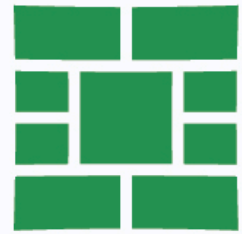


# SAVANNAH

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**MARCH 26, 2026 - 6:01 p.m. - SPECIAL CALLED MEETING**

**CITY GOVERNMENT**

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN**

**SAVANNAH, GEORGIA**

The Special Called Meeting was held at **6:08 p.m.**, in the Council Chambers. Mayor Johnson, called the meeting to order.

**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-Bryan, 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  
 Assistant City Attorney Tara Hicks  
 Clerk of Council Mark Massey  
 Deputy Clerk of Council Gwendolyn Jones

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

[1. Public Hearing to Initiate Condemnation Proceedings to Remedy Blight through Acquisition of Real Property Located at 2309 Burroughs Street in Aldermanic District 1 and Subsequent Transfer to Return the Property to Productive Residential Use.](#)

Mayor Johnson declared the public hearings open for agenda items #1, #2, #3, and #4. See related agenda items #7, #8, #9, and #10.

Speaker(s):

- Gloria Williams, Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association -- IN SUPPORT

Ald. Purtee moved to close the public hearings for agenda items #1, #2, #3, and #4, seconded by Ald. Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[2. Public Hearing to Initiate Condemnation Proceedings to Remedy Blight through Acquisition of Real Property Located at 2310 Burroughs Street in Aldermanic District 1 and Subsequent Transfer to Return the Property to Productive Residential Use.](#)

Mayor Johnson declared the public hearings open for agenda items #1, #2, #3, and #4. See related agenda items #7, #8, #9, and #10.

Speaker(s):

- Gloria Williams, Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association -- IN SUPPORT

Ald. Purtee moved to close the public hearings for agenda items #1, #2, #3, and #4, seconded by Ald. Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[3. Public Hearing to Initiate Condemnation Proceedings to Remedy Blight through Acquisition of Real Property Located at 2308 Burroughs Street in Aldermanic District 1 and Subsequent Transfer to Return the Property to Productive Residential Use.](#)

Mayor Johnson declared the public hearings open for agenda items #1, #2, #3, and #4. See related agenda items #7, #8, #9, and #10.

Speaker(s):

- Gloria Williams, Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association -- IN SUPPORT

Ald. Purtee moved to close the public hearings for agenda items #1, #2, #3, and #4, seconded by Ald. Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[4. Public Hearing to Initiate Condemnation Proceedings to Remedy Blight through Acquisition of Real Property Located at 514 West Victory Drive in Aldermanic District 1 and Subsequent Transfer to Return the Property to Productive Residential Use.](#)

Mayor Johnson declared the public hearings open for agenda items #1, #2, #3, and #4. See related agenda items #7, #8, #9, and #10.

Speaker(s):

- Gloria Williams, Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association -- IN SUPPORT

Ald. Purtee moved to close the public hearings for agenda items #1, #2, #3, and #4, seconded by Ald. Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[5. Public Hearing to Initiate Condemnation Proceedings to Remedy Blight through Acquisition of Real Property Located at 2210 Burroughs Street in Aldermanic District 1 and Subsequent Transfer to Return the Property to Productive Residential Use.](#)

Mayor Johnson declared the public hearings open for agenda items #5 and #6. See related agenda items #11 and #12.

Speaker(s):

- Attorney Keri Martin, Representative for property owners -- OPPOSED, requested temporary forbearance.

Ald. Wilder-Bryan moved to close the public hearings for agenda items #5 and #6, seconded by Ald. Leggett. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz was absent during the vote.

Mayor Johnson asked Ms. Martin if she disputed any of the conditions: uninhabitable, unsafe, or abandoned property, the code violations, or the conduciveness to crime in proximity to the property. He stated his concern was that, in asking for grace, that means you are asking for the council to ask the people of Cuyler-Brownsville to continue to live in the proximity of these eyesores every single day and to continue to deal with the vegetation, the vagrancy, the rodents, and other types of things that occur there. Mayor Johnson stated this was multiple years of people that he represented directly, and now Alderwoman Lanier represents, who have been asking for a way to address the things they do not control. He asked where the grace was for them.

Ald. Wilder-Bryan stated that, evidently, the company had been involved in some sort of scam. She stated that she could not see how she could sit there and say the council is going to give you (the property owner) more grace than the people who actually have to live in these conditions. Ald. Wilder-Bryan asked for clarity by asking if Ms. Martin wanted the council to stop so that the people she represented could get their ducks in a row so that they could do what they needed to do with the property that they purchased. She stated that the process that Ms. Martin requested was really unfair, and while it was a public hearing and Ms. Martin got to advocate for her client, the council has to advocate for the citizens in this city.

Mayor Johnson asked for clarification on whether Ms. Martin would also have the opportunity to go before the Superior Court, and if there are legal issues that need unraveling, those could also be addressed in a legal fashion in the court. (Yes)

Ald. Lanier stated these properties are blighted and have become a nuisance in this community for quite some time. She stated that the council has to decide if we want to continue to have code compliance, the police department, and the fire department to continue to go out and address these blighted properties. Ald. Lanier asked, "Should we, in a community that is making a huge investment in uplifting the community, continue to hold their hand while they (the property owner) go through this financial argument?" She stated that it is not for us to do; the court is going to decide that. Ald. Lanier asked if she was assuming correctly that everything else would be decided by the Superior Court where it should be decided as far as the monies. (Yes, correct.)

Ald. Miller Blakely asked, once this process goes into the courts and the courts decide what is going to happen, are we going to just take the property and the property owner gets nothing back? She further asked if the City would have control of that property should the council agree with the resolution. Assistant City Attorney Hicks responded.

Ald. Palumbo asked the City Attorney if there was anything legally stopping the owner from restoring the property today. He then asked Ms. Martin, "Why hasn't your client, begun working on the property or restoring the property today?" Ald. Palumbo stated our attorney's office has indicated that there was nothing stopping the property owner from improving it today. They have taken a risk on this property, and once you enter into the City of Savannah, you enter into a social contract with us that you will do as we do to take care of the neighborhoods that we have pride in. Ald. Palumbo stated to Ms. Martin that there is nothing stopping your client from jumping in the truck today and starting work today. He expressed he found our code compliance department and the court system very lenient to anyone who is actively working on their property. Ald. Palumbo recommended to Ms. Martin's clients, with a disclaimer that this was not legal advice, that the timeline is before them, and the Superior Court is ahead of us, and a demonstration of active work on the property may change the game.

Mayor Johnson stated to Ms. Martin that she certainly put forth the most effective case she could for her client. Mayor Johnson stated every day we lose credibility we cannot get back. He stated that he thinks this council and this city are just saying that at some point, enough is enough. We are sending a very clear message that we are not dealing with problems like this any longer.

[6. Public Hearing to Initiate Condemnation Proceedings to Remedy Blight through Acquisition of Real Property Located at 2308 Florance Street in Aldermanic District 1 and Subsequent Transfer to Return the Property to Productive Residential Use.](#)

See related agenda item #5.

#### RESOLUTIONS

[7. Resolutions Authorizing the City Manager to Initiate Condemnation Proceedings to Remedy Blight through Acquisition of 2309 Burroughs Street in Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood, and Subsequent Transfer to Return the Property to Productive Residential Use, As Specifically Outlined in the Description and Attached Authorizing Resolutions.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Resolution 2309 Burroughs Eminent Domain.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Resolution 2309 Burroughs Disposition.pdf](#)

Ald. Wilder-Bryan moved to approve item #7, seconded by Ald. Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[8. Resolutions Authorizing the City Manager to Initiate Condemnation Proceedings to Remedy Blight through Acquisition of 2310 Burroughs Steet in Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood, and Subsequent Transfer to Return the Property to Productive Residential Use, As Specifically Outlined in the Description and Attached](#)

[Authorizing Resolutions.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Resolution 2310 Burroughs Eminent Domain.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Resolution 2310 Burroughs Disposition.pdf](#)

Ald. Purtee moved to approve item #8, seconded by Ald. Palumbo and Ald. Wilder-Bryan. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[9. Resolutions Authorizing the City Manager to Initiate Condemnation Proceedings to Remedy Blight through Acquisition of 2308 Burroughs Street in Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood, and Subsequent Transfer to Return the Property to Productive Residential Use, As Specifically Outlined in the Description and Attached Authorizing Resolutions.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Resolution 2308 Burroughs Eminent Domain.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Resolution 2308 Burroughs Disposition.pdf](#)

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

[10. Resolutions Authorizing the City Manager to Initiate Condemnation Proceedings to Remedy Blight through Acquisition of 514 West Victory Drive in Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood, and Subsequent Transfer to Return the Property to Productive Residential Use, As Specifically Outlined in the Description and Attached Authorizing Resolutions.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Resolution 514 W Victory Eminent Domain.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Resolution 514 W Victory Disposition.pdf](#)

Ald. Bell moved to approve item #10, seconded by Ald. Palumbo and Ald. Wilder-Bryan. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[11. Resolutions Authorizing the City Manager to Initiate Condemnation Proceedings to Remedy Blight through Acquisition of 2210 Burroughs Street in Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood, and Subsequent Transfer to Return the Property to Productive Residential Use, As Specifically Outlined in the Description and Attached Authorizing Resolutions.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Resolution 2210 Burroughs Eminent Domain.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Resolution 2210 Burroughs Disposition.pdf](#)

Ald. Lanier moved to approve item #11, seconded by Ald. Palumbo and Ald. Wilder-Bryan. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-1. Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz was absent during the vote.

[12. Resolutions Authorizing the City Manager to Initiate Condemnation Proceedings to Remedy Blight through Acquisition of 2308 Florance Street in Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood, and Subsequent Transfer to Return the Property to Productive Residential Use, As Specifically Outlined in the Description and Attached Authorizing Resolutions.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Resolution 2308 Florance Eminent Domain.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Resolution 2308 Florance Disposition.pdf](#)

Ald. Lanier moved to approve item #12, seconded by Ald. Palumbo and Ald. Wilder-Bryan. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-1. Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz was absent during the vote.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the special called meeting at 6:57 p.m.

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>

