



**APRIL 9, 2026 - 2:00 p.m. - CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**

**CITY GOVERNMENT**

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN**

**SAVANNAH, GEORGIA**

The regular meeting of the City Council was held at 2:06 p.m., in Council Chambers. Chairman Nick Palumbo called the meeting to order. He then recognized Alderswoman Linda Wilder, who introduced Alderman Kurtis Purtee, to offer the invocation. Upon arrival, Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz asked the Clerk to call the roll. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States was recited in unison.

**PRESENT:**

Alderswoman Carolyn H. Bell, At-Large, Post 1  
Alderswoman Alicia Miller Blakely, At-Large, Post 2  
Alderswoman Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1  
Alderman Detric Leggett, District 2  
Alderswoman Linda Wilder, District 3 - Vice Chair  
Alderman Nick Palumbo, District 4 - Chairman  
Alderswoman Dr. Estella Edwards Shabazz, District 5 - Mayor Pro Tem  
Alderman Kurtis Purtee, District 6

**ABSENT:**

Mayor Van R. Johnson, II

**ALSO, PRESENT:**

City Manager Jay Melder  
Assistant City Manager Taffanye Young  
Chief of Staff Daphanie Williams  
City Attorney Bates Lovett  
Clerk of Council Mark Massey  
Deputy Clerk of Council Gwendolyn Jones

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**[1. Adoption of the Regular Meeting Agenda for April 9, 2026.](#)

Ald. Palumbo moved to adopt/approve item #1, seconded by Ald. Wilder and Ald. Leggett. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**[2. Approval of the Minutes for the Regular Meeting Held on March 26, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.](#)

[Agenda Plus - RM DRAFT MINUTES March 26, 2026 City Council Regular Meeting-watermark.pdf](#)

Ald. Palumbo moved to approve items #2, #3, and #4, seconded by Ald. Wilder, Ald. Miller Blakely, and Ald. Leggett. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

[3. Approval of the Minutes for the Work Session and City Manager's Briefing Held on March 26, 2026, at 3:30 p.m.](#)

[Agenda Plus - WS DRAFT MINUTES March 26, 2026 City Council Workshop watermark.pdf](#)

Ald. Palumbo moved to approve items #2, #3, and #4, seconded by Ald. Wilder, Ald. Miller Blakely, and Ald. Leggett. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

[4. Approval of the Minutes for the Special Called Meeting Held on March 26, 2026, at 6:01 p.m.](#)

[Agenda Plus - SCM DRAFT MINUTES March 26, 2026 City Council Special Called Meeting-watermark.pdf](#)

Ald. Palumbo moved to approve items #2, #3, and #4, seconded by Ald. Wilder, Ald. Miller Blakely, and Ald. Leggett. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

**PRESENTATIONS**[5. Presentation by the Employee Engagement Team for Recognition of the 2025 Employee of the Year Winner \(Human Resources\)](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz introduced City Manager Melder to present the 2025 Employee of the Year Winner. He was joined by the Employee Engagement Team's Chair, Megan Kerkhoff (Municipal Archives), and other members. City Manager Melder announced Fire Captain Trevor Jaha as the 2025 Employee of the Year Winner.

[6. Recognition of the Month of April as Savannah Safe Digging Month \(WR- Planning & Engineering\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Safe Digging Proclamation.docx](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz and Ald. Palumbo presented an official proclamation recognizing the Month of April as Savannah Safe Digging Month, to Water & Sewer Planning Senior Director James "Jim" Laplander, his team/staff, and the Georgia 811 members who were present.

**ALCOHOL LICENSE HEARINGS - (CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ALL ITEMS IN THIS SECTION UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)**[7. Approval to add a Class C \(Liquor, Wine\) \(By the Drink\) Alcohol License with Sunday Sales to James Massey for Two Tides Brewing Company, a Brewpub Located at 12 West 41st Street. The Establishment is Located between Whitaker Street and DeSoto Avenue in Aldermanic District 2. The Applicant Plans to Continue to Operate as a Brewpub. \(New Request/Existing Business\)](#)

[Exhibit 1 - Checklist - Two Tides Brewing Company](#)

[Exhibit 2 - Density Map - Two Tides Brewing](#)

[Exhibit 3 - Alcohol Reports - Two Tides Brewing](#)

[Exhibit 4 - Measurement Report - Two Tide Brewing Company](#)

[Exhibit 5 - Safety Plan - Two Tide Brewing Company](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz declared the alcohol hearings open for agenda items #7, #8, #9, and #10.

No speaker(s).

a. Ald. Purtee moved to close the alcohol license hearings for agenda items #7, #8, #9, and #10, seconded by Ald. Bell and Ald. Wilder. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

b. Ald. Leggett moved to approve agenda item #7, seconded by Ald. Wilder and Ald. Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

[8. Approval of a Class C \(Liquor, Beer, Wine\) \(By the Drink\) Alcohol License with Sunday Sales to James Ciminillo for The Aberdeen by Coop De Ville, a Restaurant Located at 301 Passage Way, Unit B101. The Establishment is Located between Pilot Street and Port Street in Aldermanic District 2. The Applicant Plans to Operate as a Restaurant. \(New Applicant/New Business\)](#)

[Exhibit 1 - Checklist - The Aberdeen By Coop De Ville](#)

[Exhibit 2 - Density Map - The Aberdeen by Coop De Ville](#)

[Exhibit 3 - Alcohol Reports - The Aberdeen by Coop De Ville](#)

[Exhibit 4 - Measurement Report - The Aberdeen by Coop De Ville](#)

[Exhibit 5 - Safety Plan - The Aberdeen by Coop De Ville](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz declared the alcohol hearings open for agenda items #7, #8, #9, and #10.

No speaker(s).

a. Ald. Purtee moved to close the alcohol license hearings for agenda items #7, #8, #9, and #10, seconded by Ald. Bell and Ald. Wilder. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

b. Ald. Leggett moved to approve agenda item #8, seconded by Ald. Wilder. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

[9. Approval of a Class C \(Liquor, Beer, Wine\) Alcohol License to Matthew Lipman for Nickel and Oak Lounge at 111 West Congress Street. The Establishment is Located between Barnard Street and Whitaker Street in Aldermanic District 2. The Applicant Plans to Operate as a Bar/Lounge. \(New Applicant/New Business\)](#)

[Exhibit 1 - Checklist - Nickel and Oak Lounge](#)

[Exhibit 2 - Density Map - Nickel and Oak Lounge](#)

[Exhibit 3 - Alcohol Reports - Nickel and Oak Lounge](#)

[Exhibit 4 - Measurement Report - Nickel and Oak Lounge](#)

[Exhibit 5 - Safety Plan - Nickel and Oak Lounge](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz declared the alcohol hearings open for agenda items #7, #8, #9, and #10.

No speaker(s).

a. Ald. Purtee moved to close the alcohol license hearings for agenda items #7, #8, #9, and #10, seconded by Ald. Bell and Ald. Wilder. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

b. Ald. Leggett moved to approve agenda item #9, seconded by Ald. Wilder and Ald. Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

[10. Approval of a Class B \(Beer\) \(Brewery\) Alcohol License to Ernest McLean for First City Brewing at 1722 Habersham Street. The Establishment is Located between East 33rd Street and East 34th Street in Aldermanic District 2. The Applicant Plans to Operate as a Brewery. \(New Applicant/New Business\)](#)

[Exhibit 1 - Checklist - First City Brewing](#)

[Exhibit 2 - Density Map - First City Brewing](#)

[Exhibit 4 - Measurement Report - First City Brewing](#)

[Exhibit 3 - Alcohol Reports - First City Brewing](#)

[Exhibit 5 - Safety Plan - First City Brewing](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz declared the alcohol hearings open for agenda items #7, #8, #9, and #10.

No speaker(s).

a. Ald. Purtee moved to close the alcohol license hearings for agenda items #7, #8, #9, and #10, seconded by Ald. Bell and Ald. Wilder. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

b. Ald. Leggett moved to approve agenda item #10, seconded by Ald. Wilder and Ald. Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

Ald. Miller Blakely stated she wanted to let the community know that this is not an ordinary brewery. She stated that the beer is delivered and the owner of the business packages it. Ald. Miller Blakely stated her earlier concern was that the brewery was so close to a home and no one had actually spoken to the homeowner of that property. She stated that she was just informed that it was a different type of brewing system that would be in that space and parking will be available for that particular homeowner.

Ald. Leggett stated that the homeowner's driveway would be painted so that she would be able to access her home from Habersham Street. He stated the applicant has made himself available

to have a conversation with the homeowner.

#### ZONING HEARINGS

[11. Petition of Josh Yellin on behalf of Bernard Property Holdings LLC for 0.16 acres at 8106 Waters Avenue \(20494 07004\) to Amend the Zoning Map from RSF-6 \(Residential Single Family-6\) to OI-T \(Office Institutional-Transition\) in Aldermanic District 4 \(26-000785-ZA\).](#)

[Exhibit 1: MPC Recommendation Packet for 8106 Waters Avenue \(26-000785-A\).pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Zoning Map for 8106 Waters Avenue \(26-000785-ZA\).pdf](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz declared the zoning hearing open for agenda item #11. See related item #12.

Speaker(s):

- Subhashi Karanarathe, MPC representative
- Josh Yellin, representing the petitioner

a. Ald. Wilder moved to close the zoning hearing for agenda item #11, seconded by Ald. Purtee and Ald. Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0-0. Ald. Miller Blakely and Ald. Leggett were away from the dais during the vote, and Mayor Johnson was absent.

b. Ald. Lanier moved to reopen the zoning hearing for agenda item #11, seconded by Ald. Wilder. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0-0. Ald. Miller Blakely and Ald. Leggett were away from the dais during the vote, and Mayor Johnson was absent. The hearing was reopened, thereby allowing the MPC representative and the petitioner to speak.

c. Ald. Palumbo moved to close the zoning hearing for agenda item #11, seconded by Ald. Purtee. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0-0. Ald. Miller Blakely and Ald. Leggett were away from the dais during the vote, and Mayor Johnson was absent.

#### ORDINANCES - FIRST AND SECOND READING - (CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ALL ITEMS IN THIS SECTION UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)

[12. Petition of Josh Yellin on behalf of Bernard Property Holdings LLC for 0.16 acres at 8106 Waters Avenue \(20494 07004\) to Amend the Zoning Map from RSF-6 \(Residential Single Family-6\) to OI-T \(Office Institutional-Transition\) in Aldermanic District 4 \(26-000785-ZA\).](#)

[Exhibit 1: Draft Ordinance for 8106 Waters Avenue \(26-000785-ZA\).pdf](#)

Ald. Palumbo moved (to approve agenda item #12) that the first reading be considered the second and the ordinance placed upon its passage and passed, seconded by Ald. Purtee and Ald. Wilder. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0-0. Ald. Miller Blakely was away from the dais during the vote, and Mayor Johnson was absent.

#### PURCHASING ITEMS - (CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ALL ITEMS IN THIS SECTION UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)

[13. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for Financial Empowerment Research and Engagement Services with BluKnowledge Consulting in the Amount of \\$65,000. \(Economic Development\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Financial Empowerment Research & Engagement Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Financial Empowerment Research & Engagement Services.pdf](#)

Ald. Lanier moved to deny item #13, seconded by Ald. Wilder and Ald. Miller Blakely. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

Ald. Lanier stated she was glad that we, as a council, as a city government, have finally placed some attention on economics as it pertains to marginalized and low-wealth communities. Ald. Lanier expressed that she recently became aware of this item and had some concerns. She stated that as policymakers and leaders in Savannah, we have a constitutional responsibility to create policies that are going to benefit our citizens, especially in this particular area, for people who are not necessarily able to speak up and out and uplift themselves. Ald. Lanier stated that, for this matter, she thinks the council has to put some guardrails in place to facilitate the enormously important problem/condition in our city, and she wants to be part of the conversation.

Ald. Lanier stated that when she looked at this particular item, there was a grant that had been secured, and that was a good thing. She stated she wished the council knew a little bit more about it. Ald. Lanier expressed that the council did not have an opportunity to have a discussion to impact the criteria that would be considered in putting this bid together. She stated the council might want to alter this bid, the criteria, or the scope, and thinks it is going to require more conversation, more deliberation, and more input from the council to say how we need to proceed with this matter.

Ald. Lanier expressed her concern about the bids received and the two bids that were considered. She stated we considered two bids, and from those two, there was a gap in between what was bid, one coming in at \$62,000 and the other one at \$121,000. Ald. Lanier stated that there was such a wide gap that it was questionable in the quality of the work or the scope of the work. She asked if we do not pass this today, what would be the procedure or the process that we would take as far as putting this back out to get some more bids to go out further, spread a wider net, on this. City Manager Melder responded. Ald. Lanier stated she knows she is not the only one concerned about this and not the only one who has high poverty in their district, but if price were our driving criteria for making this decision, even that is a problem.

Ald. Wilder asked the City Attorney how we could come back and open it for additional people, and if we would be liable. She further asked the City Attorney to explain what the process would be should this occur again, and how this shapes into the council voting on the City Manager's recommendations. City Attorney Lovett stated that the council could deny or not authorize the City Manager to execute, and then could instruct him to go back out for bid again with no liability. Ald. Wilder stated that she knows this is a time issue, and she appreciates Team Savannah for considering somebody locally, but she thinks the council wants to have input for something as important as this.

Ald. Miller Blakely asked how much the grant was and if the amount was for the whole program. (Yes, \$100,000.) She further asked if the city was going to add more to that. (Yes, we are using our staff capacity and other resources as well.)

Ald. Bell stated that if she understood Ald. Lanier correctly, what interested her was the talk about civic or community engagement and having local participation, even in the discussions before the staff designs the scope of the RFP. Ald. Bell asked Ald. Lanier, if her statement summarized what she was talking about, which was the lack of not only council participation in this discussion but civic engagement as well? Ald. Lanier responded. Ald. Bell followed by stating "you are wanting more local engagement, participation from folk who worked in this area, folk who have been sensitive to the needs in this whole process before we go out for bid nationally." (Yes) Ald. Bell stated she understands that delaying the vote today would maybe delay the process a bit, but she does not necessarily feel like it would be detrimental to the process.

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz stated that when she was going through her agenda, she too had questions about this, and like one of her colleagues, Ald. Wilder, she too, noticed that the details she was looking for to answer her questions were not there. She further stated she was clear and on the same page with Ald. Lanier, in reference to this particular item.

[14. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for \(1\) Bucket Truck with Terex USA, LLC dba Terex Utilities, in the Amount of \\$337,438. \(Fleet Services\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Bucket Trucks.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Bucket Trucks.pdf](#)

Ald. Palumbo moved to approve items #14 and #15, seconded by Ald. Purtee. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

[15. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for the Installation of New Gym Flooring and Related Upgrades with Success Sports Surfacing, LLC, in an Amount Not to Exceed \\$597,528.75. \(Recreation & Leisure Services\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Gym Renovation.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Gym Renovations.pdf](#)

Ald. Palumbo moved to approve items #14 and #15, seconded by Ald. Purtee. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

[16. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for Painting of the W.W. Law Community Center Gymnasium from Moseler LLC, DBA Founders \(LOCAL\) Maintenance & Restoration in an Amount Not to Exceed \\$75,000. \(Facilities Maintenance\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification: WW Law Gym Painting](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Note: WW Law Gym Painting](#)

Ald. Leggett moved to approve item #16, seconded by Ald. Palumbo, Ald. Wilder, and Ald. Miller Blakely. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

Ald. Leggett stated he wanted to get some clarification on item #16, and he thinks item #15 was married to the same conversation. He asked if we had already performed the remediation of the mold that was in the entire gym area (at W.W. Law). City Manager Melder responded. Ald. Leggett asked, with the facilities maintenance portion, will that address the outside, the pressure washing, the updating of the paint, or anything on the outside? City Manager Melder responded. Ald. Leggett asked if this was for all the labor and materials for painting the W.W. Law Community's gymnasium interior, and if we were going to do that portion before we do the floor. (Yes)

Ald. Leggett stated he still wanted some more information about the Eastside Concerned Citizens. He expressed that he wanted to make sure everyone knows just how important that information was and how important it was, not only to the community around, but to everybody who is sitting on the dais, and that it was historical. Ald. Leggett thanked City Manager Melder and staff for the effort in trying to locate a lot of the materials. He stated that he felt some kind of way for Freddy Patrick to have put that much effort into something of that magnitude for it to be discarded the way it was. Ald. Leggett further expressed that he just wanted to make sure that the council had a conversation about it. City Manager Melder responded.

Ald. Wilder stated that we championed having the basketball court named after our friend, Freddy Patrick. She asked that when the basketball court is painted, let us know so that we can have the family come and celebrate the reopening. In reference to the Eastside Concerned Citizens, Ald. Wilder stated there were some pictures that we took off the walls. She stated that some of them were not in the best condition, but some of the residents asked for them, and she would like to make sure that they got them. City Manager Melder responded.

Ald. Miller Blakely stated she was looking at the agenda, and she did not see all of the individuals who applied for this particular contract. She stated she would like to know the names of those individuals and requested the information from the City Manager.

#### RESOLUTIONS - (CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ALL ITEMS IN THIS SECTION UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)

[17. Resolution Authorizing Community Housing Services Agency, Inc. to Loan \\$2,000,000 from the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund to the Savannah Gateway Gardens Limited Partnership in Support of its 2026 Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Application for the Development of 78 Apartments on Portions of Vacant Property Known as 21 Edinburgh Street and 946 Rockefeller Street Located in Aldermanic District 2, Savannah, Chatham County, Georgia \(Housing Services\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: SAHF Gateway Gardens Limited Resolution.pdf](#)

Ald. Palumbo moved to approve items #17, #18, and #19, seconded by Ald. Purtee. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

[18. Resolution Authorizing Community Housing Services Agency, Inc. to Loan \\$2,000,000 from the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund to Mercy Housing Southeast in Support of its 2026 Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Application for the Re-Syndication and Substantial Rehabilitation of 70 Apartments on Property Known as Heritage Corner and Row in the Cuyler-Brownville Neighborhood Located in Aldermanic District 1, Savannah, Chatham County, Georgia \(Housing Services\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: SAHF Mercy Housing Southeast Resolution.pdf](#)

Ald. Palumbo moved to approve items #17, #18, and #19, seconded by Ald. Purtee. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

[19. Resolution Authorizing Community Housing Services Agency, Inc. to Loan \\$500,000 from the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund to Sustainable Fellwood I Limited Partnership in Support of its 2026 Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Application for the Preservation and Rehabilitation of 110 Apartments at the Property Known as Sustainable Fellwood-I, 1401 Fellwood Drive Located in Aldermanic District 1, Savannah, Chatham County, Georgia \(Housing Services\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: SAHF Sustainable Fellwood Resolution.pdf](#)

Ald. Palumbo moved to approve items #17, #18, and #19, seconded by Ald. Purtee. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

#### AGREEMENTS

[20. Authorize the City Manager to Accept a FY25 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant Award in the Amount of \\$500,000. \(WorkSource Coastal\) \(Continued to April 23, 2026\)](#)

Ald. Palumbo moved to continue/postpone item #20 until April 23, 2026 Council Meeting, seconded by Ald. Purtee. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

#### CITY ATTORNEY ITEMS

[21. Settlement #1](#)

Ald. Palumbo moved to approve Settlement #1, authorizing the City Attorney's Office to settle the claim (employee vehicle crash) of Rodney Floyd for \$37,000.00, seconded by Ald. Wilder.

The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

[22. Settlement #2](#)

Ald. Palumbo moved to approve Settlement #2, authorizing the City Attorney's Office to settle the claim (employee vehicle crash) of Olivia Martin for \$50,000.00, seconded by Ald. Wilder. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

[23. Authorize the City Manager to Approve a Major Subdivision, The Pines at New Hampstead, Phase 5B Located in Aldermanic District 5, New Hampstead Neighborhood. \(Development Services\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Plat of Major Subdivision, The Pines at New Hampstead, Phase 5B](#)

[Exhibit 2: MPC Approval Decision](#)

Ald. Palumbo moved to approve item #23, seconded by Ald. Lanier. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

[24. Authorize the City Manager to Approve a Major Subdivision, Williams Street Townhomes in Dale Terrace/Olympus/Victory Square Neighborhood Located in Aldermanic District 3. \(Development Services\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Plat of Major Subdivision: Williams Street Townhomes](#)

[Exhibit 2: MPC Approval Decision](#)

Ald. Wilder moved to approve item #24, seconded by Ald. Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Johnson was absent.

Following additional announcements made by the Mayor and Aldermen, Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz adjourned the regular meeting at 3:26 p.m.

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

The video recording of the meeting can be found by copying and inserting the link below in your URL:

<https://savannahgovtv.viebit.com/?folder=ALL>.

