



Where Community Connects

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING
SUMMARY MINUTES
TUESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2026 6:00 P.M.**

Mayor & City Council

Mayor Jayden L. Williams At-Large
Mayor Pro Tem Elton Alexander – Council District 5
Councilmember LaKeisha Gantt – Council District 1
Councilmember Antwan Cloud – Council District 2
Councilmember Kyle D. Berry, Sr. – Council District 3
Councilmember Yolanda Barber – Council District 4

Administration

Shawn Edmondson – City Manager
Frank Milazi – City Treasurer
Cassandra Lester – Interim City Clerk
Quinton Washington – City Attorney
Megan McCullough – Associate Attorney

Mission: To provide visionary leadership and superior municipal services that enhance the quality of life for citizens while creating a welcoming business atmosphere focused on sustainability and expansion of tourism and cultural events.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Williams at 6:00 p.m.

Invocation by: Councilmember Kyle Berry Sr.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

Interim City Clerk, Cassandra Lester was asked to proceed with a verbal roll call. All members were present; Mayor Pro Tem Alexander arrived at 6:05pm Councilmember Gantt arrived at 6:12pm.

Motion to adopt the Agenda was made by Councilman Berry, seconded by Councilman Cloud, and approved unanimously 4-0.

There were no public comments.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTE

Review of the December 8th, 2025 City Council Summary Meeting Minutes

Review of the January 12th, 2026 City Council Summary Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the meeting minutes was made by Councilman Berry, seconded by Councilman Cloud, and approved unanimously 5-0.

CITY MANAGER'S 4TH QUARTER REPORT

City Manager Edmondson introduced the fourth quarter report, explaining that department heads would present their accomplishments from the quarter and upcoming initiatives. He noted that Finance Director would provide their report at the next meeting as they were still closing the books for December 31st. The following department representatives provided reports:

Finance Department: Frank Milazi reported that the department was still in the process of closing the books for December 31st. They expect to close by February 15th, after which they will prepare the quarter report.

City Clerk's Office: Cassandra Lester reported that the Clerk's Office prepared 33 meetings and agendas, completed 124 open records requests, qualified the 2025 election candidates, coordinated Stockbridge Youth Council initiatives, hosted the Hometown Legislative Breakfast meeting and Legislative Municipal Dinner, and hosted Pate's Creek Elementary for their second-grade government class. Mayor Williams noted that Ms. Sharee Lane from the clerk's office was officially sworn into the Georgia Records Association.

Governing Body Administration: Rosalynd Rawls reported that she and Raven Eatmon provide daily administrative support to the mayor and council. During the fourth quarter, they supported line dance classes, the Mayor's Quarterly Meeting, The Fall Festival, the Mayor's Meet and Greet, Senior Bingo, Town Hall Meetings, Community Cleanups, and Community Forums.

Mayor Pro Tem Alexander commended the team on their work and inquired about additional needs they might have to be more successful. Ms. Rawls indicated that communication and responsiveness from council members were key, and that the city council is responsive. She states equipment needs were currently being met. She confirmed that fleet additions had been made, including a passenger van, two explorers, and a suburban and are legally ready to drive.

Councilmember Gantt recognized and thanked Rosalynd Rawls and Raven Eatmon, for their professionalism, flexibility, and support to the six-member governing body.

IT Department: Demetrius Ivery reported that they focused on inventory review and audits during the fourth quarter. For the quarter, they handled 367 tickets, closing 357 with the remaining 10 now also closed.

Mayor Pro Tem Alexander asked about expanding social media presence beyond Facebook to include YouTube for council meetings to increase accessibility. He also expressed concern about the city website navigation and requested simplification of the business services process, particularly for the façade grant program information.

Councilmember Gantt thanked Mr. Ivey and his department for their exceptional work in closing out projects and updating technology and noted that Stockbridge has become a model for transparency because of this effort.

Human Resources Department: Dwayne Pollock, reported on recruitment (13 open positions, 9 new hires), employee recognition (36 employee anniversaries), and turnover metrics (3.27% turnover rate with 189 active employees). He noted that the average time to hire is 118 days, which he considered too long. He also discussed monthly health and wellness challenges for employees and reported six workers' compensation claims for the quarter, with only one remaining open.

Public Works: Decius Aaron reported that in the fourth quarter, the department completed 6.8 miles of resurfacing, noting that over 15 miles have been resurfaced in the last two years. The department continued aggressive street lighting programs and engaged in several joint projects with Henry County, including Rock Quarry Road widening. He mentioned immediate repairs to the Pate's Creek Bridge and the ongoing demolition of the current maintenance shop with a completion date of September 2026 for the new facility.

Council members expressed appreciation for the visible road improvements and the department's work during the recent weather event.

Councilwoman Gantt expressed appreciation for the department's work over the past decade, noting their significant progress.

Discussions focused on the Rock Quarry Road extension project, the Parks Master Plan implementation, and the Bridgeway Trail system.

Mayor Pro Tem Alexander emphasized the need for a comprehensive beautification project for North Henry Boulevard.

Councilmember Barber asked for an update on the Rock Quarry Road Extension project, specifically clarifying that it is a separate project from the current widening/expansion and involves two pathway options:

- From N. Henry Blvd to Old Conyers Road
- Or alternatively, to Duval Drive.

Mr. Aaron responded that at the next council meeting, they will be bringing the task order for Falcon Design, who will present the project scope and design. The allocated budget of \$2 million is for the design phase. Funding for construction will need to be determined later.

Community Development: Ryan Anderson reported that the department met with 21 developers in the last quarter, conducted 166 plan reviews, issued 250 permits, performed 1,231 inspections, and had 79 fire marshal plan reviews with 116 inspections. The department opened 25 new businesses, with a total department revenue of \$2.6 million for the fourth quarter of 2025.

Councilwoman Barber asked about the status of hiring a consultant to conduct a Master Development Plan/Area Study along State Route 42/Valley Hill Road/Davis Road in District 4. Mr. Anderson confirmed that the Request for Proposal (RFP) for on-call planning services is in draft form and is expected to be finalized soon, adding he would solicit input from council at the retreat to prioritize area studies. He confirmed that

District 4 was among the priorities, with \$200,000 allocated for approximately three area studies.

Councilmember Gantt states she is proud of Mr. Anderson's appointment and wanted to personally thank him for his prompt responsiveness. She appreciates the community development department and his leadership.

Economic Development: Lisa Fareed reported on Main Street program accomplishments including the 5K diabetes and health fair, revamped car show, and training for the Main Street and DDA boards. The department has partnered with the SBDC to create the Stockbridge Business Partnership for workforce development and business retention.

Mayor Pro Tem Alexander inquired about the wayfinding project, particularly the implementation of city limit signs. The staff reported that phase one is complete with phase two (which includes monument signs and city limit signs) now moving forward.

Councilwoman Barber asked for an update on the shipping container project. Ms. Fareed explained that the architect was to provide feedback on pricing and designs. However, they are currently awaiting final input and invoices from the architect. She further stated that the city manager is coordinating funding before moving to the next phases. She also noted that the council had already approved ordinances for the designs at the December 8th meeting, moving the project one step forward.

Events Department: Charisma Webster reported on several successful fourth quarter events including the 50 Shades of Pink luncheon and walk with over 300 breast cancer survivors and 1,000 walk participants, Veterans Day luncheon, Turkey giveaway (700+ turkeys), volunteer appreciation dinner, food drive (1,000+ boxes), and holiday festival with tree lighting and toy giveaway.

Municipal Court: Genea Stanley reported that the court conducted 18 sessions in the fourth quarter and implemented new payment software. They received 1,582 new citations, scheduled 1,651 cases, closed 1,447 cases, had 88 defendants enter pretrial diversion, 104 on probation, 52 warrants issued, and collected \$365,400 in revenue. The recent amnesty program resulted in 10% of eligible people successfully closing their cases.

Police Department: Richard Godfrey reported that the department answered almost 11,000 calls for service, had over 5,500 proactive officer-initiated activities, conducted almost 1,800 traffic stops, and made 238 arrests. They took 25 firearms off the street, and their investigation division cleared all three homicides from 2025. The overall crime rate for the fourth quarter was down 9.16%, for 2025 compared to 2024 it was down 15.76%, and for 2023-2025 it was down 20.22%

PRESENTATION

GEORGIA INITIATIVE FOR COMMUNITY HOUSING (GICH) CERTIFICATION

Mr. Anderson from Community Development and Ms. Denita Dolman from CS Community Partners presented the city's pursuit of GICH certification.

After showing a news report about families living in extended-stay hotels due to housing affordability issues, they explained that the certification would strengthen Stockbridge's housing strategy and position the city to attract funding for housing initiatives.

They reported on the initial stakeholder meeting held January 8th with 16 participants from government, small businesses, residents, and nonprofits including Connecting Henry, United Way, and Habitat for Humanity. Key concerns include rising housing costs affecting workforce affordability, need for housing choices across life stages, and better collaboration with developers.

The presentation highlighted Stockbridge's rapid population growth and housing market challenges, noting that housing costs are rising faster than affordability for many households. A community stakeholder meeting was scheduled for Thursday at 6:00 PM at the Merrill Mander Center to gather additional input.

Council members expressed concerns about investor purchases driving up housing costs and emphasized the need for diverse housing options. Mayor Pro Tem Alexander noted that apartments and townhomes are essential components of affordable housing despite public resistance to these housing types.

OLD BUSINESS

COUNCIL CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE TASK ORDER NO. 2025.14 WITH FALCON DESIGN – PATES CREEK BRIDGE REPAIR DESIGN

Mr. Aaron explained that when certain areas were annexed into Stockbridge, the city inherited two bridges at Pate's Creek on Patrick Henry Parkway and Eagles Landing Parkway. GDOT inspections found issues requiring repair, and this task order would develop the bid documents and scope of work for those repairs.

Motion to approve the task order with Falcon Design for \$107,500 was made by Mayor Pro Tem Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Berry, and passed unanimously 5-0.

MAYOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMITTEES

Mayor Williams proposed an alternative to the traditional committee structure. Instead of standing committees, he recommended "Mayor's Mini Work Sessions" where the council could meet with specific departments throughout the year to address questions and get feedback.

Motion to approve the Mayor's Mini Work Sessions approach was made by Councilmember Gantt, seconded by Councilmember Alexander, and passed unanimously 5-0.

COUNCIL CONSIDERATION TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

The City Attorney noted vacancies in Districts 1, 3, and 4.

For District 1, Councilmember Gantt requested to table her appointment.

For District 3, Councilmember Berry nominated Darryl Thompson.

For District 4, Councilmember Barber nominated Meeka Douglas.

Motion to table the District 1 Planning Commission appointment was made by Councilmember Gantt, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Alexander, and passed unanimously 5-0.

Motion to appoint Darryl Thompson to the District 3 Planning Commission position was made by Councilmember Berry, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Alexander, and passed unanimously 5-0.

Motion to appoint Meeka Douglas to the District 4 Planning Commission position was made by Councilmember Barber, seconded by Councilmember Gantt, and passed unanimously 5-0.

COUNCIL CONSIDERATION TO APPOINT MEMBER TO THE CITYWIDE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The City Attorney noted one vacancy with three applicants: Willie Carter, Gernita Johnson, and Jai Tazel

Motion to appoint Jai Tazel to the Citywide Development Authority was made by Councilmember Gantt, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Alexander, and passed unanimously 5-0.

COUNCIL CONSIDERATION TO APPOINT MEMBER TO THE ETHICS BOARD

Four applicants: Johnnie Jenkins, Willie Carter, Gernita Johnson, and Jai Tazel indicated interest in the Ethics Board vacancy.

Motion to appoint Johnnie Jenkins to the Ethics Board was made by Councilmember Barber, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Alexander, and passed unanimously 5-0.

COUNCIL CONSIDERATION TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO THE PUBLIC FACILITIES AUTHORITY

Four applicants: Johnnie Jenkins, Willie Carter, Gernita Johnson, and Jai Tazel indicated interest in the two vacancies.

Motion to appoint Willie Carter to the Public Facilities Authority was made by Councilmember Barber, seconded by Councilmember Berry, and failed with a vote of 2-0-3 (three abstentions).

The council voted to table the second appointment to the Public Facilities Authority.

Motion to table the second Public Facilities Authority appointment was made by Councilmember Gantt, seconded by Councilmember Cloud, and passed unanimously 5-0.

COUNCIL CONSIDERATION TO APPOINT MEMBER TO THE YOUTH COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Motion to appoint Gernita Johnson to the Youth Council Advisory Committee was made by Councilmember Gantt, seconded by Councilmember Berry, and passed unanimously.

The council voted to table the remaining Youth Council Advisory Committee appointments.

Motion to table the remaining Youth Council Advisory Committee appointments was made by Councilmember Gantt, seconded by Councilmember Barber, and passed unanimously 5-0.

COUNCIL CONSIDERATION TO APPOINT MEMBER COUNCIL ON AGING

The City Attorney clarified that there is currently no vacancy for the Stockbridge appointee to the Henry County Council on Aging.

NEW BUSINESS

REQUEST MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION TO INCREASE THE CITY MANAGER'S CONTRACT SIGNING AUTHORIZATION LIMIT FROM THE CURRENT \$50,000

City Treasurer Frank Milazi explained the background: Previously, the amphitheater general manager could sign contracts of any amount while the city manager remained limited to \$50,000. With no general manager now, this created a dilemma for time-sensitive amphitheater contracts and the City Manager now needs authorization to approve amphitheater contracts that exceed the current limit.

A thorough discussion ensued, during which Councilmember Barber expressed strong opposition to the proposed increase. She cited previous budget overruns at the amphitheater and raised concerns about losing council oversight over significant expenditures. Barber emphasized the need to prevent situations in which an artist charges \$700,000, resulting in multiple payments to fulfill that fee. She stated, "This is why I am very reluctant; the council will lose control of these transactions."

Mr. Milazi clarified that this authorization would apply only to budgeted funds already approved by the council for the amphitheater (approximately \$3 million annually) and that all standard financial control procedures would remain in place.

Councilmember Barber raised a question regarding the legal contracts used for booking artists and performances at the amphitheater. She inquired whether key provisions such as the force majeure and cancellation clauses were included in the artist contracts. Councilmember Barber expressed concerns about the city potentially paying the same amount for rescheduled shows and emphasized the need for clarity on contract terms.

Legal Counsel responded that force majeure clauses are generally included in artist contracts but deferred detailed legal interpretation to the entertainment attorney, who was not present at the meeting.

Councilmember Barber requested to review the template or standard contract language used for artist agreements to better understand contractual obligations and protections.

Mayor Williams asked Legal Counsel to arrange the contract template to be provided to Councilmember Barber. Legal Counsel affirmed they would coordinate sending the contract language for review.

Councilwoman Gantt crafted the specific motion using the following language:

Motion to increase the city manager's spending authority to a cap of \$300,000 per contract / per artist / per show for amphitheater operations only, with any amendments above \$300,000 requiring council notification. Made by Councilmember Gantt, second by Mayor Pro Tem Alexander, the motion passed 4-1-0. (Barber against).

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Mayor Williams deferred his comments for executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion to adjourn to executive session for real estate, personnel, litigation, and cybersecurity was made by Councilmember Gantt, seconded by Councilmember Berry, and passed unanimously 5-0.

Motion to adjourn from executive session made by Councilmember Gantt, seconded by Councilmember Berry, and passed unanimously 5-0.

Motion to reconvene the work session made by Councilmember Gantt, seconded by Councilmember Cloud, and passed unanimously 5-0.

From Executive Session City Manager Shawn Edmonson announced that the Amphitheater General Contractor awardee is Ms. Sandra Poag.

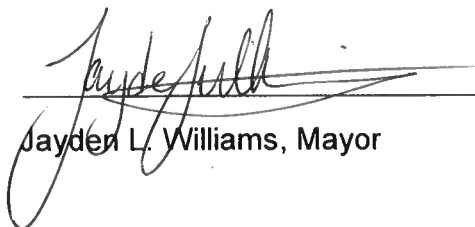
Councilmember Gantt moved to approve Ms. Sandra Poag as the Amphitheater General Contractor Awardee. This motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Alexander and passed with a vote of 4-0-1 (Barber abstained).

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:03 p.m. was made by Councilmember Gantt; seconded by Councilmember Berry. The motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Respectfully submitted by:



Cassandra Lester, Interim City Clerk



Jayden L. Williams, Mayor