



CITY OF STATESBORO
COUNCIL MINUTES
JUNE 02, 2026

Regular Meeting

50 E. Main St. City Hall Council Chambers

9:00 AM

1. Call to Order

Mayor Jonathan McColiar called the meeting to order

2. Invocation and Pledge

Councilmember Ginny Hendley gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jonathan McColiar	Mayor	Present	
Tangie Johnson	Councilmember	Present	
Vacant	Councilmember	Vacant	
Ginny Hendley	Councilmember	Present	
John Riggs	Councilmember	Present	
Shari Barr	Mayor Pro Tem	Present	

Other staff present: City Manager Charles Penny, Assistant City Manager Jason Boyles, Public Affairs Manager Layne Phillips, City Attorney Cain Smith and City Clerk Leah Harden

3. Recognitions/Public Presentations:

A) Ceremonial signing between the City of Statesboro and the United States Army.

Lieutenant Colonel Craig Henderson, Commander of the Georgia Army National Guard Recruiting and Retention Battalion, and Mayor Jonathan McColiar participated in a ceremonial signing of a Memorandum of Agreement formalizing the City of Statesboro's participation in the U.S. Army Partnership for Your Success (PAYS) program. The PAYS program guarantees soldiers and ROTC cadets' five job interviews and the possibility of employment with partner organizations after or during their military service.

Lieutenant Colonel Henderson addressed the Council, recalling his prior command of the 177th Brigade Engineer Battalion in Statesboro, and the Guard's service to the Bulloch County community during Hurricanes Helene and Debbie. He noted that the dual state-federal mission of the National Guard provides soldiers with the flexibility to serve their country while pursuing civilian careers, education, and family life. He described the PAYS program as a "true win-win" for both soldiers and community employers.

Mayor McColiar expressed deep gratitude for the service of the men and women of the armed forces, citing the community's experience during Hurricane Helene as a reminder of the Guard's essential role. He stated that through this partnership, the City of Statesboro commits to supporting soldiers at every stage of their journey. Following the signing, Lieutenant Colonel Henderson presented a certificate and plaque to the City on behalf of the U.S. Army PAYS program.

B) Presentation of a proclamation recognizing June 8-12, 2026 as Municipal Court Clerks Week.

Mayor McColiar read a proclamation recognizing the week of June 8–12, 2026, as Municipal Court Clerks Week in the City of Statesboro. The proclamation acknowledged the significant role municipal court clerks play in preserving public confidence, integrity, and impartiality in the judicial system, noting that more people come into contact with the municipal court clerk than with any other city service. The proclamation was presented to Municipal Court Clerk Haylie McGlamery and Deputy Clerks Christy Carver and Jasmine Perkins.

4. Public Comments (Agenda Item): None

5. Consideration of a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda

A) Approval of Minutes

- a) 05-12-2026 Budget Work Session Minutes
- b) 05-19-2026 Work Session Minutes
- c) 05-19-2026 Council Minutes
- d) 05-19-2026 Executive Session Minutes

A motion was made to approve consent agenda.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember John Riggs
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

6. Public hearing to solicit input on the proposed FY2027 Budget for the City of Statesboro.

A motion was made to open the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

City Manager Charles Penny reviewed the proposed FY2027 budget, characterizing it as one of the most difficult he had encountered in nearly 45 years of public service. The total budget reflects a 5% increase over FY2026. The combined General Fund and Fire Fund budget is approximately \$32 million. The total operating budget across all funds is approximately \$62 million, with a full budget inclusive of the capital fund at over \$111 million.

The proposed budget includes a recommended 2% pay plan adjustment and a 15% increase in employee health insurance premium contributions and new requirements for retiree health insurance eligibility and spousal coverage.

Mr. Penny continued stating that the General Fund transfer to the Fire Fund, rising from \$3.2 million to \$7.485 million. This is attributed to Bulloch County's decision to dissolve the fire district, which caused the city to lose \$2.75 million in annual funding and the expiration of a SAFER grant, which was approximately \$700,000 per year. The city utilized one-time internal fund loans in FY2026 to bridge this gap; a measure he stated could not be repeated.

Mr. Penny addressed the issue of the millage rate explaining that the proposed budget requires an increase in the millage rate of 2.129, which is down from the previously proposed increase. This is due to the receipt of Floating Local Option Sales Tax (FLOST) funds this year and the estimated growth in the digest. The estimated FLOST for FY2028 is \$3.5 million, which should allow the millage rate to be rolled back. The FY2027 estimated tax impact on property owners would rise from approximately \$759 to \$1,096. No rate increases are proposed for water/sewer, stormwater, natural gas, or solid waste services.

No one spoke for or against the proposed FY2027 budget.

A motion was made to close the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember John Riggs
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr expressed relief that partial FLOST revenues would be available sooner than anticipated, reducing the required increase. She thanked City Manager Penny for remaining open to every opportunity to hold down costs.

A motion was made to move the budget forward.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember John Riggs
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

7. Public hearing and second reading for consideration to approve Ordinance 2026-01: An Ordinance amending the Unified Development Code to create zoning classifications and requirements for the development of Technological Facilities & Data Centers.

A motion was made to open the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

Planning Director Justin Williams presented the ordinance, noting that it incorporated revisions discussed at the prior meeting, including the elimination of the hyperscale facility classification (previously 200 acres maximum), reducing the maximum development footprint to 50 acres, more robust sound study requirements, and enhanced environmental standards including bioswales and stormwater retention provisions.

City Manager Charles Penny emphasized a critical point for public understanding: the ordinance does not grant data centers a "use by right." Any applicant would be required to obtain a Special Use Permit, meaning every proposed data center must come before the Mayor and Council for individual approval. The Council retains full authority to deny any application, and if an approved use ceases, the permit does not transfer to a new applicant.

Noel Burnsed questioned the value of adopting the ordinance without an active application and suggested that reducing the maximum footprint from 200 to 50 acres was superficial rather than substantive. He also raised concerns about the potential impact of data center operations on water quality at the molecular level, referencing research on water memory. Steven McDaniel, attending his first council meeting, raised concerns about the transparency of the process and questioned who would bear the cost of infrastructure needed by a data center.

Mayor McCollar confirmed that infrastructure costs are borne entirely by the developer under Georgia state law.

Kiki Canon stated she was opposed to data centers regardless of size, arguing that the economic benefits promised by data center companies have consistently failed to materialize in other communities and that the centers cause environmental harm including air and water quality degradation and increased electricity costs for residents. She also stated that the AI-driven demand for data center construction represents a corporate interest rather than a consumer need. She urged the Council to reject any pathway to data center development within city limits.

Tammy Wilson stated she was against the ordinance but acknowledged that some of Mayor McCollar's explanations had made the proposal clearer to her. She asked whether electricity costs for residents would increase.

Mayor McCollar reiterated that Georgia's public service commission has required data center developers to bear their own infrastructure and energy costs.

Margot Bragg raised concerns about water quality, referencing a reported incident of discolored water from a tap on South College Street.

Mayor McCollar acknowledged that municipal water systems require periodic flushing as part of routine maintenance and expressed confidence in the city's water infrastructure. The city's approach is to review the best available technology and science before approving any application.

No one spoke in favor of the Ordinance.

A motion was made to close the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr stated she was not prepared to support the ordinance at this time. While she acknowledged the Council's efforts to address concerns—including the scaling back of the footprint, expanded sound study requirements, and strengthened environmental standards—she expressed that she did not yet have sufficient information regarding data center water usage, the frequency with which closed-loop cooling systems must dump and recharge, and the potential impact on the city's wastewater treatment capacity. She stated she did not see an urgent need to move forward before those questions were answered.

Councilmember John Riggs stated he had studied the subject for several months and had initially been strongly opposed. He concluded that the ordinance, as written, places the city in the driver's seat: developers must meet the city's stated requirements, and the Council retains full right of refusal on any specific application.

A motion was made to approve **Ordinance 2026-01**: An Ordinance amending the Unified Development Code to create zoning classifications and requirements for the development of Technological Facilities & Data Centers.

RESULT:	Approved 3-1
MOVER:	Councilmember John Riggs
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs
ABSENT:	
NAYS:	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr

8. Public hearing and consideration of a motion to approve an application for an alcohol license in accordance with the City of Statesboro Alcohol Ordinance Sec. 6-13(a):

Annie's Nail Salon PT2

Owner: Tom Berry

Location: 105 Tormenta Way, Unit B1

License Type: Low Volume

Before opening the public hearing, Councilmember Ginny Hendley recused herself from this item.

Result: Approved 3-0

A motion was made to open the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember John Riggs
AYES:	Johnson, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

No one spoke for or against the application.

A motion was made to close the public hearing.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember John Riggs
AYES:	Johnson, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

A motion was made to approve an application for an alcohol license in accordance with the City of Statesboro Alcohol Ordinance Sec. 6-13(a) issued to Annie's Nail Salon PT2, Owner: Tom Berry, Location: 105 Tormenta Way, Unit B1 License Type: Low Volume.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember John Riggs
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

Councilmember John Riggs left the meeting.

- 9. Consideration of a motion to approve Resolution 2026-22: A Resolution calling for a Special Election to fill the unexpired term of the vacant District Two Council Seat; fixing the qualification fee for candidates, and authorizing publication.**

A motion was made to approve **Resolution 2026-22**: A Resolution calling for a Special Election to fill the unexpired term of the vacant District Two Council Seat; fixing the qualification fee for candidates, and authorizing publication.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Barr
ABSENT:	Councilmember John Riggs

Councilmember John Riggs rejoined the meeting.

10. Consideration of a motion to approve Resolution 2026-23: A Resolution approving the increase of health insurance rate premiums for current and retired employees.

A motion was made to approve **Resolution 2026-23**: A Resolution approving the increase of health insurance rate premiums for current and retired employees.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

11. Consideration of a motion to approve Resolution 2026-24: A Resolution requesting approval to apply for Assistance to Firefighters Grant for the City of Statesboro, Georgia.

A motion was made to approve **Resolution 2026-24**: A Resolution requesting approval to apply for Assistance to Firefighters Grant for the City of Statesboro, Georgia.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember John Riggs
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

12. Consideration of a motion to approve an amended IGA with Bulloch County, Brooklet, Portal, and Register regarding the Floating Local Option Sales Tax (FLOST), in order to comply with Senate Bill 33.

A motion was made to approve an amended IGA with Bulloch County, Brooklet, Portal, and Register regarding the Floating Local Option Sales Tax (FLOST), in order to comply with Senate Bill 33.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

13. Consideration of motion to approve a limited warranty deed conveying a one-half undivided interest in Parcel 135 000010 000, a one acre parcel on WW Mann Center Road in Bulloch County.

A motion was made to approve a limited warranty deed conveying a one-half undivided interest in Parcel 135 000010 000, a one acre parcel on WW Mann Center Road in Bulloch County.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

14. Consideration of a motion to approve the Statesboro Police Department Towing Rotation and Wrecker Agreement for FY 2027.

A motion was made to approve the Statesboro Police Department Towing Rotation and Wrecker Agreement for FY 2027.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

15. Consideration of a Memorandum of Understanding with GeorgiaForward, Inc. to host the 2026 Youth Symposium in Statesboro, Georgia.

A motion was made to approve a Memorandum of Understanding with GeorgiaForward, Inc. to host the 2026 Youth Symposium in Statesboro, Georgia.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

16. Public Comments (General):

Marshall Webster addressed the Council, raising concerns about what he characterized as prior instances of misconduct and ethical lapses by Mayor McCollar, including allegations related to a former Council member's residency and a prior Council vote involving a conflict of interest. He called on the Mayor to resign.

Mayor McCollar responded directly and at length, firmly rejecting each allegation as false. He characterized Mr. Webster's statements as public lies and noted that he has no knowledge of where any Council member sleeps at night. He stated that Mr. Webster's remarks reflected a pattern of racially motivated hostility, including a past incident in which Mr. Webster and others arrived at a public protest with firearms while children were present. Mayor McCollar stated he would no longer remain patient in the face of what he described as racist rhetoric and pledged to actively confront bigotry in the community throughout his term.

Eddy Delgado, Civic and Advocacy Coordinator for Migrant Equity Southeast, addressed the Council regarding the Statesboro Police Department's signing of a 287(g) agreement with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on February 26. He expressed concern that the agreement, specifically the Task Force Model, directly deputizes SPD officers for immigration enforcement and has been legally contested in other jurisdictions for encouraging racial profiling. He credited Mayor McCollar and city officials for agreeing to meet on the subject.

Len Fatica announced that Bulloch VOAD would be hosting a partner organizations luncheon and community assistance event on Thursday at Pitman Park Church for residents still seeking help from Hurricane Debbie or Hurricane Helene damage. He also announced a partnership with Saint Bernard Parish to provide up to five fortified roof replacements for qualifying homeowners.

17. Other Business from City Council

Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr recognized June as Pride Month.

18. City Managers Comments

City Manager Charles Penny recognized Assistant City Manager Jason Boyles on his acceptance into the Public Executive Leadership Academy at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, a two-week program that City Manager Penny noted was established during his own tenure as president of the North Carolina City-County Management Association.

City Manager Penny announced that the city has contracted with Developmental Associates to conduct the search process for the next Police Chief following Chief Broadhead's upcoming retirement. The process will include focus groups with internal command staff, lieutenants, and sergeants, as well as virtual meetings with criminal justice stakeholders and a public meeting on June 15, 2026, at 6:00 PM in the Council chambers. Individual meetings with elected officials are also scheduled for June 15 and 16.

City Manager Penny recognized summer interns working in multiple city departments and acknowledged participants in the Youth Connect program, noting approximately 40 young people are employed through the program for a five-week period that commenced the prior week.

City Manager Penny then formally announced his retirement. His statement is as follows:

“Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council,

I am writing to formally notify you of my intention to retire from my position as City Manager of Statesboro, effective January 1, 2027. After careful consideration, I have determined that this timing allows for an orderly transition and ensures the city's continued progress. Providing advance notice will facilitate a thoughtful succession process, giving the City ample opportunity to select new leadership and maintain stability for our staff and community. Since joining Statesboro as City Manager on July 1, 2019, I have been privileged to work alongside you, our dedicated city employees, and the broader community in advancing important initiatives and making meaningful improvements. Among the accomplishments I am most proud of are the launch and expansion of the Youth Connect Program, which has provided valuable opportunities and support for our young people, significant enhancements to employee compensation, helping to attract and retain talented public servants, and the successful housing rehabilitation projects made possible through ARPA funds, improving the quality of life for many residents. Additionally, the completion of critical sewer extension projects has

strengthened our infrastructure, and the opening of Fire Station #3 stands as a testament to our commitment to public safety.

Throughout my tenure, I have been deeply grateful for the warm welcome extended by the Statesboro community and the collaborative spirit of the City Council. The friendships and professional relationships I have formed here are truly special, and I have been inspired by the dedication and vision of those around me. Together, we have launched initiatives that will have a lasting positive impact, and I am confident that the city will continue to thrive under your leadership.

As I prepare to return to North Carolina to spend more time with my family, I remain optimistic about the future of Statesboro. The foundations we have built, both in policy and in community, position the city for continued growth and success. I wish all of you, and the entire city staff, the very best as you carry forward our shared goals and pursue new opportunities.

Thank you for your trust, support, and partnership during my years as City Manager. It has been an honor to serve this remarkable city, and I look forward to seeing Statesboro reach even greater heights in the years ahead. With sincere appreciation and best wishes,

Charles Penny

City Manager, Statesboro”

Mayor Jonathan McCollar offered extended remarks honoring City Manager Penny's service, describing Mr. Penny as the right person at the right time for the organization and the community, crediting him not only with tangible infrastructure and programmatic achievements, but with helping to build a culture of care within the city organization. Councilmember Ginny Hendley also offered personal remarks, praising Mr. Penny's character, strength, and leadership. Mrs. Edith Penny was also recognized for her partnership and support throughout her husband's tenure.

19. Consideration of a Motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss “Personnel Matters” “Real Estate” and/or “Potential Litigation” in accordance with O.C.G.A 50-14-3(b).

There was no need for executive session.

20. Consideration of a Motion to Adjourn

A motion was made to

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	

The meeting was adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

Jonathan McCollar, Mayor

Leah Harden, City Clerk