



**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
SUMMARY MINUTES
MONDAY APRIL 13, 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.

Mayor Jayden Williams called the April 13, 2026 Stockbridge City Council meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Councilmember Kyle Berry led the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

Interim City Clerk Cassandra Lester conducted roll call. A quorum was established. Councilmember LaKeisha Gantt arrived at 6:39pm.

Mayor Williams noted that an amendment was needed to add an item regarding the police department piggybacking off an existing contract for records services. Councilmember Berry made a motion to adopt the agenda with the amendment. Councilmember Barber seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

Adoption of the Work Session Meeting Minutes March 31, 2026

Councilmember Barber made a motion to approve the March 31st work session minutes. Mayor Pro Tem Alexander seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The interim clerk announced five public comments:

Willie Carter (123 Wilson Avenue) addressed case number VR-2026-01, a variance on Wilson Avenue, stating it needs to be opposed and re-examined due to concerns about the plot. Mayor Pro Tem Alexander clarified that speakers on this item would have additional opportunity during the public hearing.

Charlene Woodruff (7914 Christian Court) discussed her 22-year residency and concerns about a proposed apartment development. She explained that in 2022 she was told by staff the development probably wouldn't happen due to incomplete paperwork but recently discovered surveyors on her property preparing for apartments. She reported that trees on her property had been cut down, which was verified by the developer. Mayor Williams acknowledged receiving her email and confirmed staff was working on a solution.

Dave Murphy, (2877 Mandy Court) a 30-year Spivey Cove resident and community leader, provided background on developments in their area. He detailed the community's consistent opposition to apartment developments, noting 99% opposition at public meetings despite council approval of both proposed projects. He described a 2022 community meeting with a developer who lacked professional presentation materials and proposed 318 apartments and 50 townhomes.

Kathy Walker, (200 Hunting Court) president of Spivey Ridge HOA, expressed concerns that the current development differs from what was presented in 2022. She reported that residents received no advance notice before tree clearing began, removing protective buffers between homes and construction. Walker noted that other nearby developments received significantly greater buffers (up to 50 feet) while their larger, higher-value homes received less protection. She requested immediate installation of temporary barriers, restoration of proper buffers, and accountability to ensure compliance with approved requirements.

Evelyn Dixon (267 Spivey Ridge Circle) from Spivey Ridge raised communication concerns about the apartment development, noting inconsistent and inadequate updates to residents. She proposed enhanced communication including timely construction notices, clear impact information, and consistent communication channels with current information on the city website.

CEREMONIAL REVIEW:

Proclamations for Autism Acceptance and Black Bookstore Month

Mayor Williams summarized the ceremonial portion held at 5:30 PM, noting three proclamations were presented: declaring April 2026 as Autism Acceptance Month for community inclusivity, Black Maternal Health Week (April 13-17) to foster public-health sector collaboration, and joining other mayors in recognizing Black Bookstore Day to promote literacy, culture, and diversity.

PRESENTATION

Presentation on Potential Small Area Studies to be Undertaken

Community Development Director Ryan Anderson presented the city's plan for small area studies, explaining they had identified 10 targeted areas for detailed examination over the next 3-5 years with \$200,000 budgeted for fiscal year 2026. The studies would focus on underutilized parcels, aging infrastructure, and areas needing revitalization rather than currently thriving areas.

Mayor Pro Tem Alexander expressed concern that District 5 wasn't adequately represented on the priority list, noting the need for strategic distribution throughout the entire city rather than concentration in particular districts.

He advocated for including Hudson Bridge Road and Eagles Landing Parkway to continue high-quality development momentum, similar to successful Patrick Henry Parkway planning that attracted major retailers like Costco and Sprouts.

City Manager Shawn Edmondson responded that areas like District 5, which are already thriving, would be included in the upcoming comprehensive master plan, while these small area studies target pockets needing revitalization.

Mayor Williams praised the data-driven framework and asked what the studies would mean for everyday Stockbridge residents.

Anderson explained these grassroots-level studies would give residents in specific neighborhoods opportunity to influence what they want to see in their areas. He further confirmed this is a roadmap that will provide intentional rather than just reactive growth.

Councilmember Barber expressed excitement about area studies. Citing that she had been asking for an area study for District 4, which had nine residential developments approved in her district. And it was annexed with 6,700 new residents in 2023. She sought confirmation that State Route 42 and Valley Hill Road areas would be encompassed, which Anderson confirmed.

Barber then asked for clarification between the critical action and high priority ranking areas on the area study presentation.

Anderson clarified that based on the planning analysis and the development trends and all the other data that we've taken into consideration, staff felt like there were the three areas they wanted to target first.

Mayor Pro Tem Alexander provided population context stating "In, in 2020, retroactively the census and Atlanta Regional Commission went back, and they proactively put in the annexation numbers for the city." Noting that despite perceptions of rapid growth, the net population increase from 2020 to 2026 was only 229 residents (from 35,740 to 35,969) when accounting for retroactive census adjustments that included annexation numbers. He contrasted this with McDonough's net growth of over 5,000 residents in the same period. Adding that for a three-year period, there was not one rezoning that came to the city council between 2016 and almost to 2019, and then one came in 2019, it was denied. So there was a long period of time where there was no development in the city.

PUBLIC HEARING

Variance Case #VR-2026-01

Community Development Director Ryan Anderson presented the variance request for property on Wilson Avenue to allow construction of a single-family dwelling. The property's irregular shape and narrow dimensions require reducing front yard setback from 50 feet to 25 feet and rear yard setback from 40 feet to 20 feet. The 0.613-acre property is long and narrow, with insufficient space to meet standard SR district requirements.

Anderson explained the property meets all seven variance criteria, noting there are 40 feet of city right-of-way that would accommodate future sidewalks without impact.

The proposed 2,294 square foot home would have 1,370 square feet on the first floor and 924 on the second floor to minimize the footprint.

Councilmember Cloud questioned recent variance approvals in the area and existing homes that might have required variances. Anderson explained that older homes were grandfathered in before current code enactment, though some existing homes in the area already encroach into the 50-foot setback requirement.

Councilmember Cloud noted he had spoken with residents and community leadership who support new development but want it built to existing SR zoning requirements. He expressed openness to growth while respecting residents' rights to expect code compliance.

Councilmember Gantt suggested conditioning approval on sidewalk easement acceptance and noted modern development trends favor reduced setbacks near downtown areas, citing examples of high-value developments with minimal setbacks selling for premium prices.

Anderson acknowledged this highlighted weaknesses in the current code, which only has two residential districts (SR and RR) compared to the previous code's four districts (R1-R4). Most homes in the area don't meet current SR requirements but are grandfathered in.

Mayor Pro Tem Alexander confirmed staff recommended approval based on meeting all seven variance criteria, with Anderson noting it would be difficult to legally defend denial since the criteria are met and denial would create hardship.

Councilmember Barber expressed concern about setting precedent, noting this would be one of the largest homes in the area.

No speakers appeared for or against the variance during public comment periods.

Motion to table VR-2026-01 made by Councilmember Cloud, seconded by Councilmember Gantt until the next meeting to allow the applicant to meet with residents for discussion. The motion passed 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Council consideration of purchase agreement for SPD K9 Moos to its current handler.

Interim Chief Godfrey explained Lieutenant Blake Zimmerman's resignation to seek opportunities at a larger agency, requesting to purchase his six-year-old canine Moos. With approximately two years of service life remaining, finding and training a new handler would leave only about one year of service by completion. The specialized boarding requirements during transition would create substantial costs. Staff recommended the sale based on both the canine's best interests and city financial considerations.

Councilmember Gantt asked about pricing methodology. Chief Godfrey explained they used a prorated amount based on original canine cost separate from training, resulting in a \$2,000 sale price.

City Attorney requested the motion include finding the canine and kennel unserviceable per city code.

Motion to approve the sale of canine Moos and kennel, determining them unserviceable based on provided information, made by Councilmember Gantt, seconded by Councilmember Barber. The motion passed 5-0.

Quitclaim Disposal of Remnant Tract at 2125 Jodeco Road

Community Development Director Ryan Anderson presented the proposal to transfer a 0.77-acre remnant tract to Tidal Wave Auto Spa. The city acquired the tract from Georgia DOT in 2023 for drainage maintenance, but the drainage system has been redirected, making only half the tract necessary for city purposes. The tract's protrusion into the Tidal Wave property creates development difficulties.

The transfer follows OCGA requirements for conveying small strips to abutting property owners and includes conditions requiring staff presence during operations for litter control, adherence to submitted site plans with stacked stone and brick finishes, screening for cleaning stations, and developer reimbursement of legal costs.

Mayor Pro Tem Alexander confirmed this followed standard city abandonment procedures and appreciated the significant brick and stone requirements to complement the Joe Deco

development. He emphasized the value of mixed-use development providing services like car washing on-site to reduce traffic burdens.

Motion to approve declaring the property at 2125 Jodeco Road unserviceable and proceeding with the abandonment made by Mayor Pro Tem Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Barber. The motion passed 5-0.

(First Reading) South Berry Street Renaming

Anderson presented the first reading to rename South Berry Street to "Alphonso Thomas Street" honoring Councilmember Thomas's decades of public service. The renaming affects only two properties, and proper public notification was provided.

Councilmember Cloud explained his thought process in spearheading this honor, noting Councilmember Thomas pioneered the Martin Luther King Sr. Heritage Trail and deserved recognition with his own street. He hoped Thomas would be honored by this gesture.

Councilmember Berry expressed excitement about honoring such a beloved public servant who served as their predecessor. He emphasized Thomas as a curator of history who loved Stockbridge, noting this was an appropriate way to memorialize his legacy.

Mayor Pro Tem Alexander praised Councilmember Thomas as a statesman and consensus builder, sharing personal appreciation for Thomas's support during difficult times and noting his faith-based leadership in the community.

Councilmember Gantt emotionally endorsed the honor, calling Thomas a wonderful colleague whose legacy lives on, and praised Councilmember Cloud for stepping into Thomas's role effectively.

Motion to approve the resolution renaming South Berry Street to Alphonso Thomas Street made by Councilmember Cloud, seconded by Councilmember Gantt. The motion passed 5-0.

(First Reading) Text Amendment Case #TX-2026-02

Anderson presented the proposed text amendment to establish formal procedures for street and facility renaming, noting no current formal process existed in city code. The proposal included two pathways: city council initiation requiring legal advertisement and two readings, and community/resident initiation requiring 75% of affected neighbors' signatures plus petition to council.

Councilmember Barber questioned whether the Lee Street renaming could be appealed under this policy, expressing concern about the timing and process and stated for the record;

"The issue, the policy, the process that we took to rename a street in my district that was not initiated by me. If it's the mentality of this governing body to try to just erase history and close the door on residents' businesses and the church that is affected by that change, I am vehemently opposed to it. They deserve to have an opportunity to appeal that decision. Unfortunately, the vote was approved by the council. Three, I voted against it, three approved it, one abstained. I cannot bring that vote back for reconsideration. Only those three who approved it, one of them would need to bring it back for reconsideration. Which is why I'm asking that those residents, businesses that are affected by this change, they deserve to have an opportunity to appeal the decision. But because there was no policy then you're now enacting a policy after we've approved the renaming of Councilmember Thomas. It just does not seem fair at all. I just want all of this for the record."

Barber reiterated her question, asking, "So there is no current policy in which residents, business owners, or any stakeholder who's affected by that change, they don't have an outlet, they don't have an opportunity to appeal?" In response, Anderson stated, "The intent of this formal policy is because if staff is given a directive, we have to have something to work off. So we were just trying to formalize the process. But council has the right to make motions from the floor to make a street name proposal."

Barber then posed a question to city attorney representative Megan McCollugh "those residents, business owners and the church that is affected by the name change Lee Street, do they have an opportunity to appeal that? And if they do, what is the timeframe?"

The city's legal responded "I would actually defer to our zoning attorney and our planning and zoning attorney Valerie Ross, although she's not here right now. And if those residents are interested in appealing that, I would recommend that they contact their own counsel. I can't provide legal advice to residents on that."

Barber further asked, "I'm asking you on behalf of the governing body, me, as a member of the governing body who represents this district, is there an opportunity to appeal the name change?"

And legal stated "what I'm saying is, ma'am, that I can't answer that question for you."

The discussion continued and Mayor Pro Tem Alexander strongly defended the Martin Luther King Jr. Way naming, calling it shameful to face "theatrics" for honoring Dr. King. He opposed any policy limiting council authority to name streets and noted that staff brought forward this policy without the required three council member votes requesting it.

Councilmember Barber clarified that she never requested the policy, with Anderson confirming it was staff-initiated to provide working procedures. She supported having consistent policies for staff rather than random council decisions.

Councilmember Gantt expressed concern about creating additional roadblocks, noting that adequate notice was provided on meeting agendas and residents could attend to comment. She opposed adding more processes that could cause delays, referencing previous issues with excessive procedures that stopped growth.

A Motion to not move forward with a street name change policy made by Mayor Pro Tem Alexander. After discussion about letting items die versus voting, the motion was rescinded with staff understanding that no policy change was desired.

Piggyback Henry County Records Contract Amendment

Interim Chief Godfrey presented the final year extension of the piggyback contract with Henry County for Supreme Trio LLC (DBA Swanson's Towing) and Wrecker One Inc. Wrecker One received exclusive service rights for the I-75 corridor except during TRIP (Towing and Recovery Initiative Program) activations for commercial vehicles. The delay in bringing this forward was due to ownership changes following the original owner's death and probate proceedings.

Motion to move forward with the piggyback contract made by Councilmember Berry, seconded by Councilmember Gantt.

Discussion: Mayor Pro Tem Alexander asked for clarification on the service area of Swanson's Towing. Godfrey explained Swanson's handles city services while Wrecker One has exclusive service rights for the I-75 corridor, except during TRIP (Towing and Recovery Initiative Program) activations, which is required when commercial trucks are involved.

Mayor Pro Tem Alexander expressed personal concerns about one of the companies based on previous interactions and requested additional discussion. Interim Chief Godfrey indicated there will be no disruption to services on the interstate during the discussion period.

Councilmember Berry rescinded the original Motion and made a Motion to table the contract extension to the work session for further discussion; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Alexander. The Motion passed 4-0-1 with Councilmember Gantt abstaining.

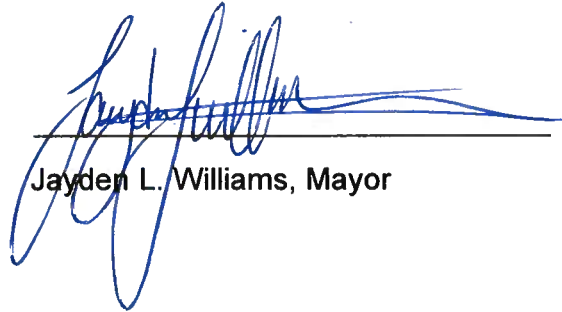
ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Councilmember Berry, seconded by Councilmember Gantt. The motion passed unanimously 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:58p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:



Cassandra Lester, Interim City Clerk



Jayden L. Williams, Mayor