# CITY OF MABLETON, GEORGIA

Riverside EpiCenter
135 Riverside Pkwy, Austell, GA 30168
July 16, 2025 at 6:30 PM

The Honorable Michael Owens, Mayor
The Honorable Ron Davis, District 1 Councilmember
The Honorable Dami Oladapo, District 2 Councilmember
The Honorable Keisha Jeffcoat, Mayor Pro Tem/District 3 Councilmember
The Honorable Patricia Auch, District 4 Councilmember
The Honorable TJ Ferguson, District 5 Councilmember
The Honorable Debora Herndon, District 6 Councilmember

## CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Owens called the meeting to order.

**2. ROLL CALL**

City Clerk Susan Hiott conducted the roll call. Mayor Owens and Council were present. Councilmember Davis arrived a few moments after the roll call.

**3. INVOCATION**

Councilmember Davis led the invocation.

**4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Auch and seconded by Councilmember Oladapo to approve the agenda with an amendment to move 12b - 12 e to the beginning of the Public Hearing Section and a friendly amendment to also move the Zoning Case 7a Rezoning Case 2025-001 after 12e.

Mayor Owens acknowledged there were other hearings on the agenda. Discussion followed. The motion carried 7-0.

(Clerk's Note: Following the removal of these items, the agenda was rearranged in the Civic Plus Portal.)

## 6. PUBLIC HEARINGS - DURING COUNCIL MEETING ITEMS WERE MOVED BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL TO THE BEGINNING OF PUBLIC HEARINGS.

### a. Consideration and Approval of Resolution Updating the Urban Redevelopment Areas within the City of Mableton - City Attorney Emilia Walker-Ashby

Mayor Owens introduced the item and mentioned that this proposal is for an expanded Area 1 and a new area added for District 2. Councilmember Auch asked for clarity on the process of discussion on the matter. Mayor Owens clarified.

Attorney Walker-Ashby emphasized that this proposal isn't for the approval of the plan. She noted this item is solely for the extension of the area, but there will still be a hearing before the approval of the plan itself. She further detailed the process.

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Jeffcoat and seconded by Councilmember Davis to approve the Resolution Updating the Urban Redevelopment Areas within the City of Mableton. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilmember Auch asked how the areas were determined and what the selection process was for Area 2. City Attorney responded that it was based on conversations with Council and executive staff. Councilmember Oladapo asked if the additional areas could be disclosed at this time to the public.

Attorney Walker-Ashby reiterated that this item was not a vote for the plan. The City identified what the Urban Redevelopment Area would be, and this item is expanding the area 1 to include three new parcels and creating an area 2 that is near the Silver Comet Trail. If this item is approved, it will allow the Council to go forward with the public to hear their thoughts, and then to consider approving the proposed plan.

Mayor Owens asked if there were any questions or discussions. There was none.

The **motion** passed unanimously.

### b. Public Hearing for the Proposed Amendments to the City of Mableton Urban Redevelopment Plan 2024

Mayor Owens opened the Public Hearing. Mayor Owens noted the public hearing would be for 20 minutes,with 10 minutes for and 10 minutes against. Councilmember Auch and Mayor Owens reviewed and addressed the Urban Redevelopment previous areas and the proposed added and updated areas. Councilmember Auch stated the current Urban Redevelopment Area was purchased on Mableton Drive and Puckett Drive. The area is to be amended to include 6116 and the house next to that property. There was an Area 2 located on the Silver Comet Drive. Mayor Owens explained the reason the Mableton Urban Redevelopment Agency existed is to revitalize and reduce blight. He continued to address how there were other areas in the City that were clearly blight. Many cities use the Urban Redevelopment test to reduce blight and uplift underutilized areas. Discussion and explanation about the financing mechanisms continued.

Public Comment occurred. Those who spoke were:

- **Yashica Marshall** asked about the area and what the blight was on the property and asked how the City was going to pay for the property. The problem was that the people did not know what was being talked about.

- **Jeff Padget** expressed that he looked at the property and he did not see any blight. There were other places in the City that needed improvement. The City needs parks. He asked how the city was going to pay for the land. He asked if the residents were going to pay property taxes.

Mayor Owens reported there is not a property tax in the City of Mableton. The items discussed regarding URA or public safety ($9.5 mil) would not raise anyone's taxes. The mileage for 2023, 2024, 2025 is 0.00, and he will sign again for 2026 to be 0.00.

Finance Director Karen Ellis explained how the current revenue streams would be enough to pay the debt service payments. The revenue streams coming in were conservatively budgeted. Beginning in August, Mableton will continue discussing public safety with the County.

Questions and discontinued. Mayor Owens stressed any money raised for public safety should be spent on public safety.

Others who spoke included:

- **Robert Redmonds** of District 4 opined the space that the City was interested in at Hicks and Concord does not have a lot of blight. He agreed Urban Redevelopment is great, but the decision to do this without fully defining the use of the property is misleading the public. He lived in the community. He expressed concerns about using the space for commercial, causing more traffic, and loss of trees. He stated that there is no clear plan for the utilization of the purchase of the property.
- **Jolee Elze**r of District 4 pointed out that the City did not have maps or pictures and a plan shown on the screen overhead. She opined that if the City did their homework, the City would get better results.
- **Heidi Hun**t of 720 Gregory Manor Drive of District 6 opined the 28-acre forest is not a blighted area. She spoke about the previous developer who did not purchase the land. She expressed there was a lack of transparency.
- **Hope Rope**r expressed her position on the resolution without financial transparency and other costs. She spoke about how the City Lite model was changing. The City was not being transparent.
- **Denny Wilson** stated she did research on URAs. People were told there would be no additional taxes. The money has to come from somewhere. She asked how the City was going to pay for this $6.7 million and not pass it on to the taxpayer.
- **Mr. Redmond** stated he saw the plan, but did not know what part of the land would be purchased and what to be used for. He was looking for specifics.

Councilmember Oladapo read a portion of the plan, recognizing it was vague: to establish a passive pocket park, and or other recreational facilities and redevelopment opportunities.

City Attorney Walker-Ashby explained how the plan could be located on the public's phones. The plan was located in the agenda packet. Mayor Owens apologized that the plan and pictures were not on the EpiCenter screen. Mayor Owens noted that the item was published and was on the Civic Plus platform. There have been updates related to the bond transaction and bond amount because the City has been in discussion with bond counsel and attorney.

City Attorney Walker-Ashby reiterated the plan does not say what the City was placing on a parcel. Before that happens, there will be more discussions and public input sessions and other processes. This is approval of an area where land can be acquired where the City has designated that such acquisition may be a better use than what is designated now.

Questions and discussion continued about what blight was. City Attorney Walker-Ashby commented that blight is underdeveloped infrastructure, property not being used to highest and best use. She explained the owner would have to be willing to sell. The City can then determine what it would like for the property. If the City doesn't have capital assets, the City would miss out on revenue opportunities such as funding resources such as a SPLOST.

**Jeff Padgett** stated he walked the property and he did not see any blight. Attorney Walker-Ashby showed the photos on the screen for 6084 Mableton Parkway and the Silver Comet Trail parcels. City Walker-Ashby stated the City has discretion and the ability to isolate and look into the area. The plan does not say the City is going to purchase, but gives the City the ability to make something better than it is now. Councilmember Auch stated the City knows what goes on with the parcel. City Attorney Walker-Ashby expressed that she does not know what goes there. Before anything goes there, there will be public engagement, discussions with developers, and discussions with people who may partner with the City. The City is not at that point yet. The pictures showed power lines fallen on trees, abandoned vehicles, and trash.

Public Comment continued:
**Jolie Elzer** commented that the current property on the Silver Comet Trail was zoned as residential.
**Lamar Scottie** commented that the residents elected the people to run the City and make the best decisions because you can't have 80000 people in a room to make decisions. The more assets a city has, the better. He was in favor of transparency, but sometimes council can't speak yet.
**Ms. Brenda Nas**h of District 3 commented that she appreciates Mr. Scottie has money as a developer, but not all residents have money. She commented that the Council was elected to represent the Mableton residents, but the public also asked for transparency.
**Christoper Brock** of District 3 commented that if the council believes that entering into the bond agreements will promote economic development and clear blight, he asks that any partnerships, especially private, that they are paying their fair share of taxes and minimize any tax abatements so that the City recovers its investment asap.

Mayor Owens closed the Public hearing. Mayor Owens thanked everyone that came to speak stressing the importance of receiving public input.

**c. Consideration and Approval of Amended City of Mableton URA Plan - City Attorney Walker-Ashby**

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Ferguson to approve the amendment of the City of

Mableton Urban Redevelopment Plan. Councilmember Davis seconded the motion.

Councilmember Auch asked if there could be any discussion about changing the boundaries but keep the other parcels. Mayor Owens asked if there were any other discussion. There was none.

The motion passed 4-3. Yeas: Davis, Jeffcoat, Owens, and Ferguson
Nays: Auch, Herndon, and Oladapo
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**d. Consideration and Approval of Bond Resolution and Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Mableton, Georgia - City Attorney Walker-Ashby**

Mayor Owens announced the item and provided background.

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Jeffcoat to approve the Bond Resolution and Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Mableton.

Mayor Owens asked for discussion. Councilmember Ferguson asked for clarification of the attached Intergovernmental Agreement noting not all of the information was included in Exhibit A and B. City Attorney Walker-Ashby explained that the exhibits were a template. For the Exhibit, the winning bid and rate information was from Truist Bank which was given to Mayor and Council. Discussion and explanation of the processes of bond validation ensued. Councilmember Herndon asked if the City could disclose the amount of the bond and the payment information, and Mayor Owens recognized Finance Director Karen Ellis who came forward to report on the proposed bond payment information. She reported:

- Payments will be made in June and December of each year.
- The payment includes interest only for December, and the July payment included interest and principal,.
- The payments will be approximately $453, 000-$457,000 each year.
- The City pays the URA to pay for the bonds.
- The City budgeted conservatively on revenues.
- There are revenues that the City did not budget for because the City staff did not know the amount, but now the City staff knows.
- That increase in revenues offsets this debt service.
- The City does not levy taxes.
- The fixed rate is 5.25 fixed rate with Truist for a 20 year loan maturing in 2045.
- If interest rates falls, the City can refund and get lower interest rates.
- The first payment amount ranges $513,000 - $514,000 average for the first year. The payment is pro-rated.

Mayor Owens asked if there were any comments or questions. Councilmember Ferguson asked when the decision should be made. Attorney Walker-Ashby explained that Truist is committed to the rate by August 19th. There is a lot of work to do by August 19th. That is a short time period. There is no time for even mailing letters. Legal will be emailing, walking up to offices to let the Court and others know that the City was in the process of validation. Councilmember Oladapo asked if the City could delay the deadline. Attorney Walker-Ashby offered to call Financial Advisor Ed Wall, but his earlier consensus was that it would look bad because Truist had already gone out of their way to meet the July 16th deadline. Truist was being very gracious to giving the rate that they did.

Councilmember Auch asked the attorney when the City could disclose what the plan was for the property. Attorney Walker-Ashby explained that the City was not at a stage to announce. The City does not have anything to say concretely. There are some great ideas, but the City was not at the point to decide and vote. There needs to be a level of specificity. The City has an interest, but as far as sufficient information to make a determination of yes or no, the City is not there yet. Discussion continued.

Councilmember Oladapo noted the City has heard from a lot of people and there are concerns about how to pay. The City has not addressed how to pay for police services yet. The priorities must be aligned with what the residents are concerned about, and that is the reason for hearing from them. The City has to be understanding. She explained that she was not against addressing blight and revitalizing Mableton and having land for capital projects, but timing was everything. She stated she could not justify going into this amount of debt for this purpose at this point.

Councilmember Jeffcoat expressed that she appreciated everyone's concerns. She commented that staff and leadership are in place and Mayor and Council have relied on the Finance Director and City Manager to provide the numbers. The Council has asked time and time again if the City was fiscally responsible. She commented further about how it was premature to say what the City was going to do with the land, and the City was not there yet. She acknowledged there was a pending police cost. She explained how the Council goes into Executive Sessions and looks at all options. That process continued. The Council was not just jumping to a decision.

Councilmember Oladapo asked why now. People are concerned about pending services.

Councilmember Herndon said she knew the motivation for why the City was looking at the properties. It was difficult for her that the Councl couldn't say for sure that xyz would be on the land. She opined that the City was playing with the truth. The City's constituents are concerned, and she has heard their concerns. It is easy to say the attendees are a subset, and does not reflect all of Mableton. But, when people show up and talk, that subset is a very strong subset because they are interested enough to come and voice their concern. Between all the parcels, the City was looking at almost of $1 million each year in payments. Although the City looks good now, the future is not known. She expressed that a measured decision and caution is advisable. She expressed concern because the City does not need the added area property right now, especially when the City has two parcels that the City has not done anything yet. She is not certain that the City needs the parcels right now. She was not certain about the urgency to have a $6.7 million bond.

Mayor Owens stated he had lived in the community for a long time. The City has asked Cobb County to get things on a list. If the Council doesn't invest in the City, who is? Real estate has urgency; nothing is getting cheaper. The City currently has a partnership with Truist which is becoming a better and better partner. Mableton is the 12th largest city in

Georgia. He asked how much land does the City own. Land ownership helps determine what the City's future looks like. The City is looking at land strategy to look for opportunities to invest. The City can afford it. The land purchase will not disrupt any services. Mayor Owens continued addressing how the City should invest in itself and the community. Land ownership will give the City an opportunity to move forward to take advantage of upcoming opportunities. He thinks this should be supported.

Councilmember Auch stated she appreciated the Mayor's vision, but the City also must invest in services which still have not been negotiated with the County. She addressed the transparency issue of the County School District when there was controversy about a parcel purchased by the School District. There were complaints about the School Board not disclosing the parcel information to the community. She asked if the City could have moved URA boundaries to that parcel. Mayor Owens stated the City did try to do that.

Councilmember Auch expressed that she thought the City had not engaged the citizens. She mentioned the comments that night about consideration of future costs; the City knows the funding is there now, but the City does not know what expenses will occur in the future. She addressed the comment by the resident about not wanting to have tax abatement.

Councilmember Ferguson referenced comments from the Mableton residents. He remarked he was not married to any idea so far, so he can't say specifically, know what was going on the land. The purchase of land is still a conversation. There was concern about whether we could afford the purchase of land. He has asked the experts and they said yes. He got the answers that he needed. The Council were put in office for a reason to conduct these types of discussions.

Councilmember Davis expressed how the decisions made affect him as well as the residents. He reported he had been in Mableton for 30 years. He has seen very slow progress. This is an opportunity. He was a resident that happened to be in this position to hear the residents' voices. He commented about how he knows how it feels to not be heard. In order for the city to grow and thrive, there are some things that must happen. Mableton has a zero millage rate. He would like to see that to continue to happen, but he would like to see things come to Mableton. No city can grow and thrive without land. He loves trees, loves the country, but at the same time, Mableton can't afford to look like it did in 1990 or 2000. He does not want Magnolia Crossing to still be undeveloped. It galls him that it is still the way it is. He explained that there are some systematic approaches when the City has to be strategic.

**Motion** passed 4-3. Yeas:Davis, Jeffcoat, Owens, and Ferguson Nays: Herndon, Auch, and Oladapo

**e. Rezoning Case 2025-001 - Second Read - TKHC Ministries - Rezone Tax Parcel 17010700480 and 17010700100 from GC (General Commercial) to R-20 (Residential Single-Family) District for construction of a Church - Community Development Director Michael Hughes**

Mayor Owens announced the item and provided background. Councilmember Auch asked if there were any substantial changes. There were none.

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Auch to approve (Second Read Ordinance - ORD 2025-07-01) Rezoning Case 2025-001 TKHC Ministries, General Commercial to R-20 including the Planning Commission stipulations. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion carried 7-0.

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Auch for a recess. Councilmember Jeffcoat seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0. The recess was from 8:49 pm.to 9:06 pm.

**f. First Read and Public Hearing - Consideration of an Ordinance creating Chapter 5, Alcoholic Beverages, and for Other Lawful Purposes - City Attorney Emilia Walker - Ashby and Community Development Director Michael Hughes**
**Open and Close Public Hearing - No action to be taken - this is First Read.**

Mayor Owens recognized Director Hughes, who then invited Lamaya Edmonds, Business License Manager, to address the Council.

Manager Edmonds provided an overview, noting that regulatory licenses will be implemented following the completion of the current IGA with the County. She stated that the City will soon begin issuing alcohol licenses, and the purpose of the proposed ordinance is to establish the framework for that licensing process.

Councilmember Ferguson asked whether this process would involve public safety or police efforts. Manager Edmonds confirmed that the required background checks will require police involvement. Councilmember Ferguson then asked if this would require a separate IGA. Manager Edmonds clarified that it is already covered under the existing one.

Mayor Owens asked if the staff were prepared to take on this new responsibility. Ms. Edmonds confirmed that they are. She explained that the team does not anticipate a large initial influx of applications. Mayor Owens also inquired whether this change would require additional staffing. Ms. Edmonds responded that the existing organizational chart already accounts for the necessary positions.

Councilmember Jeffcoat asked about the projected volume of licenses. Ms. Edmonds noted that the County currently has approximately 170 active licenses, and the City does not anticipate issuing more than 200.

Councilmember Oladapo inquired about the appointment of an alcohol board. Manager Edmonds responded that the ordinance includes details about the board appointment, and Mayor Owens noted that the Council will need to prepare to make these appointments. Councilmember Ferguson asked for clarification on the number of nominees. Mayor Owens explained that some members will serve by virtue of their office. Councilmember Ferguson then asked whether the ordinance could be amended to allow business owners who are not residents to serve on the board. Mayor Owens and Councilmember Oladapo confirmed that, per the City Charter, only residents are eligible, so such an amendment is not currently allowed.

Mayor Owens opened the public hearing. Councilmember Ferguson asked about the license renewal period. Manager Edmonds confirmed that the renewal season starts in October and must be completed by December 31st, with no grace period.

Mayor Owens then asked about the renewal of the approximately 170 licenses currently issued by the County. Manager Edmonds stated that those renewals are expected to begin in October as well, and she emphasized that her team has been preparing in advance for the upcoming workload.

Mayor Owens also inquired about coordination with Code Enforcement to ensure that all businesses operating in Mableton hold proper licenses. Manager Edmonds explained that alcohol license holders are also required to have a valid state license and added that enforcement typically occurs at the state level.

Mayor Owens made the final call for those wishing to speak for or against this ordinance. None came forth. Mayor Owens closed the public hearing. This is a first read, so no action is required.

**g. First Reading and Public Hearing - An Ordinance Updating Chapter 7. Taxes, Fees and Assessments of the Code of Ordinances: Regulation Occupation Taxation and Business Licensure and For Other Lawful Purposes, Of Mableton Code of Ordinance - Community Development Director Michael Hughes**
**Open and Close Public Hearing. No action at this time - this is First Read.**

Mayor Owens recognized Director Hughes, who then invited Lamaya Edmonds, Business License Manager, to address the Council.

Mayor Owens asked for clarification regarding the update to the Chapter. Manager Edmonds explained that the ordinance will add a new section to the existing Chapter 7. She provided an overview of the additional licensing to be included and noted the establishment of a regulatory framework.

Councilmember Auch asked whether the ordinance had gone before the Planning Commission and inquired about any recommendations they may have made. Manager Edmonds confirmed that it was presented to the Planning Commission, and noted that their comments and recommendations are included in the agenda packet for the Council's review.

Mayor Owens opened the public hearing and invited public comment on the proposed ordinance. Mr. Sam Culbreath commented that during the Planning Commission meeting, the ordinance document appeared to be outdated. He encouraged the City to conduct a thorough review to ensure the ordinance is current and accurate. Mayor Owens then called for any comments in opposition to the ordinance; there were none.

Councilmember Ferguson asked the City Attorney whether the ordinance would be redlined to reflect the Planning Commission's suggestions. The City Attorney confirmed that her team will review and incorporate the Planning Commission's recommendations, pending staff approval. She also stated that the Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) stipulations will be added prior to the next draft, and the updated version will be made available for Council review.

Mayor Owens made a final call for anyone wishing to speak for or against the ordinance. None came forward. Mayor Owens closed the public hearing. This is a first read, so no action was required.

**h. Second Reading and Public Hearing of An Ordinance Creating Article 5, Subdivisions, under Chapter 8, Buildings and Construction, of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances - Community Development Director Michael Hughes**

This item was deferred. Director Hughes noted that the ordinance will require a substantial rewrite. Once revised, it will need to go before the Planning Commission and then return to the City Council for consideration at the next meeting.

**i. OZI-2025-002: Public Hearing - To consider amending the stipulations of United Security Services Agency c/o Matthew Herbert regarding rezoning application Z-13 of 2009 - located at 1140 Old Powders Springs RD SW in Land Lot 36 of the 18th District - Public Hearing - Community Development Director Michael Hughes**

**Staff is recommending deferral to August 11, 2025 meeting.**

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Planning and Zoning Manager Chris Wheeler. He noted that the application seeks to modify the existing zoning stipulations, to allow for a security office instead of an electrician's office. He also noted that staff and the Mableton Improvement Coalition (MIC) are in agreement with the proposed change. Staff was in agreement with the seven Mableton Improvement Coalition (MIC) stipulations. (Letter dated July 15, 2025 is located in the agenda packet.)

Mayor Owens asked if there were any questions from the Council. He then opened the public hearing and invited anyone wishing to speak for or against the application. There were no public comments.

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Jeffcoat to approve OZI 2025-002 amending the stipulations of United Security Services Agency c/o Matthew Herbert regarding rezoning application Z-13 of 2009 located at 1140 Old Powders Springs Road including Mableton Improvement Coalition (Letter of July 15, 2025) stipulations. Councilmember Oladapo seconded the meeting.  The meeting passed unanimously.

Clerk's Note - Seven Conditions per letter of July 15, 2025:
1. Approval is for office use for this business only (United Security Agency).
2. All applicable stipulations remain from 2009 unless explicitly stated.
3. Applicant will reseal and restripe the parking lot. Install in-ground swing arm gates at entrances to deter loitering or misuse of property outside of business hours, painted a dark color to avoid rust and blend in with landscaping.
4. Install fencing on the west and rear property lines where one does not already exist, either wooden privacy or vinal coated chain link as outlined in the original stipulation letter.
5. Install an evergreen landscape buffer on the east side of the property to screen residential property.
6. Environmentally sensitive, downward facing, non-glare exterior lighting that does not

extend past property lines.
7. No signage on the right of way of Old Powder Springs Road; however, non-illuminated decals on the business window are permitted.

j. **OZI-2025-003: To consider amending the stipulations for Kingdom Business c/o Tommy Orok regarding rezoning application Z-30 of 2014, property located at 4511 Austell Rd SW in Land Lot 1067 of the 19th District - Public Hearing - Community Development Director Michael Hughes**
**Staff is recommending deferral until the August 11, 2025, meeting.**

This item was deferred.

## 7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

## 8. PRESENTATIONS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS/PROCLAMATIONS

a. **Presentation and Discussion of the City of Mableton's Grant Writing Services - Sustainability, Waste, and Beautification Director Emily Groth and Chris Brewer of Fund it Forward**

Mayor Owens introduced the agenda item and recognized Emily Groth, Director of Sustainability, Waste, and Beautification (SWB).

Director Groth noted that Chris Brewer, the City's contracted grant writer from Fund It Forward, had to leave the meeting. She proceeded with a presentation introducing Mr. Brewer and provided an update on his role and the City's partnership with Fund It Forward. She explained that a grant policy will soon be presented by the Finance Department. Director Groth presented a status report on the grants the City has applied for, mentioning that the City is awaiting notification on two grants and highlighting upcoming grant opportunities of interest.

Councilmember Jeffcoat asked when the City expects to hear about the grant approvals. Director Groth responded accordingly. Mayor Owens noted that timelines vary depending on the grant. Director Groth encouraged Council members to reach out to Mr. Brewer with any questions or to explore grant opportunities relevant to their districts.

## 9. APPOINTMENTS

None.

## 10. PUBLIC COMMENTS - 2 minutes per speaker - no more than 30 minutes for all speakers. Anyone wishing to make a public comment should complete and submit the public comment card to the City Clerk prior to the start of the meeting.

The following individuals spoke during the Public Comment:
Mr. Leroy Hutchins highlighted the upcoming return to school during the first week of August and shared several back-to-school events taking place in the community, including:
July 16 – Food bank distribution
July 26 – School Prayer Walk with First Christian Church of Mableton

– Back-to-School event hosted by Sheriff Owens
– Hope Outreach Center event
– Powder Springs Task Force event
July 27 – Reflections of Trinity event
July 30 – Amerigroup event

Mr. Sam Culbreth highlighted the Austell Community Task Force's 24th Annual Back-to-School Jam, scheduled to take place on August 2nd at the South Cobb Recreation Center. He shared that the event is primarily targeting specific Title I-funded schools. He acknowledged the event sponsors. Lastly, he extended an invitation to the community to attend the monthly general meeting of the Austell Community Task Force.

Jolie A. Ezler, a resident of District 4, raised concerns and posed questions regarding the funding of police services provided by the County for the City's policing efforts.

**11. CONSENT AGENDA**

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Oladapo and seconded by Councilmember Jeffcoat to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried 7-0.

**a. Approval of June 25, 2025 Work Session Minutes (5:15 pm)**

**b. Approval of June 25, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes**

**12. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Consideration and Approval of Resolution Approving the Purchase of All Fleet Vehicles from Wade Ford for the Fleet Department and Authorize the Mayor to Finalize and Execute Related Agreements and Documents - Special Projects Manager Xavier Ross**

Mayor Owens introduced the agenda item and acknowledged Special Projects Manager Xavier Ross. Manager Ross greeted the audience and highlighted that Mableton was among the first cities to introduce an all-electric vehicle (EV) fleet. He then explained that he is seeking approval to proceed with an agreement to purchase vehicles from Wade Ford. He also noted that the fleet will be customized to meet the specific needs of various City departments. He highlighted that he successfully negotiated an agreement with Wade Ford priced below the State Minimum Contract.

He noted that the City has requested specifications that differ from the state contract, and Wade Ford has agreed to honor those requirements. He stressed that vehicle purchases will be phased out according to staffing needs rather than bought all at once. By the end of this budget cycle, all fleet purchases are expected to be completed. He mentioned that next month, he plans to present a fleet policy to the Mayor and Council. He also mentioned that this initiative further qualifies the City for sustainability grant opportunities.

Mayor Owens thanked Wade Ford for stepping up to the table and expressed his appreciation that they honored—and even beat—the state contract price.

Councilmember Jeffcoat asked how many vehicles are anticipated and how many the City currently has. Manager Ross responded, emphasizing that the agreement aligns with the budget. Councilmember Jeffcoat then inquired whether every code enforcement officer would be provided with a vehicle. Manager Ross replied with an explanation.

Mayor Owens commented that the goal is to enhance both the availability and productivity of every City vehicle.

He explained that the City will not assign a designated vehicle to each individual but will instead ensure vehicles are available whenever needed to maximize efficiency. Manager Ross added that the vehicles will be rotated regularly to prevent overuse by any single user or vehicle. However, certain vehicles will be specifically allocated to particular departments. Councilmember Jeffcoat emphasized the importance of conducting a needs-based assessment to clearly understand and document the City's requirements.

Councilmember Ferguson asked whether insurance costs increase significantly with the purchase of each vehicle. Manager Ross clarified that insurance premiums through GIRMA are calculated on a scale based on the asset and its value. He noted that the budget accounts for these projected increases. Manager Ross emphasized that the City is taking precautions to subsidize cost savings. He also stressed that the upcoming fleet training program, launching next month, will meet state requirements.

Councilmember Ferguson followed up with questions about the policies to be implemented, to which Manager Ross responded. Mayor Owens inquired whether any related matters would be brought back before Council, to ensure GIRMA requirements are properly met. Manager Ross confirmed that any additional info related to this will be addressed through the forthcoming fleet policy presented to the Council.

**Motion** made by Councilmember Ferguson and seconded by Councilmember Herndon to approve the Resolution Approving the Purchase of All Fleet Vehicles from Wade Ford for the Fleet Department and Authorize the Mayor to Finalize and Execute Related Agreements and Documents ($470,425 for 11 vehicles). The motion carried unanimously.

## 13. OTHER BUSINESS/DISCUSSION

None.

## 14. CITY MANAGER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS

Mayor Owens expressed his gratitude to Director Hughes for standing in for City Manager Tanks during his absence. He also thanked Xavier Ross for returning from out of town to be present at tonight's meeting.

Director Hughes read a list of announcements provided by the City Manager. He highlighted that the City's formal transition was completed as of June 27, 2025, and highlighted the active services that have been successfully implemented. He also highlighted the services secured through an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the County. He acknowledged the formal adoption of the City's budget and the completion of the first audit for 2024. Additionally, he provided an update on City facilities, specifically noting the new administrative office at 1245 Veterans Memorial Highway, which the City moved into on July 1st. He noted that the City has selected four engineers to serve on call.

He also noted that eight additional staff members have been hired since June 2nd. He noted that discussions are underway to organize Council training on topics including special service districts, service delivery strategy, storm water, revenue diversification, and SPLOST.

**15. CITY ATTORNEY/CITY CLERK/STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS**

City Clerk Hiott announced that the City will be hosting candidates qualifying for Districts 2, 4, and 6 from August 18–20 at 1245 Veterans Memorial Highway, in preparation for the November 4, 2025, election. She noted that the qualifying fee is $600 and provided additional details. She emphasized that supporting documents for agendas and meetings are available on the City Clerk's section of the City's official website. Lastly, she clarified that the City does not currently have an online codified ordinance available but is in the process of having it formally codified through Civic Plus.

**16. MAYOR AND COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS**

Councilmember Davis thanked everyone for coming out tonight and acknowledged the community's engagement. He highlighted a 24th Annual "Back to School Jam" event hosted by the Austell Community Task Force on August 2nd at South Cobb Recreation Center. He encouraged volunteers to get involved.

Councilmember Oladapo thanked attendees for their in-person and online engagement. She announced a District 2 Back to School Haircuts event she is sponsoring and encouraged everyone to help spread the word.

Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat thanked attendees for staying late and congratulated Deputy Clerk Alison Benson on being named Employee of the Quarter, recognizing her dedication. She acknowledged Councilmember Ferguson's milestone birthday on July 18th. She noted that Family Life Restoration Center needs support to maintain its cooling center.

Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat encouraged community support for the Pebblebrook High School football fundraiser and highlighted several upcoming back-to-school events. She is partnering with Pure Hope Church for a Back to School Bash on July 27th, and also mentioned the Back to School BBQ Bash hosted by Hope Family Resource Center on July 26th, commending their summer lunch efforts. She concluded by promoting Karaoke Kids Night at Green Room Restaurant on July 19th.

Councilmember Auch thanked residents who spoke during the public hearing. She highlighted a group bike ride on August 9th from Atlanta to Mableton celebrating the completion of the Silver Comet Connector. She expressed interest in partnering with Councilmember Ferguson to organize a Mableton group to participate and encouraged everyone to stay tuned for more details.

Councilmember Ferguson congratulated Deputy Clerk Alison Benson on her Employee of the Quarter recognition and thanked her for her efforts. He thanked attendees for their participation and emphasized that their concerns are being heard.

Councilmember Herndon shared that she and Mayor Owens attended the grand opening of

7 Brew and encouraged everyone to support the new business. She also thanked those who stayed until the end of the meeting, including the nine online viewers. She extended safe travels home.

Mayor Owens emphasized several key points. He assured the public that the City's financial position is sound and highlighted the City's ongoing commitment to fiscal responsibility. He reiterated his intention to continue avoiding the implementation of a property tax. Additionally, he confirmed that City leadership has a plan to address debt obligations. Mayor Owens also noted that the City is committed to negotiating in good faith with the County on a long-term Service Delivery Strategy. As such, he explained that certain details cannot be disclosed at this time.

He made it clear that the Council wasn't happy with the deal the City ended up with, and they really pushed hard to negotiate more favorable terms.

He acknowledged that the issue of double taxation will remain a recurring topic of discussion and assured the public that the City is actively reviewing it. He highlighted several key nuances that must be taken into account when determining whether double taxation applies and provided additional context and explanation to clarify the complexities involved. He emphasized that while the City is committed to continuing the fight, it is equally important to be well-informed and strategic in its approach. He pointed to the potential repercussions the City—and other partnering cities—could have faced if an agreement had not been reached. He stressed that the City must fight strategically, ensuring progress while maintaining strong relationships with neighboring sister cities. Ultimately, he expressed confidence that there is a better path forward for this county and its cities—and that unity is the best way to reach it.

He emphasized that his office is always open to answer questions and clear up any misinformation. He also stressed the importance of conducting a thorough review and cost analysis of all City services to determine whether it would be in the City's best interest to provide certain services independently. He noted that the City must remain focused on the present and address the challenges it currently faces.

Lastly, he reintroduced the Small Business Saturday Initiative, which will take place every Saturday. As part of this effort, his office will spotlight and support a different local business each week. This Saturday's focus will be on 7 Brew. He expressed confidence that when the City creates opportunities for residents to engage locally, the community will respond.

**17. 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** made by Councilmember Herndon to go into Executive Session for Real Estate, Litigation, Personnel, and miscellaneous (exemptions). Councilmember Jeffcoat seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Yeas: Davis, Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Owens, Auch, Ferguson, and Herndon (10:22 pm)

**Motion** made by Councilmember Herndon to close the Executive Session and seconded by Councilmember Ferguson. The motion passed 6-0. Councilmember Oladapo was not present. Yeas: Davis, Jeffcoat, Owens, Auch, Ferguson, and Herndon

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Jeffcoat to authorize the Mayor to finalize and execute, in substantial form, the agreement with Asmaou and Idrisu Yunusa for the purchase and sale of property within the city located on or near 6084 Mableton Parkway, for a purchase price not to exceed $297,000. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0. Councilmember Oladapo was not present.

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Davis to authorize Mayor Owens to finalize and execute, in substantial form, the agreement with L2L27, LLC for the purchase and sale of property within the city located on or near Hicks Road, Concord Road, and Brazos Drive, for a purchase price not to exceed $5.5 million. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0. Councilmember Oladapo was not present.

**18. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion** made by Councilmember Ferguson and seconded by Councilmember Herndon to adjourn. The motion passed 6-0.
The meeting adjourned at 11:34 pm.

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Dr. Michael Owens, Mayor Susan Hiott, City Clerk