



**MAY 8, 2025 - 11:30 a.m. - WORKSHOP and CITY MANAGER'S BRIEFING**

**CITY GOVERNMENT**

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN**

**SAVANNAH, GEORGIA**

The work session and City Manager’s briefing was held at **11:35 a.m.**, in the SCCPSS Board of Education Room located at the Eli Whitney Administrative Complex, 2 Laura Avenue, Building G. **Mayor Johnson** called the meeting to order. **Alderman Purtee** offered a prayer.

**PRESENT:**

- Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding
- 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
- Chief of Staff Daphanie Williams
- City Attorney Bates Lovett
- Clerk of Council Mark Massey
- Assistant to Clerk of Council Renee Osborne

**Workshop Agenda Items**

**1. SPLOST 8**

[Exhibit 1: 050825 SPLOST 8 City Council Workshop.pptx](#)

Mayor Johnson stated that City Manager Melder would have a presentation on SPLOST 8. Mayor Johnson also stated that SPLOST (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) has served each of us in some way since 1985. The Mayor and City Manager recently attended a meeting with officials from other municipalities of Chatham County regarding SPLOST. He stated that we had two choices to discuss, a) if we plan to move forward with SPLOST 8, and b) what we can do to adhere to the timeline. The Mayor stated that the timeline is tight to be on the ballot for

November 4, 2025. Mayor Johnson also publicly thanked City Manager Melder for taking the lead on this project by creating a starting point. According to the SPLOST 8 Summary page there was an estimate of what each jurisdiction would receive. Savannah's share could potentially be approximately \$261M using the current SPLOST allocation.

Mayor Johnson thanked City Manager Melder for the presentation and asked for a specific deadline. The deadline was determined to be Thursday, May 15, 2025, by close of business. The format for the feedback must be in writing via email.

Ald. Wilder-Bryan thanked the City Manager for his presentation. She stated that Council did all that they could do, but she was disappointed that (all districts) only 533 surveys were completed. Every district was given the opportunity to share their complaints and concerns. Ald. Wilder-Bryan also stated that she is encouraged that the \$25M will stay on the list for Skidaway Road improvement.

Ald. Lanier asked about the I-16 Flyover Removal Project; who was the driving force behind the emergency and impetus for this project? The community did not embrace it in the past. She stated that we cannot continue to create division between communities like SCAD and Brickyard. Our priorities have since changed. She disagreed with spending this kind of money in this economy. The funds could be better utilized. However, it was supported by Council and other community leaders, with prior allocations that were designated towards the project. Ald. Lanier stated that she believed that the process associated with this project should be reconsidered and that advocates be permitted the opportunity to make a case at this point.

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz stated there was a typo on the draft projects list - Mills B. Lane and Liberty City Parkway Culvert should be District 5 instead of 2.

Mayor Johnson stated to Council that it is a starting point and reminded them to have their information to City Manager Melder by the following Thursday in writing.

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to close the meeting for an Executive Session regarding Personnel, Litigation, and Real Estate, seconded by Ald. Leggett. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[2. Closed Executive Session Regarding Personnel, Real Estate, and Litigation](#)

Employee reviews for the Clerk of Council, City Attorney, and City Manager began at 12:08 p.m., and ended at 1:45 p.m. All City Council members were present. Each appointee attended their portion only.

No action was taken during the executive session, and both meetings were adjourned at 1:45 p.m., upon its conclusion.

[3. City Manager's Update](#)

There was no update.

There was no action taken during the Workshop. Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at 1:45 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>