



AUGUST 28, 2025 - 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 2:04 p.m., in Council Chambers. Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order, then introduced Pastor Derrick L. Grant, Sanctuary of Praise Christian Assembly to offer the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States was recited in unison. Mayor Johnson asked for everyone to keep the people of Minneapolis in their thoughts and prayers and he asked for a moment of silence due to the recent tragedy/shooting.

PRESENT:

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

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 August 28, 2025.](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to adopt/approve item # 1 as amended by Mayor Johnson to include unnamed presentations, seconded by Ald. Palumbo and Ald. Lanier. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES[2. Approval of the Minutes for the Work Session/Executive Session Held on August 14, 2025, at 11:00 a.m.](#)[Agenda Plus - WS DRAFT MINUTES August 14, 2025 City Council Workshop Meeting.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve agenda items #2, #3, and #4, seconded by Ald. Palumbo and Ald. Lanier. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[3. Approval of the Minutes for the Regular Meeting Held on August 14, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.](#)[Agenda Plus - RM DRAFT MINUTES August 14, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve agenda items #2, #3, and #4, seconded by Ald. Palumbo and Ald. Lanier. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[4. Approval of the Minutes for the Show Cause Hearing for Henry Street Bistro Held on August 14, 2025, at 6:52 p.m.](#)[Agenda Plus - SCM DRAFT MINUTES August 14, 2025 City Council Special Meeting.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve agenda items #2, #3, and #4, seconded by Ald. Palumbo and Ald. Lanier. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to authorize the Mayor to sign an affidavit/resolution that an executive session regarding personnel, real estate, and litigation was held following the work session on August 14, 2025, for which no vote was taken. All members were present for the executive session, including the City Manager, City Attorney, and Clerk of Council. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Ald. Wilder-Bryan was away from the dais during the vote.

PRESENTATIONS[5. Presentation and Acknowledgement of Savannah State University, Georgia Southern University and Savannah Technical College MOU Partnerships for the City of Savannah Bridge to Success Student Internship Program Inaugural Cohort.](#)

*Prior to the Bridge to Success Student Internship presentation, Mayor Johnson made a presentation to the Savannah Regional Central Labor Council (SRCLC) and proclaimed Monday, September 1, 2025, as Labor Day. Mayor Johnson was joined at the podium by SRCLC President Christi Hulme, who also spoke, and other members of Savannah Regional Central Labor Council, Amalgamated Transit Union-Local 1324 Chatham Area Transit, Carpon's Local 256, Savannah Federation of Teachers-Local 2069, American Federation of Musicians Local 447704, Retirees Unite For the Future (R.U.F.F.), American Federation of Teachers, and International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees-Local 491.

Mayor Johnson then asked the presidents of Savannah State University, Georgia Southern University, and Savannah Technical College to join him at the podium. Mayor Johnson, City Manager Melder, and Human Resources Director Jeff Grant presented and acknowledged the City of Savannah Bridge to Success Student Internship Program and a Memorandum of Understanding Partnerships to President Dr. Jermaine Whirl (SSU), Dr. Kyle Marrero (GSU), and Dr. Ryan Foley (STC), who each were present and spoke.

[6. Presentation of the Employee Engagement Team and Recognition of the 2025 2nd Quarter Employee of the Quarter Winners](#)

Mayor Johnson welcomed City Manager Melder, Employee Engagement Team Chair Kristina Chandler, and the members of the Employee Engagement Team to recognize the 2025 2nd Quarter Employee of the Quarter Winners:

- Brittney Kempson, Community Services, Moses Jackson Advancement Center
- Benjamin Mitchell, Government Operations, Park & Tree
- Jessica Primus, Information & Public Affairs, 311 Action Center
- Robert Mitchell, Management Services, Purchasing
- Zarina Davis, Planning & Urban Design
- Angela Kalb, Savannah Fire
- Dusean Williams, Savannah Police
- Tue Vu, Water Resources, Water, Planning, & Engineering

Following the presentation, Mayor Johnson recognized City Manager Melder to introduce the new Chief Operating Officer, Saesha Carlile, who will lead the Management Services Service Center.

Mayor Johnson also recognized the birthday of City Manager Melder, a party being held across the hall at the conclusion of the City Council Meeting.

ALCOHOL LICENSE HEARINGS - (CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ALL ITEMS IN THIS SECTION UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)

[7. Approval of a Class C \(Liquor, Beer, Wine\) Alcohol License with Sunday Sales to Maronda Pierce for Kim's Cafe Midtown, a Restaurant Located at 714 Martin Luther King Boulevard. The Establishment is Located between West Gwinnett and West Hall Streets in Aldermanic District 2.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Checklist - Kim's Cafe](#)

[Exhibit 2: Density Map - Kim's Cafe](#)

[Exhibit 3: Alcohol Reports - Kim's Cafe](#)

[Exhibit 4: Measurement Report - Kim's Cafe](#)

[Exhibit 5: Security Plan - Kim's Cafe](#)

Mayor Johnson declared the hearings open for agenda items #7 and #8.

No speaker(s).

a. Ald. Wilder-Bryan moved to close the alcohol license hearings for agenda items #7 and #8, seconded by Ald. Leggett. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

b. Ald. Leggett moved to approve agenda item #7, seconded by Ald. Miller Blakely and Ald. Wilder-Bryan. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[8. Approval of a Class C \(Liquor, Beer, Wine\) Alcohol License with Sunday Sale to Vasilis Varlagas for Olympia Cafe, a Restaurant, Located at 5 East River Street. The Establishment is Located Between Drayton Street and Abercorn Street Ramps in Aldermanic District 2. This is for a new manager/existing business.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Checklist - Olympia Cafe](#)

[Exhibit 2: Density Map - Olympia Cafe](#)

[Exhibit 3: Alcohol Reports - Olympia Cafe](#)

[Exhibit 4: Measurement Report - Olympia Cafe](#)

[Exhibit 5: Security Plan - Olympia Cafe](#)

Mayor Johnson declared the hearings open for agenda items #7 and #8.

No speaker(s).

a. Ald. Wilder-Bryan moved to close the alcohol license hearings for agenda items #7 and #8, seconded by Ald. Leggett. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

b. Ald. Leggett moved to approve agenda item #8, seconded by Ald. Wilder-Bryan. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

[9. Public Hearing on State-Mandated Annual Update to the Community Work Program Portion of the Capital Improvements Element \(Adopted by City Council in February 2023\), Which Amended the Chatham County-Savannah Comprehensive Plan \(Plan 2040\).](#)

[Exhibit 1: Draft FY24 Impact Fee Revenue by Public Service Facility.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Proposed Transmittal Resolution.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Draft of the Redlined Version of the Savannah Five-Year Community Work Program 2026-2030.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 4: Draft of the Savannah Five-Year Community Work Program 2026-2030.pdf](#)

Mayor Johnson declared the hearing open for agenda item #9.

No speaker(s).

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to close the public hearing for agenda item #9, seconded by Ald. Wilder-Bryan and Ald. Miller Blakely. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

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

[10. Petition of Hitendra Patel and Dipika Patel for a zoning map amendment of a ~0.76 acres at 1402 Stiles Avenue \(20068 09025\) from B-L \(Business Limited\) to B-N \(Neighborhood Business\) with Conditions in Aldermanic District 1 \(25-002835-ZA\).](#)

[Exhibit 1: MPC Recommendation Packet for 1402 Stiles Ave \(25-002835-ZA\).pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Combined Maps for 1402 Stiles Ave..pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Draft Ordinance for 1402 Stiles Avenue \(25-002835-ZA\) .pdf](#)

Ald. Lanier moved to approve agenda item #10, seconded by Ald. Miller Blakely. The motion passed, 5-4-0. Mayor Johnson, Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz, Ald. Leggett, and Ald. Wilder- Bryan voted no.

Ald. Lanier stated that she needed to mention she had received a message from a member of the Cloverdale leadership, expressing that the Cloverdale community was still not in favor of this ordinance. She stated that it (the ordinance) is not allowing an alcohol license, but it sets the path for someone to apply for an alcohol license, which we know is another process. Ald. Lanier stated that the abutting neighborhood where the property actually sits (the Carver Village Community) is in support of this measure.

Mayor Johnson stated that he wanted to reiterate that the Cloverdale Neighborhood Association was still against this. He expressed that once you have turned a non-conforming use into a conforming use, then the implications of that use go into the future, into eternity. And their concern is not necessarily this particular petition, but what happens when the zoning changes.

Ald. Lanier stated that it is correct (addressing Mayor Johnson's remarks), and that is why we placed some conditions in here (the ordinance) to sort of mitigate what they are able to do in this area.

[11. Petition of P. Bart Smith on behalf of Progressive One Realty, LLC for a Future Land Use Amendment of ~0.2 acres from Residential Suburban - Single Family to Commercial - Neighborhood at 1103 E. 69th Street \(20114 19002\) in Aldermanic District 3 \(25-003226-ZA\).](#)

[Exhibit 1: MPC Recommendation Packet for 1103 E 69th Street \(25-003226-ZA\).pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Combined Maps for 1103 E 69th St.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Draft Ordinance for 1103 E. 69th St FLUM \(25-003226-ZA\).pdf](#)

Ald. Wilder-Bryan moved to approve agenda item #11, seconded by Ald. Purtee. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

Ald. Wilder-Bryan stated that the problem she had was the drive-in in an already congested area. She said we had a lot of discussion about that, and the petitioner has been very gracious-- he is not seeking the drive-in component. Ald. Wilder-Bryan thanked Mr. Smith (the petitioner) for having extensive conversations in that community.

[12. Petition of P. Bart Smith on behalf of Progressive One Realty, LLC for a Zoning Map Amendment of 0.2 Acres from O-I \(Office-Institutional\) to B-N \(Neighborhood Business\) with Conditions at 1103 E. 69th Street \(20114 19002\) in Aldermanic District 3 \(25-003170-ZA\).](#)

[Exhibit 1: MPC Recommendation Packet for 1103 E 69th Street Rezoning \(25-003170-ZA\).pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Combined Maps for 1103 E 69th St.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Draft Ordinance for 1103 E 69th St \(25-003170-ZA\) .pdf](#)

Ald. Wilder-Bryan moved to approve agenda item #12, seconded by Mayor Johnson. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

Ald. Wilder-Bryan asked City Manager how to word this (the motion) since the petitioner has agreed (not to seek the drive-thru component). City Manager Melder stated the recommendation is to approve with three conditions, and all the following conditions are in the item as recommended:

1. The drive-thru component is be removed from the development plan, as the proposed stacking length does not meet the minimum 160 ft. requirement and is anticipated to create traffic congestion that may negatively affect circulation on adjacent neighborhood streets.
2. The rezoning is tied to the conceptual site configuration review through the zoning process.
3. The site plan must come back to the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) for the review process.

Ald. Wilder-Bryan stated that this is why she asked Mr. Smith (the petitioner) to come to the podium, because he said he was removing it from the site plan, and this is the first time a person (petitioner), based on your recommendations, said he was in agreement with that. She stated she does not want to approve the recommendations; we do not need the recommendations because they are pulling it. City Manager Melder stated he believed the

recommendations should still be in place. Mayor Johnson noted that the zoning still had to be approved. Ald. Wilder-Bryan moved to approve the petition with conditions from the city's recommendations, and with his statement saying that they have pulled it (the drive-thru) off of the restaurant's design. She stated for the record that it was a pleasure working with Mr. Smith, and while they did not agree on everything, he was not disagreeable.

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 \(27\) Mowers from John Deere c/o Beard Equipment in the Amount of \\$105,788. The \(27\) Mowers will be Purchased from Beard Equipment at the Dealer's Cost, with No Markup Included in the Purchase Price. \(Fleet Services\).](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Mower Buyout.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Mower Buyout.pdf](#)

Ald. Miller Blakely applauded the City Manager for purchasing the lawnmowers--it is going to save our taxpayers a lot of money. She stated she read in the summary that the lawnmowers would be resold. Ald. Miller Blakely asked the City Manager who the lawnmowers were going to be sold back to. And if the constituents can purchase them, how do you go about doing it? The City Manager stated that we sell them through GovDeals and he would provide information to the council so they can share with the public on how to see what is for sale on GovDeals. Ald. Miller Blakely asked if it is possible for us to provide these young people from our 100 Days of Summer program, who work in this program and want to become lawn care workers, with lawnmowers to learn how to repair them, or whatever the case may be — is something like that possible? City Manager Melder stated he will get back with Ald. Miller Blakely in two weeks with the possibilities.

[14. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for Rebuilding One Primary Clarifier in an Amount Not to Exceed \\$800,000. The Primary Clarifiers Play a Critical Role as the First Stage in the Wastewater Treatment Process. \(Water Reclamation\).](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification-Clarifier Rebuild](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Note-Clarifier Rebuild](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve agenda items #14, #15, and #17, seconded by Ald. Palumbo and Ald. Lanier. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[15. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for SCADA Annual Maintenance for Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System with Layer 3 Communications, LLC \(LOCAL\) in an Amount Not to Exceed \\$126,291. The Annual Maintenance Agreement Maintains the SCADA Network Utilized by the Industrial & Domestic Water Treatment Plant. \(Industrial & Domestic Treatment Plant\).](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - SCADA Network Maintenance.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - SCADA Network Maintenance.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve agenda items #14, #15, and #17, seconded by Ald. Palumbo and Ald. Lanier. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[16. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for the Reconstruction of Basketball Courts at 11 Neighborhood Parks throughout the City with Court Makers, Inc in an Amount Not to Exceed \\$252,870. These Outdoor Courts are Experiencing Significant Cracking, Surface Fading, and Equipment Deterioration Creating both Aesthetic and Safety Concerns. \(Recreation and Leisure Services\).](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Reconstruction of Athletic Courts.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Reconstruction of Athletic Courts.pdf](#)

Mayor Johnson stated that when he was the First District Alderman, they used a portion of the SPLOST funds for districts. He chose to refurbish the basketball courts throughout his district. He stated that these courts are heavily used by young people. We want them to be outside, to play, and to be engaged; therefore, the courts should represent something that the neighborhood, more importantly, the young people want to play on and that is fun. Mayor Johnson stated he would love to get to the point where we have something that is a little easier on the knees. He thanked the City Manager and our Recreation Re-Imagined for continuing to make sure that we are not waiting until they are beyond repair, to keep them up, and maintain them. Mayor Johnson stated the only question would have been is when does this occur? (The work will begin in late October and will be finished by the end of the year.)

Ald. Lanier stated that when staff came forth with the recommendations for the resurfacing, there were some other things being requested and considered around the parks. Ald. Lanier stated she wanted to say something about Hudson Hill Park. She stated that not only the residents, but the leadership was a little bit concerned about some safety issues around the

park. With the basketball courts being directly against the street and sidewalk, they had been requesting some safety fencing for both the basketball court and the playground area, which is also abutting the street. Ald. Lanier stated we are going to be able to do the resurfacing of the basketball court, the replacement of the hardware, and, in addition, staff is going to be able to take care of those two critical areas where the ball keeps rolling into the streets or where the kids might dash into the street near the basketball court and the playground. Ald. Lanier stated that the upgrading of the basketball courts adds to the aesthetics, and it is always a welcomed community asset to do this type of work. It does something psychologically when we keep those courts and equipment up, but to take care of that safety issue in the process, she wanted to thank the staff for doing that work.

Mayor Johnson stated that he would be really interested in us ultimately selecting a few sites where basketball courts are covered. It is covered to a point where you are not playing necessarily in the heat of the day. He further stated that it might be a really good pilot, and it might also help maintain the courts for a longer period of time. Mayor Johnson added that years ago, he used to work with the communities to help determine the colors that kind of went along with the neighborhood's style. He stated, hopefully, it (the basketball courts) will be reflective of those communities and help them take ownership of it.

[17. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract with Christaline LLC for the Reconstruction of Tennis Courts at Bacon Park in an Amount Not to Exceed \\$148,240. The 16-court facility is One of the City's Most Actively Used Recreation Assets and Experiencing Significant Cracking, Surface Fading, and Equipment Deterioration Creating both Aesthetic and Safety Concerns. \(Recreation and Leisure Services\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Reconstruction of Tennis Courts.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Reconstruction of Tennis Courts.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve agenda items #14, #15, and #17, seconded by Ald. Palumbo and Ald. Lanier. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

Ald. Wilder-Bryan stated she wanted to reiterate that we have been promising the people on the southside of the Third District a place, not a gymnasium, but a meeting place like they have at the park. She stated to please consider this as a part of our budgeting this year for an attachment because there is a lot of activity on the court over there, and we want to use that empty space/land in Bacon Park. Ald. Wilder-Bryan stated that we are still requesting that we have a meeting place for our seniors and our community people over on that side.

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

[18. Public Hearing on State-Mandated Annual Update to the Community Work Program Portion of the Capital Improvements Element \(Adopted by City Council in February 2023\), Which Amended the Chatham County-Savannah Comprehensive Plan \(Plan 2040\).](#)

[Exhibit 1: Draft FY24 Impact Fee Revenue by Public Service Facility.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Proposed Transmittal Resolution.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Draft of the Redlined Version of the Savannah Five-Year Community Work Program 2026-2030.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 4: Draft of the Savannah Five-Year Community Work Program 2026-2030.pdf](#)

Ald. Palumbo moved to approve agenda item #18, seconded by Ald. Lanier. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

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

[19. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Lease/Use Agreement with the Federal Bureau of Investigation for Telecommunications Space on the City Telecommunication Tower Located at 1801 Kerry Street.](#)

[Exhibit 1 - Map - FBI - 1801 Kerry Street.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2 - FBI BOA-signed.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve agenda item #19, seconded by Ald. Leggett and Ald. Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

MISCELLANEOUS

[20. Authorize the Approval of a Major Subdivision Named Camellia Trail Subdivision. The Subject Property is Located Near the Intersection of Montgomery Cross Road and Hodgson Memorial Drive. This Proposed Subdivision Totals 1.72 Acres and will Consist of 9 Single-Family Lots with Varying Lot Sizes. The Property is Between Eugene & Dennis Streets in Aldermanic District 4.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Plat-Major Subdivision Camelia Trail..pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Vicinity Map..pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: MPC approval recommendation.pdf](#)

Ald. Wilder-Bryan moved to approve agenda item #20, seconded by Ald. Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[21. Authorize Supplemental Budget Appropriations to Fiscal Year 2025 Operating and Capital Improvement Program.](#)
[Exhibit 1; FY25 Q2 Budget Amendment.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve agenda item #21, seconded by Ald. Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[22. Approval to Remit the Savannah Airport Commission's Committed Funding to the 2033 Strategic Initiative, in the Amount of \\$250,000. Added Item](#)

Ald. Wilder-Bryan moved to approve agenda item #22, seconded by Ald. Palumbo and Ald. Leggett. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

Following announcements made by the Mayor and Alderman, Mayor Johnson adjourned the regular meeting at 3:28 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>.

