



Where Community Connects

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
SUMMARY MINUTES
MONDAY MARCH 9, 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 Jayden L. Williams at 6:00 PM.

Councilmember Kyle Berry led the invocation.

Mayor Williams led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Interim City Clerk Cassandra Lester proceeded with roll call. A quorum was established. Councilmember LaKeisha Gantt arrived at 6:03 p.m.

Mayor Williams requested two amendments to the agenda: removing item number 4 (confirmation of the police chief) and adding to the consent agenda that the city is now a city of civility as discussed during the council retreat.

Motion: Councilmember Cloud moved to amend the agenda as requested. Mayor Pro Tem Alexander seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

Councilmember Barber then requested adding an item for the confirmation of the human resources director to the consent agenda, noting that the position wasn't included on the original agenda.

City Attorney Megan McCulloch clarified that since it was already discussed and approved by council, it could simply be an announcement, but it could be added to the agenda.

Motion: Councilmember Barber moved to add the confirmation of the new HR director to the consent agenda. Councilmember Gantt seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

With those amendments, Mayor Williams called for adoption of the agenda.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Alexander moved to adopt the agenda as amended. Councilmember Gantt seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Adoption of the February 24th 2026 Work Session Meeting Minutes

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Alexander moved to approve the February 24, 2026 work session meeting minutes. Councilmember Gantt seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Six citizens signed up for public comments. Below is a summary of their comments:

Judy Neal (174 East Club Drive) spoke against the Lee Street name change, sharing her personal history with the area and her sons' attendance at Stockbridge schools. She emphasized the happy memories associated with Lee Street and supported the business owners who had requested the council vote against the name change. She suggested the council respect constituents' concerns and vote no.

Marvin Gross (115 North Lee Street) opposed any name change to his street, regardless of what new name might be chosen. He noted his family had lived there for over 80 years, his brick house was built in the early 1960s, and changing the name would cost both the city and residents money for new signs, driver's license changes, and potential address number changes. He questioned why the change was necessary and stated he didn't understand the reason behind it.

Coren Randazzo (111 Bryant Street) argued that renaming Lee Street based on dishonesty about its origins undermines Dr. King's legacy. He contended that the street wasn't named after Robert E. Lee but rather a local Lee family, and that creating false narratives devalues both historical truth and Dr. King's memory. He referenced studies showing that MLK streets across America often become associated with declining neighborhoods rather than thriving communities, suggesting symbolic renaming without substance fails to honor what Dr. King stood for.

Brandon Dubs (118 Lake Terrace) spoke on behalf of his family's business, Affairs by Pinehurst Catering, which has operated on South Lee Street for over 30 years. He emphasized that while he supports Stockbridge's growth, the name change would create practical difficulties for their business, requiring reprinting materials, updating advertisements, and ensuring GPS systems direct out-of-town wedding guests correctly. He asked the council to reconsider and vote no on the change.

Mary Broun (115 North Lee Street) became emotional while speaking about Lee Street's historical significance to the community and her personal connection to Stockbridge High School. She suggested that instead of changing the street name, the council consider installing beautiful bronze plaques at the entryways to honor Dr. King, which would be less financially burdensome for residents and businesses while still providing appropriate recognition. She asked the council to vote no on the name change.

Chuck Dubs (108 South Lee Street) provided historical context about former Stockbridge mayor R.E. Lee and his wife Mildred, a longtime elementary school teacher. He read from official city council meeting minutes indicating Lee served as mayor for over two decades and was instrumental in bringing electricity, paved roads, and water systems to Stockbridge. He argued that renaming Lee Street would erase the historical value and honor bestowed upon the Lee family and their descendants and respectfully asked the council not to proceed with the name change.

CEREMONIAL

PRESENTATION OF THE ADOPT-A-ROAD SIGN AND PROCLAMATION FOR THE ZETA MU NU CHAPTER OF OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY, INC.

Mayor Williams presented a proclamation recognizing the Zeta Mu Nu Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated for their participation in the City's Adopt-A-Road Program. The proclamation commended the fraternity for their community service and civic engagement in helping to keep roadways clean and enhancing quality of life in the community.

Randall Slaughter, representing the Henry County chapter with 106 brothers, expressed honor at being able to help keep the community beautiful. He noted that the fraternity also provides scholarships to high school seniors in the Henry County area and engages in various community activities, stating it was a delight to be a community partner.

Mayor Williams expressed his look forward to the first invitation to their road cleanup activities.

CONSENT AGENDA

Confirmation of the Economic Development Director Mr. William Smith

Confirmation of the Chief of Police (removed from agenda)

Confirmation of HR Director Mr. Dwayne Pollock (added during agenda amendments)

City of Civility Designation (added during agenda amendments)

Motion: Councilmember Gantt moved to approve the consent agenda. Mayor Pro Tem Alexander seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

COUNCIL CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE NORFOLK SOUTHERN LEASE AGREEMENT

City Attorney Megan McCulloch explained that as discussed at the planning retreat, the Norfolk Southern lease agreement for the parking lot was currently not in the city's best interest in her opinion. She indicated that staff would like to work on fixing the

agreement before council approval and noted that representatives from the city would be meeting with elected officials to help facilitate improvements to the agreement.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Alexander moved to table the Norfolk Southern Lease Agreement. Councilmember Gantt seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARING

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT (C.I.E.) FOR 2026

Community Development Director Ryan Anderson presented the Capital Improvement Element, explaining its purpose as guiding infrastructure planning and ensuring compliance with state laws. He detailed that the CIE enables strategic budgeting, maintains eligibility for state programs and grants, and coordinates planning across services like parks, safety, and utilities.

Anderson explained that Georgia law requires local governments to adopt capital improvement elements for impact fee compliance and planning, with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs setting compliance standards. He noted that Stockbridge's current CIE was based on a 1993 joint document with Henry County and other jurisdictions, but since other jurisdictions had adopted their own CIEs and Henry County amended theirs to be standalone, Stockbridge needed its own CIE.

The presentation outlined that Stockbridge's population is projected to increase 53.9 percent by 2050, driving demand for infrastructure improvements. The CIE would support the 2023 annexation impact, ensure development pays its fair share through impact fees, and fund projects like Rock Quarry Road improvements, expanded police facilities, and 33.5 new miles of trail system.

Public Comments in Favor: Anthony Ford (47 Lily Glenn Lane) supported the CIE adoption, emphasizing Georgia's position as a top 10 growth state and Henry County as one of the fastest-growing counties in the country. He stressed the importance of properly preparing for inevitable growth and population increases.

Councilmember Barber asked Anderson to highlight specific roadway projects affected by the CIE. Anderson mentioned improvements planned for Walt Stevens Road, Jodeco Road, Flippen Road, Highway 138, East Atlanta Road, and North Henry Boulevard, explaining that the CIE would allow the city to collect impact fees from developers to support these initiatives.

Motion: Councilmember Barber moved to approve the capital improvement element for 2026. Mayor Pro Tem Alexander seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

STREET NAME CHANGES FOR NORTH LEE STREET AND SOUTH LEE STREET

Community Development Director Ryan Anderson presented the agenda item proposing the renaming of North and South Lee Street to *Martin Luther King Jr. Way*. He stated that the purpose of the change was to honor Dr. King's legacy and provide a more familiar and unifying name for the high-visibility corridor near City Hall and the amphitheater.

Anderson provided background research on Lee Street, noting that the earliest reference identified by staff appeared in City Council meeting minutes from 1949. He

explained that while some information suggests the street may have been named after General Robert E. Lee, staff research also indicated the possibility that it was named after former Stockbridge Mayor R.E. Lee.

As part of the presentation, Anderson displayed a memorial resolution from the February 19, 1952 City Council meeting minutes commemorating former Mayor R.E. Lee following his passing. The resolution outlined his significant contributions to the city, including the introduction of electricity, paved roads, and water systems during his tenure from 1927 to 1952.

During the presentation, questions arose regarding the validity of the information provided. Councilmember Gantt reviewed the materials and stated that she could not find specific evidence confirming that Lee Street was named after the former mayor. She emphasized that the memorial resolution did not explicitly reference the street being named in his honor.

Veronica Green, Chief Planner for the Community Development Department, clarified that there is no definitive evidence establishing that Lee Street was named for R.E. Lee. She explained, "That is the oral history of the City of Stockbridge." When asked about the source of this oral history, Green stated that references were found on several websites but could not be included in the presentation due to lack of verifiable citation. She added, "We have to present what we can prove," referencing the February 19, 1952 City Council minutes as the closest documented connection.

Mayor Williams asked for clarification, stating, "So you're basically saying that Lee Street is not named after anybody?" Green responded that the information presented represents the closest historical reference and association available. Councilmember Berry asked when Lee Street first appeared in postal or official records, and Green reiterated that the first confirmed reference in City meeting minutes was in 1949.

Mayor Pro Tem Alexander cautioned that, given the sensitivity of the issue, it is important to rely on verified facts. He stated, "In situations like this, emotions are high. We need to have facts. We cannot have definitive statements without supporting evidence." He also referenced prior efforts by a former City Clerk to research Confederate-related names within the city.

Councilmember Barber, who represents the district containing Lee Street, clarified that the initiative to rename the street did not originate from her but from Mayor Pro Tem Alexander. She stated that the issue was not a priority concern within her district and urged compassion for residents with longstanding ties to the area. Councilmember Barber expressed opposition to the proposed name change and called for a broader, more comprehensive discussion regarding downtown redevelopment.

Councilmember Gantt stated that her support for renaming the street was not solely based on any perceived Confederate association, but rather a desire to honor Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by naming a prominent street near the STEM school in his recognition.

Councilmember Cloud asked whether the referenced mayor passed away after the earliest documented mention of Lee Street and whether all possible research avenues

had been exhausted. Anderson responded that significant public interest prompted staff to investigate the origin of the street name. He stated that staff were unable to find evidence confirming that the street was named after General Robert E. Lee and included all available findings in the presentation for transparency. He added that staff conducted thorough research to the best of their ability and presented the information to Council accordingly. Councilmember Cloud confirmed that all reasonable research efforts had been exhausted, and Anderson affirmed.

Mayor Williams inquired whether Lee Street may have had a different name prior to its first documented appearance in 1949. Staff indicated that no evidence had been found to suggest a prior name.

Councilmember Berry emphasized the importance of due diligence, stating that when historical matters are debated, the city has a responsibility to ensure accuracy. He noted discrepancies in the timeline, including that General Robert E. Lee died in 1870, the City was established in 1920, and Lee Street first appeared in records in 1949. He stated that these gaps highlight the need for further research and that a definitive conclusion could not be reached during the meeting.

Mayor Williams then opened the floor for public comment.

Public Comments in Favor:

Anthony Ford expressed support for the name change, noting that many people are unaware that Stockbridge is considered the ancestral home of the King family. He described a vision of creating a Martin Luther King Sr. Heritage Trail on one side of downtown and Martin Luther King Jr. Way on the other, both connecting to Rock Quarry Road, where Dr. King Sr.'s father historically worked.

Mayor Pro Tem Alexander provided additional context regarding the broader vision, explaining that the Downtown Development Authority has discussed replacing the Statue of Liberty in Municipal Park with a statue of Martin Luther King Sr. This would create a symbolic connection between the STEM school, the statue, and Floyd Chapel Baptist Church through a multi-use trail system.

Public Comments in Opposition:

Coren Randazzo presented historical documentation from Henry County Weekly archives dating back to the 1800s and early 1900s, indicating references to Lee families and Lee Street as early as 1918—prior to Mayor R.E. Lee's death in 1952.

Brandon Dubs expressed concerns regarding the potential impact on local businesses and recommended that additional research be conducted before any decision is made.

Chuck Dubs stated that, based on his research and work conducted by former City Councilmember Steve Cash using official City records, the street was named after the mayor, describing it as "his street" and asserting confidence in that conclusion.

Marvin Gross voiced opposition to the name change and questioned the need to alter what he considered an important part of Stockbridge's history.

The discussion highlighted significant uncertainty regarding the origin of the street name, with multiple theories presented, including connections to local Lee families, pre-1952 references, and the former mayor.

Given the conflicting historical information and timeline discrepancies, Mayor Pro Tem Alexander made a motion to defer the item to allow additional time for staff research.

Motion:

Mayor Pro Tem Alexander moved to defer the street name change to a future meeting to allow for additional due diligence and research. Councilmember Cloud seconded the motion.

Vote:

The motion passed 4–1, with Councilmember Barber voting in opposition.

Councilmember Barber explained her dissent, reiterating the need for a comprehensive downtown redevelopment plan and expressing concern about making decisions that impact constituents without sufficient planning and verified historical information.

NEW BUSINESS

Council moved the de-annexation cases to after executive session due to attorney-client privileged legal memorandums that needed to be discussed first.

Motion: Councilmember Gantt moved to move executive session before new business to discuss the de-annexation items. Councilmember Cloud seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: Councilmember Gantt moved to adjourn to executive session for real estate, personnel, litigation, and cyber security matters. Mayor Pro Tem Alexander seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

[Executive session held]

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Alexander moved to adjourn executive session and reconvene regular session. Councilmember Berry seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

DE-ANNEXATION CASE #DX-2026-01 FOR THE MANDERLEY SUBDIVISION, PHASE 9

Following executive session discussion of attorney-client privileged legal documents, Councilmember Gantt explained that council had received detailed legal authority based on state code regarding the legality of the de-annexation requests.

Motion: Councilmember Gantt moved to deny de-annexation case DX-2026-01. Mayor Pro Tem Alexander seconded. The motion passed 4-0-1, with Councilmember Barber abstaining, stating she didn't have enough information to vote.

**DE-ANNEXATION CASE #DX-2026-02 FOR THE MANDERLEY SUBDIVISION,
PHASE 10**

Motion: Councilmember Gantt moved to deny de-annexation case DX-2026-02 based on the legal explanation received in executive session. Mayor Pro Tem Alexander seconded. The motion passed 4-0-1, with Councilmember Barber abstaining for lack of sufficient information.

Councilmember Gantt clarified for the record that council had received a detailed 4-page attorney-client privileged legal document providing legal authority based on state code, which informed their decision-making on both de-annexation cases.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Mayor Williams welcomed the spring weather and expressed excitement about upcoming activities in the warmer weather. He announced that council would be producing initiatives and engagement opportunities, directing citizens with questions to contact Executive Assistant Roslyn Rawls at rrawls@stockbridgega.org.

ADJOURNMENT

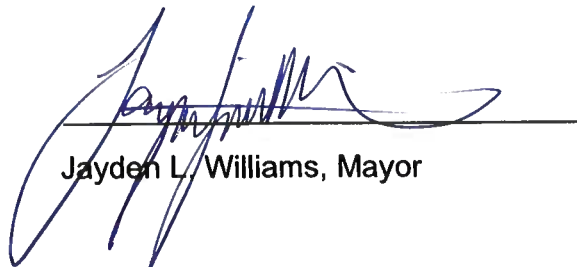
Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Alexander moved to adjourn. Councilmember Berry seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:



Cassandra Lester, Interim City Clerk



Jayden L. Williams, Mayor