



CITY OF STATESBORO  
COUNCIL MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 4, 2025

Regular Meeting

50 E. Main St. City Hall Council Chambers

9:00 AM

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Jonathan McCollar called the meeting to order

**2. Invocation and Pledge**

Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jonathan McCollar	Mayor	Present	
Tangie Johnson	Councilmember	Present	
Paulette Chavers	Councilmember	Present	
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 February 21, 2025, as Arbor Day in the City of Statesboro and recognition of the City's participation in the Tree City USA program.**

Mayor Jonathan McCollar read the proclamation recognizing February 21, 2025 as Arbor Day in the City of Statesboro and presented it to the Statesboro Tree Board.

Tree Board Chair, Shawn Diddy invited Mayor, Council, and the community to join the Tree Board at 4 pm Friday February 21st at the Food Bank for the planting of a tree for Arbor Day.

Bulloch County Chief Ranger Paul Kitchens, Ranger Nick Kloid, and Urban and Community Forestry Specialist Sam Smith with the Georgia Forestry Commission recognized the City of Statesboro's participation in the Tree City USA program and presented a flag to the City Council and the Tree Board.

**4. Public Comments (Agenda Item): None**

**5. Consideration of a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda**

**A) Approval of Minutes**

- a) 01-28-2025 Work Session Minutes
- b) 01-28-2025 Council Minutes
- c) 01-28-2025 Executive Session Minutes

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda.

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

**6. Hearing to consider a motion to revoke a massage parlor license for Lisa’s Therapeutic Massage located at 609 Brannen Street on the grounds that illegal activity has occurred at the business location. This hearing is being conducted pursuant to City of Statesboro Ordinances 18-141 and 18-143.**

Mayor McCollar stated that for purposes of this hearing, Mayor and Council shall operate as a quasi-judicial body to determine if the massage parlor license should be revoked due to illegal acts occurring at Lisa’s Therapeutic Massage.

A motion was made to open the hearing.

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

Captain Jared Akins gave a brief on the investigation conducted by the Statesboro Police Department. This particular location has been the subject of tips and confidential information that’s come in over the last two or three years all of it to this point unsubstantiated. In 2024 our impact team received information again that sexual activity was taking place under the guise of massage. Someone couldn’t just walk in and receive those services there was some key words and indicators to indicate that is what you were there for. Once they started digging into that and were able to look through some online reviews and talk to some folks they thought they had established a pattern that would enable them to go in an undercover capacity to see if there was any truth to those particular allegations. In November of last year, they equipped one of the officers with audio and video recording devices and sent that officer into the business. That officer made contact with the manager and asked to speak with a particular masseuse that he had suspicion based on the reviews and other tips may be one of the masseuse who was conducting sexual favors under the guise of doing massages. The manager informed the officer that that female was no longer working there but referred him to another employee. The officer was then escorted back to a private room and during the course of the massage, that particular masseuse conducted a sexual act on the officer. The officer made an excuse to leave immediately. All this was caught on audio and video tape. The officer briefed up the rest of the members of the impact team who went back an arrested that particular masseuse for this sexual act that she committed while doing the massage. Further investigation led them to discover that the original masseuse who was charged initially was already back on the job working there. During the course of the interview with the manager they established probable cause to arrest her for keeping a place in which sexual acts prostitution the official term was being committed. That is where we are at right now both of those individuals are still pending jurisdiction in state court. That is the brief summary of facts on how we got here.

Michael Classens a local attorney representing the applicant responded to Captain Akins summary. Ms. Hu purchased the business in December 2023 so during that period of time including the August 2023 report that was mentioned she was not the owner of the business. Other than that there haven't been any complaints substantiated against any activities in the business under my clients ownership. The charges are pending and the young woman who is alleged to have committed the act on November 14<sup>th</sup> was arrested. Ms. Hu was not there at the time and not made aware of the arrest, the next day an officer came to her and told her and she genuinely expresses shock. As soon as Ms. Hu discovered this allegation she fired the young lady. From that point on there have been no complaints. There is an allegation against the young woman for committing the act. The allegation against Ms. Hu is for maintaining a house for prostitution. The point is my client had been a law abiding business person in the city. There is an allegation against her based on the activity that the other woman did. What we have now is an allegation with a request to revoke Ms. Hu's license to operate her business in Statesboro based on an allegation that somebody else did something wrong. There is no evidence, Ms. Hu knew about it, encouraged it or hired the woman. There was not commercialization of the act that's at the heart of the allegation.

Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr asked City Attorney Cain Smith about what their options are. City Attorney Cain Smith stated the options under the code are that the mayor and council may suspend or revoke the license or do nothing.

Councilmember John Riggs asked if the person who committed the acts was fired from the business.

Captain Akins stated he has no way of knowing that, as they have not been back to the business since. It is my understanding from the manager that she had been.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar stated he is very concerned and that there is not too much that's going to go on in my house that I do not know about. Therefore, if a business owner has this going on inside of their business and they are not aware of it that raises a red flag.

Mayor Pro Tem Barr stated her concern is innocent until proven guilty and the taking away of somebody's livelihood. I would like folks to stand innocent until they have been proven otherwise.

Councilmember Tangie Johnson stated that we take on a liability if we leave it open and someone else comes in and commits those same acts we will be liable. We have to have that part in consideration as well. It's a heavy decision. But if we leave it with her in action and if other acts are done pending this investigation we are responsible.

Councilmember John Riggs stated that he agrees with both of them and asked if the license could be suspended for two weeks and a decision made at the next meeting.

Councilmember Paulette Chavers stated that we have revoked a license in the past and based on this situation and what was taking place that we follow the trend that we've been doing.

After further council discussion a motion was made to suspend the license for two weeks with final determination on February 18, 2025.

<b>RESULT:</b>	Approved 3-2
<b>MOVER:</b>	Councilmember John Riggs
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
<b>AYES:</b>	Hendley, Riggs, Barr
<b>ABSENT:</b>	
<b>NAYS:</b>	Chavers and Johnson

A motion was made to close the hearing.

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

**7. Consideration of a motion to approve Resolution 2025-04: A Resolution to abandon the 17' wide +/- alley from North Walnut Street to North Main Street which runs through Simmons Shopping Center.**

A motion was made to approve Resolution 2025-04: A Resolution to abandon the 17' wide +/- alley from North Walnut Street to North Main Street which runs through Simmons Shopping Center.

<b>RESULT:</b>	Approved (Unanimous)
<b>MOVER:</b>	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Councilmember Paulette Chavers
<b>AYES:</b>	Johnson, Chavers, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
<b>ABSENT:</b>	

**8. Consideration of a motion to award a contract in the amount of \$106,000.00 to Fred Foley Construction, Inc. for the construction of a restroom facility for the Streets Division and a restroom facility for the Sanitation Division at Public Works. Funding will be provided by Solid Waste Collection Fund Income and 2019 SPLOST.**

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

**9. Consideration of a motion to approve a sole source purchase of Opti brand Continuous Monitoring and Adaptive Control Hardware in the amount of \$49,355.00 from Opti by Aliaxis (Opti) as part of the Stormwater STM-36 project. This contract is for the hardware for the continuous monitoring and adaptive control system (CMAC) specifications to be installed as part of the Lake Sal project, as recommended by the project engineer GMC. This project is funded from 2013 SPLOST.**

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

**10. Other Business from City Council: None**

**11. City Managers Comments**

City Manager Charles Penny shared that in their FYI packet there is a report from the Savannah Joint Development Authority (JDA) on the Workforce Development study that Anna Chafin with RISE presented to you last week. In addition, there is a memo in the packet about Cobblestone place requesting that the City take over within the development. The roads do not meet City standards for ROW, pavement width, and infrastructure quality. Accepting these streets would place an undue burden on the City and its resources. The reason this is being brought up is that we have a lot of development going on in our community and when we have developments we have to develop to city standards they develop roads to city standards they are developed in a way that once those roads are completed those roads can be turned over to the city. But if the a developer has an option to make them private roads and turns around and sell those properties off individually and the individuals that have purchased those properties don't necessarily know that those roads are private until they get a pothole and then they call the city and want us to fix it. Moreover, from that standpoint it becomes a buyer beware because the developer chose to develop it privately. Therefore, it becomes a tough pill and it may have been cheaper for the developer not to build the streets to city standards. In the end, our citizens are the ones that end up being the ones left holding the bag. This memo is a hard line for citizens when they say I need you to fix my street. If you bought a house on a private street that is the responsibility of the homeowners to take care of it. Council may want to change that policy but we might also require developers to build those streets to city standards. The last item is regarding the Fire district. We met with the county last Thursday to discuss the Fire District where they presented a proposal without giving our staff a chance to review it in advance. Currently the city receives 2.7 mills for property located in the five-mile district, which comes to about \$2.3 million. The proposal bottom line is that the county would like to have all those funds we currently use to pay for our firefighters. When we increased our firefighters from 48 to 69 we did all of that with the county's knowledge to protect the five mile district. The five-mile district is 96 square miles and the city is 17 square miles so the fire district constitutes 82% SFD service area and the county has been paying 30% of the cost of the operation of the fire department. What happens right now is we provide automatic aid in Bulloch County. So what that means is every time there's a fire call we have at least one engine come out of the city of Statesboro that goes into the county beyond the fire district to provide fire protection. What they've chose to do is they want to take

the funding that we use to pay for our firefighters down and use it to build up their fire stations hire their employees and then we have to find a way to pay for our people. It was a contentious meeting and you know we are willing to talk with the county but when you are negotiating, you really have to know what the answer is going to be before you start.

**12. Public Comments (General):**

Marshall Webster signed up to speak regarding an ethics complaint he submitted to the Mayor regarding a vote made by Councilmember Paulette Chaves on an MOU between the City of Statesboro, Habitat for Humanity and Agape Worship Center at the last meeting and the lack of an investigation being conducted.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar called on City Attorney Cain Smith for clarification.

City Attorney Cain Smith stated the complaint was received forwarded as required and that we have been in discussion about appointing a three council member investigative committee to review the matter.

**13. Consideration of a Motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss “Personnel Matters” in accordance with O.C.G.A 50-14-3(b).**

At 10:32 am, a motion was made to enter into executive session.

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

At 10:48 am, a motion was made to exit executive session.

<b>RESULT:</b>	Approved (Unanimous)
<b>MOVER:</b>	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
<b>AYES:</b>	Johnson, Chavers, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
<b>ABSENT:</b>	

**14. Consideration of a Motion to Adjourn**

A motion was made to adjourn.

<b>RESULT:</b>	Approved (Unanimous)
<b>MOVER:</b>	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
<b>AYES:</b>	Johnson, Chavers, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
<b>ABSENT:</b>	

The meeting was adjourned at 10:48 a.m.

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Jonathan McCollar, Mayor

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Leah Harden, City Clerk