



JULY 9, 2026 - 6:01 p.m. - SPECIAL CALLED MEETING

CITY GOVERNMENT

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

The special called meeting of the City Council was held at **6:04 p.m.**, in Council Chambers.

PRESENT:

Mayor Van R. Johnson, II
Alderwoman Carolyn H. Bell, At-Large, Post 1
Alderwoman Alicia Miller Blakely, At-Large, Post 2
Alderwoman Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1
Alderman Detric Leggett, District 2
Alderwoman Linda Wilder, District 3 - Vice Chair
Alderman Nick Palumbo, District 4 - Chairman
Alderwoman 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

Special Meeting Agenda Items

[1. Public Hearing on 2026 Property Tax Millage Rate](#)

[Exhibit 1: State of Georgia Notice of Tax Increase.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: 2026 Tax Digest and Five Year History.pdf](#)

Mayor Johnson explained that the 2026 rollback rate was 11.402 mills, and because the proposed property millage rate of 11.749 mills was higher than the rollback rate, the Georgia law requires the City to advertise it as a property tax increase. He further explained that the proposed millage is the same millage rate from last year which was 11.749 mills. Mayor

Johnson provided an example of how the proposed millage rate may affect property owners who do not qualify for the Stephens Day exemption.

Mayor Johnson stated state law requires three public hearings before the City can adopt a millage rate above the rollback rate. Those hearings give residents the opportunity to share their comments before the Mayor and Aldermen take action. The public hearing schedule is as follows:

- Today at 6:01 p.m.
- August 13, 2026, at 11:00 a.m.
- August 13, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.

All the hearings will be held in the City Council Chambers at Savannah City Hall, 2 E. Bay Street. Mayor Johnson provided residents with instructions on how they could provide their comments: in-person at one of the hearings, by submitting a written comment to Mark Massey at ClerkofCouncil@savannahga.gov, or by calling 912-651-6441.

Mayor Johnson declared the hearing on at 6:07 p.m., and asked if there was anyone that wanted to speak to the Council regarding the millage rate that is being proposed. There were no speakers.

Ald. Leggett moved to close the hearing, seconded by Ald. Wilder, Ald. Lanier, and Ald. Miller Blakely. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the special called meeting at 6:08 p.m. No action was taken.

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: _____

Signature: _____

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

<https://www.youtube.com/@cityofsavannah/videos>

