighboring counties, noting that some of his associates opt to stay in adjacent counties where rates are lower.

Kathleen Keehner, a candidate for the District 2 vacancy, challenged Mayor McCollar's earlier statement that he served as the representative for District 2 constituents, contending this was not supported by the city charter or state law.

Mayor McCollar clarified that as the only at-large elected official, he represents the city in its entirety, and that district representation does not cease when a seat is vacant. He explained that every Statesboro resident has dual representation: their district councilmember and the Mayor. He acknowledged that District 2 does not currently have a district representative, and noted that this is not the first time such a vacancy has occurred.

Ms. Keehner raised concerns about employee compensation, asserting that City Manager's salary and the number of assistants in his office as examples of budget inefficiency. She contended that "there are huge holes in the budget" due to overpaid employees and urged that the bottom 10 percent of positions by value be examined. She spoke personally about the financial struggles of working-class residents, including her partner, a truck driver earning less than \$80,000 a year despite 14-hour days, and expressed difficulty trusting elected and appointed officials who earn substantially more to make decisions that reflect those lived realities.

City Manager Charles Penny responded by clarifying that he has one Assistant City Manager and one Assistant to the City Manager—not two assistant city managers—and that this structure is not uncommon for local governments.

Mayor McCollar responded at length, defending the council's record of community service, including food bank support serving 3,400 families monthly, Christmas programs for children, and poverty reduction efforts, noting that the poverty rate in Statesboro had declined from 53% to 36% during his tenure. He emphasized that the council takes budget decisions very seriously and does not approach its responsibilities lightly.

Joseph Charron, a Statesboro homeowner spoke against the proposed millage rate, arguing that adopting 9.6 mills instead of the statutory rollback rate of 7.165 mills constituted a 34% effective tax increase. The general fund doubling in seven years demonstrated a spending trend, and that future FLOST projections were speculative and insufficient justification for the current burden placed on taxpayers. He urged the Council to adopt the rollback rate and live within its means.

No one spoke in favor of the proposed millage rate.

A motion was made to close the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember John Riggs
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

Councilmember Tangie Johnson asked City Manager Charles Penny to clarify what the options were if the Council chose not to adopt the proposed 9.60 mill rate.

City Manager Penny explained there were essentially two options: first, cut approximately 60 positions out of a total workforce of 360 to cover the shortfall; or second, hold the rate at the current 8.625 mills and draw approximately \$1.4 million from the general fund balance. He noted the latter would drop the fund balance from approximately \$6.5 million (20 percent) to approximately \$5 million, further below the Council's 25 percent policy threshold, and that such a draw would require the Council to consider amending its fund balance policy. He also noted that drawing from the fund balance is unsustainable because it is a non-recurring resource—once spent, it does not replenish without either vacancies or future rate increases.

Councilmember Ginny Hendley expressed a strong preference for keeping the millage rate at its current level and drawing from the fund balance rather than imposing additional tax burden on residents.

A motion was made to approve **Resolution 2026-37**: A Resolution setting the millage rate for Ad Valorem (Property) Taxes for the 2026 calendar year for the City of Statesboro, Georgia, at the current rate of 8.625 mills without any personnel reductions.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

7. Consideration of a motion to approve Resolution 2026-38: A Resolution approving the issuance of bonds by the Statesboro Housing Authority for the Statesboro Summit project.

A motion was made to approve **Resolution 2026-38**: A Resolution approving the issuance of bonds by the Statesboro Housing Authority for the Statesboro Summit project.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

8. Public hearing and consideration of a motion to approve APPLICATION RZ 26-08-01: Zack Smith Properties is requesting a Zoning Map Amendment from the R-15 (One-Household Residential)/HOC (Highway Oriented Commercial) to R-4 (High Density Residential District). The Zoning Map Amendment requests is for one (1) parcel of 17.83-acres located along Zetterower Road (Tax Parcel # MS48000022 000).

A motion was made to open the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
SECONDER:	Councilmember John Riggs
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

Planning Director Justin Williams presented the application by Zack Smith Properties for a zoning map amendment from R-15/HOC to R-4 (High Density Residential) for a 17.83-acre parcel along Zetterower Road. He noted this application had previously come before the council approximately one year prior and was being resubmitted with modifications. The applicant proposed a two-phase multifamily development—one phase for senior housing and one for standard multifamily—with access limited to Zetterower Road. Staff's primary concern was traffic impact at the Zetterower Road intersection, which already experiences congestion related to an adjacent school. Staff recommended denial of the application; however, if approved, staff requested conditions including GDOT and Army Corps of Engineers approval for an additional access point to Highway 80 West, an updated traffic impact analysis, and interconnectivity between the two development phases. The Planning Commission had unanimously recommended denial (7-0).

Public Comments – In favor of the request

Philip Searles, President of the Beverly J. Searles Foundation, a nonprofit workforce and affordable housing developer based in Atlanta with over 25 years of Georgia experience, spoke in support of the application. He argued that the traffic concern was overstated, noting that GDOT data showed traffic counts on Zetterower Road and Highway 80 have declined over the past seven years. He acknowledged that a highway access point to Highway 80 would be cost-prohibitive due to wetland crossings and deceleration lane requirements and expressed willingness to comply with all other staff conditions. He described the organization's community-oriented approach, including partnerships with higher education, food security initiatives, and open, unfenced community designs. He stated the foundation's name and reputation are on the line and expressed commitment to doing right by the community.

Trent Long, addressed the Council briefly, confirming that the Searles Foundation had been a positive community partner in their city, delivering on commitments and contributing to infrastructure improvements.

No one spoke against the request

A motion was made to close the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

During discussion, Council members raised questions about the feasibility of obtaining GDOT access to Highway 80 West, the speed environment on Zetterower Road, and the timeline pressures faced by the applicant with respect to tax credit application.

Mr. Searles explained that the project is pursuing 9 percent Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and that a denial would cost the applicant an entire application cycle—roughly one year. However, he clarified that tabling the application to a future meeting would still preserve the application, as zoning approval is needed prior to final site permitting rather than immediately.

Staff confirmed that tabling to the next available meeting for rezoning items—November 17, 2026—would still provide the applicant sufficient time to proceed through the GDOT coordination process and return with additional information.

Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr expressed enthusiasm for the development concept but uncertainty about whether the site access challenges could be resolved. The Mayor noted there were multiple outstanding issues—including GDOT coordination, the traffic study, and wetland considerations—that warranted more information

A motion was made to table **APPLICATION RZ 26-08-01** to the November 17, 2026 Council Meeting.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

9. **Public hearing and consideration of a motion to approve APPLICATION SU 26-08-03: Robert Fordham requests a Special Use Permit to allow a sober living residence at 105 Peg Wen Boulevard. Applicants requests the property to be used as a residence for up to eight (8) women (Tax Parcel # MS84000087 000).**

A motion was made to open the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember John Riggs
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

Planning Director Justin Williams presented the application by Robert Fordham for a Special Use Permit to allow a sober living residence at 105 Peg Wen Boulevard for up to six women. The property, located in an established R-15 residential neighborhood near Dutch Bros Coffee and Bel Air Drive, requires a Special Use Permit due to the presence of unrelated persons. Staff recommended conditional approval, subject to the condition that all construction alterations be reviewed and approved by the city. The Planning Commission recommended approval with an additional condition limiting occupancy to six women, on a 7-0 vote.

Public Comments - in favor of the request

Robert Fordham owner of the property spoke in favor of the request. He explained that his son and future daughter-in-law—both in long-term recovery—would operate the facility.

Alexandra Fordham spoke in favor of the request and outlined the program's structure, including requirements for sobriety maintenance, drug and alcohol testing, curfews, employment goals, and respectful conduct. She confirmed the applicant had voluntarily reduced the proposed occupancy to six women, and affirmed compliance with federal Fair Housing laws. She formally requested approval of the Special Use Permit.

Joseph Charron spoke briefly in support, noting the city's positive track record with similar programs and emphasizing the importance of maintaining a strong sense of community.

Autumn expressed her support for the application. She stated that Statesboro has a significant but under recognized recovery community and that after 90 days of treatment, women lack local options for structured sober living, often being forced to leave the area or return to harmful environments due to the lack of long-term sober living residences for women in the community.

No one spoke against the request.

A motion was made to close the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember John Riggs
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

A motion was made to approve with staff and Planning Commission conditions **APPLICATION SU 26-08-03**: Robert Fordham requests a Special Use Permit to allow a sober living residence at 105 Peg Wen Boulevard. Applicants requests the property to be used as a residence for up to eight (8) women (Tax Parcel # MS84000087 000).

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

10. Public hearing and consideration of a motion to approve APPLICATION RZ 26-08-04: Techwood Lodging, LLC is requesting a Zoning Map Amendment from a PUD (Planned Unit Development) to MX (Mixed-Use District). The Zoning Map Amendment is for one (1) parcel along Tormenta Way for 3.80-acre portion of Tax Parcel # 076 000001 002.

A motion was made to open the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember John Riggs
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

Planning Director Justin Williams presented the application by Techwood Lodging, LLC for a zoning map amendment from PUD (Planned Unit Development) to MX (Mixed-Use District) for a 3.8-acre parcel along Tormenta Way, located behind the Tormenta FC stadium. The parcel, originally intended as a parking area, is situated adjacent to existing stadium infrastructure and wetlands. The applicant proposes to develop a hotel on the site, with a new roadway that staff anticipates will eventually connect to Old Register Road. The site is located in the Activity Regional Center designation of the comprehensive plan, which calls for high-density, high-intensity uses. Staff recommended approval with a condition that a traffic study be submitted prior to issuance of a land disturbance permit. The Planning Commission amended that condition to require that egress from the constructed roadway be right-turn only, with a traffic study required only if left turns become necessary in the future.

Public Comments — In favor of the request:

Doug Lambert, developer for the project, confirmed agreement with the right-turn-only condition and expressed appreciation for planning staff's accommodation, noting that a full traffic study requirement would have substantially delayed construction.

No one spoke against the request.

A motion was made to close the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember John Riggs
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

A motion was made to approve with Planning Commission conditions **APPLICATION RZ 26-08-04:** Techwood Lodging, LLC is requesting a Zoning Map Amendment from a PUD (Planned Unit Development) to MX (Mixed-Use District). The Zoning Map Amendment is for one (1) parcel along Tormenta Way for 3.80-acre portion of Tax Parcel # 076 000001 002.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

11. Public hearing and consideration of a motion to approve ORDINANCE 2026-03: An Ordinance Amending the Code of Ordinances to replace Chapter 62: Subdivision Incentive Program with Workforce Housing Incentive Program.

A motion was made to open the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

Development Services Director Justin explained that this ordinance would amend Chapter 62 of the Code of Ordinances, replacing the existing Subdivision Incentive Program with a Workforce Housing Incentive Program. The amendment was designed to accommodate an applicant who had received pre-approval for a workforce housing project and could not proceed under the existing ordinance.

No one spoke for or against the request.

A motion was made to close the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
SECONDER:	Councilmember John Riggs
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

The Mayor noted that the Council had discussed the need to waive the second reading requirement to meet the grant application deadline.

Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr asked what exactly what we are putting in and what we are giving them.

Planning Director Justin Williams elaborated that the ordinance would allow the city to offer incentives—such as lot size and building size waivers, and fee reductions—to reduce the developer's required leverage from 30% to 10% for purposes of state grant qualification. The city's existing housing incentive funds would be targeted toward this program rather than market-rate development. The maximum sale price for homes under the program would be approximately \$290,000.

City Manager Penny noted that a developer agreement, with all specific terms, would come before the council for approval at a future meeting. The council agreed to waive the second reading to meet the grant application deadline.

A motion was made to waive the second reading requirement and approve **ORDINANCE 2026-03**: An Ordinance Amending the Code of Ordinances to replace Chapter 62: Subdivision Incentive Program with Workforce Housing Incentive Program.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

- 12. Consideration of a motion to approve the purchase of a 2026 Ford F-150 STX Crew Cab 2-wheel drive from J.C. Lewis Ford instead of Buster Miles Chevrolet, as previously approved on September 1, 2026. The total cost is \$41,684.00, which reflects an increase of \$1,691.00 from the amount also approved by the Council on September 1. This purchase will be funded through the 2019 SPLOST.**

A motion was made to approve the purchase of a 2026 Ford F-150 STX Crew Cab 2-wheel drive from J.C. Lewis Ford instead of Buster Miles Chevrolet, as previously approved on September 1, 2026. The total cost is \$41,684.00, which reflects an increase of \$1,691.00 from the amount also approved by the Council on September 1. This purchase will be funded through the 2019 SPLOST.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

- 13. Consideration of a motion to approve a task order in the amount of \$24,285.09 with STV, Inc. for environmental permitting on ENG-123F Cawana Road at Brannen Street and S&S Railroad Bed Road Project, to be funded by TSPLOST.**

A motion was made to approve a task order in the amount of \$24,285.09 with STV, Inc. for environmental permitting on ENG-123F Cawana Road at Brannen Street and S&S Railroad Bed Road Project, to be funded by TSPLOST.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

14. Consideration of a motion to approve a task order in the amount of \$82,500 with Atlas Technical Consultants, LLC, for right of way negotiation services on ENG-124F Fair Road Turn Lane Project, to be funded by TSPLOST.

A motion was made to approve a task order in the amount of \$82,500 with Atlas Technical Consultants, LLC, for right of way negotiation services on ENG-124F Fair Road Turn Lane Project, to be funded by TSPLOST.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
SECONDER:	Councilmember John Riggs
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

15. Consideration of a motion to approve a change order of \$37,500 for additional design work on the transfer station floor replacement project, to be funded by Solid Waste Disposal Reserve Funds.

A motion was made to approve a change order of \$37,500 for additional design work on the transfer station floor replacement project, to be funded by Solid Waste Disposal Reserve Funds.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

Mayor Jonathan McCollar recused himself from this item and left the dais.

16. Consideration of a motion to award a contract to D. Lance Souther Inc. in the amount of \$164,900.00, for the installation of natural gas facilities along Cypress Lake Road and Veterans Memorial Parkway to serve Kroger and adjacent developments. Project to be paid for with funds in the Natural Gas CIP budget item # NGD-11.

A motion was made to approve an award of contract to D. Lance Souther Inc. in the amount of \$164,900.00, for the installation of natural gas facilities along Cypress Lake Road and Veterans Memorial Parkway to serve Kroger and adjacent developments. Project to be paid for with funds in the Natural Gas CIP budget item # NGD-11.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember John Riggs
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

Mayor McCollar announced an addition to the agenda:

Consideration of a motion to approve Resolution 2026-39: A Resolution naming a new unnamed street “Robbie Franklin Way”.

A motion was made to approve Resolution 2026-39: A Resolution naming a new unnamed street “Robbie Franklin Way”.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

17. Public Comments (General):

Sue Palmer addressed the Council regarding the ongoing issue of residents leaving roll-out garbage cans at the street beyond the permitted time. She stated that following a complaint to her district Councilmember and a subsequent visit by Code Enforcement, the violation remained unaddressed within two weeks. She argued that stricter code enforcement would not only improve the appearance of the city but could also generate revenue through fines, and she questioned whether code enforcement personnel were adequately performing their responsibilities.

City Manager Charles Penny acknowledged Ms. Palmer's concern, agreed that roll-out carts should not remain at the street permanently, and noted that the two-person code enforcement team is responsible for 17 square miles of the city and manages a variety of concurrent issues. He committed to having staff meet with her and explore whether additional ordinance changes might be appropriate.

Len Fetica extended an invitation to the Mayor and Council to meet with Chelsea Shore, the new Regional Director for the American Red Cross, at Pitman Park Church on Thursday, September 24, 2026. He noted that Don had resigned from the Red Cross board and that he would be replacing him as the Statesboro representative. He also asked whether there was a plan to replenish the city's reserve funds given the potential for a major disaster.

18. Other Business from City Council

Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr shared that this morning the City cut the ribbon at the new fire station. She also shared some upcoming events: The Brooklet Peanut Festival is this weekend; the Averitt Center will have a Rollin Stones tribute band this Saturday, there is also a Renaissance Fair the last weekend of September.

19. City Managers Comments

City Manager Penny provided the following updates:

Fire Station: The recently completed fire station project was commended. City Manager Penny praised the public works crew, specifically John Lavender, for their outstanding work. A new fire truck was placed into service.

CDBG Grant: The City was approved for \$1,000,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for water line infrastructure upgrades, targeting areas where water lines remain below the 6-inch minimum necessary for adequate fire protection.

Workforce Housing Pre-Application: The City received approval for the workforce housing pre-application submitted to the State.

Third-Party Inspections: A third-party inspection program discussed previously with the Council is scheduled to go into effect in November.

Bryant Landing: Phase 1 of the Bryant Landing development (the former Judy P. Bryant School site, approximately \$9 million) was previously approved. Phase 2 is currently under construction (approximately \$9–10 million). The City was notified that Phase 3 received Low Income Housing Tax Credit approval, representing an additional investment of approximately \$30 million and adding approximately 150 units of affordable housing to the market. City Manager Penny recognized the partnership between the City and the school system in making this project possible.

Fund Balance Policy: City Manager Penny advised the Council that in light of the millage rate decision made earlier in the meeting, he would recommend a revised fund balance policy be brought forward at the next Council meeting. The current policy requires a 25% fund balance; the City is already at 20%, and the additional draw to cover the shortfall would reduce it further. He noted he did not want the Council to be in violation of its own policy and that an audit finding should be avoided. He expressed personal concern about leaving the organization in a sound financial position ahead of his retirement.

20. Consideration of a Motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss “Personnel Matters” “Real Estate” and/or “Potential Litigation” in accordance with O.C.G.A 50-14-3(b).

There was not a need for executive session.

21. Consideration of a Motion to Adjourn

A motion was made to

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember John Riggs
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Jonathan McCollar, Mayor

Leah Harden, City Clerk