CITY OF MABLETON, GEORGIA

Riverside EpiCenter
135 Riverside Pkwy, Austell, GA 30168
December 8, 2025 at 6:00 PM

The Honorable Michael Owens, Mayor
The Honorable Ron Davis, District 1 Councilmember
The Honorable Michael McNeely, District 2 Councilmember
The Honorable Keisha Jeffcoat, Mayor Pro Tem/District 3 Councilmember
The Honorable Cassandra Brown, District 4 Councilmember
The Honorable TJ Ferguson, District 5 Councilmember
The Honorable Debora Herndon, District 6 Councilmember

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Owens called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

City Clerk Hiott conducted the roll call and a quorum was present. Councilmember Davis arrived shortly after roll call.

3. INVOCATION

City Manager Tanks led the Invocation.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember Brown led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. APPOINTMENTS

a. Appointment to the License Review Board and Administration of Oath - Mayor Owens

Mayor Owens administered the Oath of Office to his appointee, Andres Herazo. He provided a brief overview of the Board and its importance. Mayor Owens confirmed that, because Mr. Herazo is a new appointee and not a replacement, a vote is required.

Motion made by Councilmember Ferguson to approve the recommendation of appointment by Mayor Owens of Andres Herazo to the License Review Board. Councilmember Brown seconded the motion. The motion carried 7-0.

Mayor Owens thanked Mr.Herazo for his commitment to service. City Clerk Hiott reminded Council that if anyone has a pending appointment, there is an item on the regular meeting agenda to do so. Councilmember Ferguson confirmed that all individuals submitted for appointment have been sworn in. City Clerk Hiott confirmed.

Mayor Owens confirmed that there is one vacancy for District 6 on this board, and that

Councilmembers McNeely and Brown will need to make their appointments. City Clerk Hiott confirmed with the City Attorney that any individual being reappointed will be required to retake the oath. Attorney Walker-Ashby confirmed.

6. PRESENTATIONS

7. AGENDA ITEMS AND DISCUSSION

a. A Resolution Approving The Municipal Court of Mableton Fee Schedule — Court Administrator Mallory Minor

Mayor Owens recognized Court Administrator Mallory Minor, who shared details of a tragic event that occurred in the City of Tifton and asked for prayers.

She continued with the presentation of a resolution supporting the approval of the municipal court fee schedule, which authorizes the Municipal Court to recommend fees to Council to help offset the court's operational costs. The fee schedule and resolution are included in the agenda packet for the record.

Mayor Owens asked what forms of payment would be accepted. Administrator Minor stated that credit cards (online) or money orders would be accepted, but not cash. She pointed out the difference between the administrative fee schedule and the fine fee schedule, and noted that a separate resolution regarding the City's citation fees would be brought before Council at a later date.

Councilmember Jeffcoat asked if this list is exhausted of the fees and if there would be a processing fee. Administrator Minor noted that there is a nominal fee for credit card processing, but she will defer to the Finance Department. She negotiated a fee with Justice One for a 4% fee in office and 6% fee out of office for processing payments.

Councilmember Herndon asked for clarification on the Open Records fee. Administrator Minor explained that the court encourages e-copies and provided the fee for those. She further clarified other proposed fees, highlighting several, including the fee for copies of citations, certified copies, contempt fee, failure-to-appear fee, disposition fee, and warrant fee.

Administrator Minor noted that the Municipal Court will offer criminal background checks and that all staff will be GCIC certified to perform these checks. She also mentioned that the court will eventually provide an opportunity to educate offenders as a means of addressing specific citations, with an associated fee.

Councilmember Herndon asked whether an individual already certified as a notary in Cobb County would need to be certified by the City if they live within city limits. Administrator Minor clarified that notary applications are always approved by Cobb Superior Court, but a city notary license may be required in specific cases.

Councilmember Brown asked whether the fees are standardized across cities. Administrator Minor confirmed that the fees are not only aligned with the standard but are lower. Councilmember Herndon requested clarification on the charging of fees for Open Records requests, specifically for records that require more than the allotted 15 minutes to process.

Administrator Minor elaborated.

b. A Resolution to Adopt a Records Retention Policy and Official Judicial Branch Record Retention Schedules for the Municipal Court of Mableton - Court Administrator Mallory Minor

Administrator Minor explained that this item is a resolution to adopt a records' retention policy along with an additional judicial branch retention schedule. This schedule is used by every court in Georgia, published by the Judicial Council of Georgia and the Administrative Office of the Courts, and is compliant with ALC rules and the Supreme Court of Georgia. She also noted that next year a webinar will be held with the Georgia Archives, that will allow the public to ask questions.

Mayor Owens encouraged the adoption of paperless operations. Administrator Minor explained that paper may still be necessary in certain instances, specifically for citations. Mayor Owens tasked City Manager Tanks with ensuring that paper usage is minimized. Administrator Minor confirmed that the Court’s software is capable of going paperless and allows documents to be signed electronically, noting that the only paper required would be for citations, which can also be digitized at a later date.

Councilmember Ferguson asked about the microfilm format and the reader printer language within the resolution (Item #3). Administrator Minor explained that the language may refer to the Superior Court and should not be required of the Municipal Court.

c. Municipal Court Smart Safe LOOMIS Safepoint Agreement - Court Administrator Mallory Minor

Administrator Minor introduced the Loomis Safepoint Agreement, a secure automated management software system designed to streamline the daily cash handling operations of the Municipal Court. She noted that a company representative would present to the Council at the January 6th meeting. The agreement has been reviewed by the City Attorney and is expected to cost $349.26 per month. She highlighted the system’s enhanced security features, including the ability to run tills accurately, make real-time deposits, and have the contracted service handle weekly bank runs.

Councilmember Ferguson asked whether the agreement is annual or month-to-month. Minor explained that payments are made monthly, but the agreement spans one year. Mayor Owens noted that the agreement does not specify a term, but it allows termination with 90 days’ notice. Administrator Minor stated that she will confirm the term for the January 6th meeting. The City Attorney confirmed that she has reviewed the agreement.

d. Agreement for the Rendition of Services of Solicitor for the Municipal Court of Mableton, Georgia - Court Administrator Mallory Minor

At the recommendation of the City Attorney, Council will discuss this item in Executive Session. Administrator Minor noted that Solicitor Flynn Brodey was present. This item was added to the Consent Agenda for the Dec 10th regular meeting.

e. PTO New Hire Resolution - Human Resources Director Jeanne Pope

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Director Pope, who provided the presentation and thanked the Mayor, Council, and residents for their time.

Director Pope explained the proposed Advanced PTO Policy, noting that its goal is to remain attractive —not just competitive—while supporting work-life balance. She outlined the process, stating that non-directorial staff will receive up to 40 hours of advanced PTO, while directorial staff will receive 80 hours of advanced PTO applied retroactively. She clarified that the advanced PTO is separate from accrued PTO.

Director Pope further explained that employees must remain employed for one year to avoid repayment of advanced PTO. She noted that there will be oversight and required authorization from the employee's department director. She explained the process for forfeiture of an advanced PTO. She noted that the policy will be added to the employee handbook and has been reviewed by the City Attorney. She highlighted that there is little to no fiscal impact and requested that this item be placed on the consent agenda for the Wednesday regular meeting.

Mayor Owens asked whether the policy would impact start dates for new hires and asked about consistent start dates or cohorts. Director Pope confirmed that there are established start dates for orientation. Councilmember Ferguson asked whether the annual accrued PTO would change, and Director Pope stated that it would not. He also asked whether the policy applies only to salaried positions, and she confirmed that it applies to all full-time employees.

Councilmember Jeffcoat asked whether the advanced PTO would roll over, and Director Pope confirmed that it could, noting that up to 480 hours of PTO can be rolled over. Councilmember Brown asked whether the accrued PTO also rolls over, and Director Pope confirmed that it does. Councilmember Herndon asked if an advanced PTO is in addition to an accrued PTO, and Director Pope confirmed that it applies only to new hires and serves as a safety net. Councilmember McNeely asked whether a PTO donation option would be available. Director Pope explained that this option will be implemented with the new payroll system and will require an application process.

City Manager Tanks clarified that the 480-hour rollover applies over the course of an employee's career, and Director Pope noted that this is in accordance with FMLA. Director Pope requested that this item be placed on the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Ferguson asked whether the policy would be shared publicly for recruiting purposes, and Director Pope confirmed that the information will be included in recruitment efforts.

f. Communications Policies - Communications Director Gregory Woods

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Director Woods. Director Woods reviewed the first cohort of policies for the City's internal and external communications. The presentation is available on record.

The policies included are as follows:
1. Records Management & Archiving
2. Photography & Videography Release Policy
3. Photo & Video Release Form
4. Newsletter Policy (Email & SMS)
5. Comment Moderation & Terms of Use
6. Social Media Policy
7. Video & Photo Settings Guideline
8. Website Governance & Content Management
9. Department Request Workflows (SOP)

He noted that these policies set a standard for:
- Public Records: Retention, archiving, and GORA compliance
- Content Rights: Required releases and media ownership
- Digital Outreach: Email, SMS, and subscriber management
- Public Interaction: Viewpoint-neutral comment moderation
- Platform Governance: Social media, website publishing, and ADA accessibility
- Department Operations: How communications requests are submitted and prioritized

Director Woods requested that this item be placed on the Consent Agenda for the Regular Meeting. Mayor Owens opened the floor for Council questions. Councilmember Ferguson requested clarification on the approval process for publishing, specifically which types of publications require approval and through which process. Director Woods explained that all published materials will follow a “two sets of eyes” policy, which includes review by a department head or a member of the Communications Department. She also noted that the policy will be updated to include a specific list of publications requiring approval from the City Manager.

Councilmember Ferguson also asked about the draft status of the policy. City Attorney Walker-Ashby confirmed that it is standard practice for all departments to keep policies in draft form until they receive official approval from Council.

g. Resolution to Adopt FY 2026-2027 City Wide Fee Schedule - Administrative Supervisor Lily Smith

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Supervisor Smith. Mrs. Smith provided an overview of the resolution to approve the FY 2026–2027 City fee schedule. She explained that this is a formal process to create a comprehensive, centralized schedule of all City fees and noted that all fees included have been previously approved. She requested that the item be placed on the Consent Agenda if approved.

Mayor Owens noted that it is a common practice among municipalities to consolidate fees—excluding court fees—into a single location. He clarified that the resolution does not change the existing fee structure but streamlines it. He confirmed that the item will be placed on the Consent Agenda for the Wednesday regular meeting.

h. First Read - An Ordinance Amending the 2024-25 Spending Plan/Budget of the City of Mableton and for Other Lawful Purposes - Finance Director Karen Ellis

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Director Ellis. She noted that the FY 2024–2025 spending plan was adopted in September 2024 as the first semi-budget established prior to the City's transition. While the plan supported certain assumptions, it did not fully account for actual expenditures. This routine amendment is intended to align the City's fiscal year with actual outcomes for audit purposes. Director Ellis highlighted that the net effect on the City's budget is zero, as funds were reallocated from other surplus areas. She detailed all necessary amendments to include the following:

Revenue Amendments: (approximate)

- TAVT Tax – decreased from 3.3 mill to 2.9 mill
- Franchise Tax for Electric – decreased from 2.7 mill to 1.8 mill
- Natural Gas – decreased from 749k to 555k
- TV – increased 190k (previously not accounted for)
- Business Occupational Tax – increased from 1.4 mil to 2.6 mil
- Business and Sign Permits – decreased from 1.2 mil to 299k
- SWB Charges – increased 275k (previously not accounted for)
- Interest Revenue – increased 75k (previously not accounted for)

Expenditure Amendments: (approximate)

- Risk Management – increased 17k (previously not accounted for)
- Facilities – increased from 810k to 1.2 mil
- General Administration – increased 30k (previously not accounted for)
- Parks & Recreation – decreased from 1.8 mil to 1.1 mil
- Economic Development – increased 20k (previously not accounted for)
- Data Processing/IT – decreased from 932k to 475k

Director Ellis provided a brief explanation for each category increase or decrease. Councilmember Herndon noted that the total revenue amendment should be $681,000, but it was currently listed as $756,000. Director Ellis acknowledged the error and stated that the figures would be updated to reflect the correct amount. Accordingly, the Parks and Recreation category will be revised to read "from $1,816,854 to $1,135,854, a decrease of $681,000," which will balance.

Councilmember Jeffcoat requested clarification regarding the decrease in the Parks and Recreation category. Director Ellis explained that the reduction was due to vacancies in salaries and technology expenditures.

Mayor Owens asked about the increase in Business and Sign Permits. Director Ellis provided an explanation. Councilmember Ferguson asked about the General Fund and how court and other fees are reflected. Director Ellis noted that those amounts will be adjusted either through a mid-year budget amendment for FY 2026 or at the end of the fiscal year to reflect actual figures.

i. Presentation on the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) - Code Enforcement - Jerry Silver, Code Enforcement Supervisor

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Code Enforcement Supervisor Jerry Silver. City Attorney Walker-Ashby clarified that this item is not a First Read but a discussion. Mr. Silver provided a presentation reviewing the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC), including:

- Adoption process & Legal Principles under the Fourth Amendment
- Enforcement Authority & Procedures
- Notices of Violations & Ethics

Supervisor Silver highlighted that the goal of the IPMC is to achieve compliance. Mayor Owens asked how it differs from current procedures. Supervisor Silver explained that the code allows enforcement to take additional steps to ensure compliance, including inspections inside properties. He confirmed that this is a standard process. Supervisor Silver noted that this process will allow the City to clarify the IPMC already in place, providing residents with a better understanding of expectations. Mayor Owens asked whether a change to the code would require an update to the Ordinance, and City Attorney Walker-Ashby confirmed that any change would require an amendment.

Councilmember Ferguson requested clarification on “windshield cases,” in which violations are issued to residents without direct contact. He also asked how responsibility is determined between the resident and other local entities. Supervisor Silver explained the process used to determine responsibility in such cases.

Councilmember Brown asked how this process would allow Code Enforcement to enter a property to determine a deficiency. Supervisor Silver explained that the tenant would provide access to Code Enforcement officers to observe the issue, after which a citation would be issued to the property owner. Councilmember Brown noted the connection to the recently passed Safe and Healthy Residence Ordinance. City Manager Tanks highlighted that this process will close loopholes and allow the City to pursue violations through adjudication. City Attorney Walker-Ashby noted that the item will return to the Council after she and Supervisor Silver finalize the specifications to be included.

Councilmember Herndon asked if this would be an appendix to the City’s Ordinance. City Attorney Walker-Ashby explained that the adoption would clarify existing regulations, reduce ambiguity, and streamline reference to the IPMC, which is already included in the City’s technical codes. She noted that subsection 8.3.1.1 references “technical codes,” which includes the IPMC, but the public often does not review the specific code noted in the definition.

City Manager Tanks recognized Court Administrator Minor, who requested that the version of the code used be referenced in the ordinance. City Attorney Walker-Ashby confirmed.

j. REZ-2025-004 - 6851 Queen Mill Road (Tax Parcel 18040500240) - Request to rezone 4.0-acre parcel from R-20 to R-15 for the development of seven (7) single-family detached homes - (First Read) - Community Development Director Michael Hughes

Mayor Owens recognized Director Hughes, who introduced the item and provided a brief overview. Director Hughes recognized Manager Wheeler, who provided further details. Manager Wheeler noted that the applicant revised the rezoning request from seven lots to six. The applicant seeks to rezone 4 acres from R-20 to R-15 to develop six single-family detached lots at 6851 Queen Mill Road (Tax Parcel 18040500240).

Manager Wheeler displayed the proposed site plans and elevations, noting that the applicant is willing to include 25% brick on the front façades. He outlined the zoning criteria used to evaluate the rezoning request. Planning staff recommended approval with ten conditions, and the Planning Commission also recommended approval with additional conditions, as detailed in the packet on record.

The floor was opened for Council questions. Councilmember McNeely asked Manager Wheeler to address recommendations #5 and #6 regarding intersection sight distance and improvement of the curve. Manager Wheeler noted that during the initial review of the application, there were concerns regarding intersection sight distance and the curve. The applicant revised the plan, including a clearing and revised grading plan, which was approved by Cobb DOT. He added that there are still public concerns about the curve, and acknowledged the letter Council received expressing those concerns.

Councilmember McNeely raised questions regarding an easement agreement between the developer and the property owner. Manager Wheeler explained that the easement relates to Cobb County Sewer access along Queens Mill or Cordell. Cobb County has not yet determined the preferred route but will review it if the rezoning and land disturbance processes are approved. The applicant is working on an easement to provide access through both options.

Councilmember Jeffcoat asked whether there are any additional safety concerns from the County. Manager Wheeler confirmed that, aside from clearing and grading requirements, there are none regarding ingress and egress to the site.

Councilmember Herndon asked whether there are measures to ensure the easement will continue to be maintained for safety. Manager Wheeler confirmed that the easement agreement will be reviewed through the permitting and land disturbance process to ensure it meets standards. He also noted that if the property changes ownership, the same restrictions will remain in effect.

Councilmember Davis asked about the reduction of the plan to six lots. Manager Wheeler explained that the detention pond was moved inside the property. He also noted that the applicant requested a variance to reduce the setback from 35 feet to 20 feet, which staff deemed acceptable.

Councilmember Herndon asked who would be responsible for maintaining the detention pond. Manager Wheeler explained that it would typically be deeded to the HOA, which is standard practice for maintaining easements and common areas in a subdivision.

k. REZ-2025-005 – 4470 Floyd Drive (Tax Parcel 19100100060) – Request to rezone a 0.5-acre parcel from R-20 to RD for the development of a duplex project - (First Read) - Community Development Director Michael Hughes

Mayor Owens recognized Manager Wheeler, who provided additional information regarding REZ 2025-005 at 4470 Floyd Drive. Manager Wheeler stated that the applicant is requesting to rezone 0.5 acres from R-20 (Single-Family Residential) District to RD (Residential Duplex) District. He noted that the proposed development will consist of a 5,440-square-foot residential duplex. The application and presentation materials are available in the agenda packet on record.

Manager Wheeler noted that the property has frontage on both Wysteria Drive and Floyd Drive, but access will be from Floyd Drive due to a culvert on Wysteria Drive. He stated that the future land use is designated as low-density residential and provided details on the future land use of surrounding properties. He also shared the proposed site plan, elevation, and an aerial map, all of which are available on record.

Manager Wheeler noted that access will be from Floyd Drive and presented the criteria for approval. Both staff and the Planning Commission recommend approval, with nine staff stipulations and additional Planning Commission stipulations, as listed:

- No short-term rental (STR) uses are permitted on the subject property.
- The garage shall not be converted or used as separate living space.
- Three canopy trees for each unit shall be planted before a Certificate of Occupancy is issued.
- Sidewalk, curb and gutter must be constructed; no payment in lieu is permitted as mentioned in DOT comments.

Councilmember Brown asked about an HOA, and Manager Wheeler confirmed that the property is fee simple for personal use. Councilmember Ferguson asked about parking standards for RD zoning and potential parking issues. Manager Wheeler explained that each unit has a 2-car garage, a shared driveway, and one required space per unit; street parking would be at the owner’s discretion.

l. OZI-2025-004 - 2480 East-West Connector (Tax Parcel 19078800140) - Request to construct an accessory structure in excess of 1,000 square feet - Community Development Director Michael Hughes

Mayor Owens introduced the item and recognized Manager Wheeler. Manager Wheeler noted that this is a request to rezone the former Regal Movie Theater at 2480 East-West Connector (Tax Parcel 19078800140) for use as a home and garden store exceeding 1,000 sq. ft. The applicant, Rural King, a nationwide home and garden supplier, proposes a 1,200 sq. ft. outdoor display. The display will include small trailers, tractors, lawn mowers, a nursery, and seasonal items, with landscaping to screen it from public view. An aerial map was presented. Staff found the request reasonable and recommended approval with the listed conditions.

Councilmember Herndon asked for clarity on the kinds of equipment that would be on display outside. Manager Wheeler clarified. Staff has met with the applicant many times concerning the proposed project as well as current code violations on the vacant property. He indicated that they are heavily invested in improving the site. Councilmember Ferguson asked about the maintenance of the entrances. Manager Wheeler noted that major improvements will not be possible until the project has been fully approved, but they have plans for improvements. Code Enforcement Supervisor Silver noted the applicant has addressed some code issues, including gates, signs, and overnight parking. Full compliance is required as a condition of approval.

Councilmember Ferguson asked if there is a plan to build a structure for the outside displays. Mr. Wheeler stated that there would be a pen but no structure. Councilmember Herndon asked how this company differs from other home and garden stores; Manager Wheeler noted it will operate more like a tractor supply store. Councilmembers Ferguson and Herndon requested the rendering be sent to them. Councilmember Brown asked whether the location would sell weapons; Manager Wheeler confirmed it would not. Councilmember Ferguson asked about fencing and gates; Manager Wheeler stated the fence would be vinyl-clad. He also confirmed that renovations will occur within the existing building, which will not be demolished. Councilmember Davis expressed concerns about the compatibility and viability of the business in relation to other large-scale businesses in the area.

Manager Wheeler noted that the applicant went through a bidding process and is confident in success. Staff expressed concerns about the business aesthetics and requested the rendering when available. He clarified that as a "change in conditions" item, this request bypasses the Planning Commission and goes directly to Council. Staff stipulations, including code compliance requirements, will be included in the official packet, and Director Hughes noted that Council may require additional stipulations. City Manager Tanks asked whether staff would recommend approval without stipulations; Manager Wheeler responded that stipulations serve as guardrails, and staff would not recommend approval without them. He noted that without stipulations, blanket approvals could allow applicants to act freely rather than in the City's best interest.

Manager Wheeler emphasized that Council's consideration is limited to the 12,025 sq. ft. outdoor display area, including a pen. The applicant retains rights to the building itself due to a buy-right use from the auction. The City's authority is limited to enforcing zoning commercial development standards for architectural requirements.

Councilmember Herndon asked why the City does not have more control over commercial building aesthetics. Manager Wheeler confirmed that the City regulates aesthetics through the Code of Ordinances via commercial architectural requirements. Councilmember Ferguson requested clarification on the area intended for seasonal displays.

m. License Review Board Appointment Process - Community Development Director

Michael Hughes

Mayor Owens recognized Director Hughes, who provided an overview of the item and described the current license review process. He noted that Council adopted an alcohol ordinance (20205-08-01, Chapter 5 – Alcohol) establishing code provisions and a License Review Board. He detailed the duties of the board and emphasized its role in safeguarding public health and safety as the gatekeeper for alcohol sales in the City.

He noted challenges in achieving a quorum of board members, which has affected the City's ability to conduct routine business regarding alcohol sales. He emphasized that a timely resolution is important, as these matters impact the livelihoods of business owners.

He noted that the board is composed of seven appointed members—one from each district and one appointed by the Mayor. Currently, the District 6 seat is vacant, and appointments are pending for Districts 2 and 4 following the seating of new Councilmembers.

Director Hughes presented the following options for Council's consideration:

- Three members appointed by the Mayor and ratified by a majority of the Council.
- Five members: a Finance employee, a Community Development appointee, a City employee or resident appointed by the City Manager, a resident appointed by the Mayor, and a resident appointed by the Council.
- The Mayor may appoint an individual if a timely decision is not made.

Director Hughes stated that if Council is interested in any of the proposed options, he can present a formal recommendation in the New Year. Mayor Owens noted that at the start of Cityhood, other options were considered, including the involvement of individuals with specific expertise. He noted that additional people may help the quorum issue. Councilmember Ferguson asked about including Mableton business owners instead of residents, and Director Hughes noted this could present a potential conflict of interest. Councilmember Jeffcoat inquired if the options were prompted by frequent absences at meetings, and Director Hughes confirmed, emphasizing the goal of acting efficiently given the impact on people's livelihoods. Councilmember Herndon mentioned a few of the setbacks she has experienced with finding someone to fill the vacant role for District 6 and expressed interest in other options.

Additional discussion focused on the proposed options. Mayor Owens suggested that if the board is expanded, it should include members with relevant expertise and emphasized the importance of attendance. Director Hughes will present the options in writing.

Director Hughes proposed allowing Council more time to review zoning cases. Acknowledging the lengthy public hearing process, he suggested dedicating one meeting per month to rezonings and entitlement cases. This would provide more time to review case details and help reduce late-night meetings.

City Manager Tanks explained that zoning and land use are not common terms, and the goal is to make Council better informed. He suggested using the Monday before the second meeting each month to review zoning cases. Councilmember Ferguson asked whether zoning issues would be delayed until the monthly review meeting and whether this would slow development. Councilmember McNeely responded that the process needs more time for thorough review by staff, Council, and residents, which could ultimately benefit the city. Additional discussion followed. City Manager Tanks noted the trade-off between a slower process, which allows everyone to become well-informed, and a quicker process that benefits developers.

Mayor Owens expressed concern about “stockpiling” cases by holding meetings once a month but acknowledged that the City cannot move faster without greater knowledge. Councilmember Brown asked how Council could ramp up their understanding, and Mayor Owens suggested additional training. Discussion followed on when rezoning case information should be made available and shared between staff and Council. Councilmember Ferguson emphasized the importance of staff engaging the community to provide well-rounded information and noted the emotional aspects of zoning cases. City Manager Tanks reminded Council to focus on technical aspects, and Councilmember Ferguson suggested educating residents on the technical details to reduce emotional tension.

Mayor Owens added that Council should be notified when information is available. Councilmember Herndon noted she defers to the Councilmember representing the rezoning district in question to educate others and take ownership of the item. Councilmember Ferguson also requested that zoning staff avoid using acronyms while the Council is still learning.

8. PRE REGULAR MEETING AGENDA REVIEW

Mayor Owens led a review of the proposed agenda items for the Regular Meeting on Wednesday, Dec 10th,2025.

- 6c – He noted that the rezoning item that was deferred to the Jan 2026 hearing – REZ-2025-006 – Tax Parcel 18020100030 (Old Alabama Rd) and Tax Parcel 18025800020 (Cordell Rd) – Request to rezone 22 acres from R-20 to RA-6 for the development of 101 single-family detached homes.
- 8a – He noted the appointment of the Code Enforcement Director.
- 10 – He reviewed the consent agenda items.
- 12a – He noted the Interim Comprehensive Plan item, with a focus on the word interim. He requested Director Hughes resend the plan to all Council for a refresh. He noted this originated as Cobb’s Comprehensive Plan, but this is an updated version. Councilmember Ferguson asked if a zoning code amendment would be needed to acknowledge new zoning districts; the City Attorney confirmed.
- 12c – Resolution creating a Public Safety Service District after substantial discussion with the County since May. It is now coming back before the Council. The City Attorney will provide a document for the record following discussion with the Council due to litigation.

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS

City Manager Tanks noted that staff plans to provide food before Council meetings rather than after, allowing Council to focus on business during Executive Session. Mayor Owens asked if this change was due to meeting length, and City Manager Tanks confirmed.

City Clerk Hiott reminded Council that Campaign Contribution Disclosure Reports (CCDR) are due December 31, with a grace period until January 8.

City Manager Tanks noted that New Year's Eve is not currently a City holiday for 2026 and suggested that Council consider approving it through an amendment to the resolution. City Clerk Hiott confirmed that the City will be closed on New Year's Eve 2025.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION (IF NEEDED) FOR LITIGATION (O.C.G.A. 50-14-3(B)(1)(A)REAL ESTATE(O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (B)(1)) PERSONNEL (O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (B)(2)) AND MISC. EXEMPTIONS (O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (B)(4)&(5))

Motion to go into Executive Session by Councilmember Ferguson and seconded by Councilmember Jeffcoat for litigation, personnel and real estate. The motion passed 7-0. Yeas: Davis, McNeely, Jeffcoat, Owens, Brown, and Herndon (9:24 pm)

Motion to exit Executive Session by Councilmember Jeffcoat and seconded by Councilmember Herndon. The motion passed 7-0. Yeas: Davis, McNeely, Jeffcoat, Owens, Brown, and Herndon (11:58 PM)

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made to adjourn by Councilmember Jeffcoat and seconded by Councilmember McNeely. The meeting adjourned at 11:59 PM.

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Dr. Michael Owens, Mayor	Susan Hiott, City Clerk