CITY OF STATESBORO
COUNCIL MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 1, 2026

Regular Meeting | 50 E. Main St. City Hall Council Chambers | 9:00 AM

1. Call to Order

Mayor Jonathan McCollar called the meeting to order

2. Invocation and Pledge

Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDENCE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jonathan McCollar	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) Presentation by City Manager Charles Penny regarding data centers.

City Manager Charles Penny delivered an informational presentation on the subject of data centers, emphasizing that the purpose was not to make a recommendation to the Mayor and Council, but rather an effort to educate the public and provide transparency on how the City arrived at its current position.

Mr. Penny outlined that staff began researching data centers in June 2025, visiting facilities in Social Circle and Alpharetta, Georgia, reading articles, and attending webinars. In September 2025, the City and Bulloch County were invited by the Development Authority to discuss the topic, and the Development Authority assisted in arranging tours to further build staff's knowledge. Director of Planning and Development Justin Williams, presented a report on data centers at a subsequent work session, after which the Council directed staff to organize a facility tour.

Mr. Penny also provided context on how the data center conversation arose on Burkhalter Road. Approximately three years ago, the City saw an explosion in housing development interest following the Hyundai announcement and a new county subdivision ordinance, resulting in approval of more than 6,000 new housing units. The owner of a 26-acre parcel on Burkhalter Road subsequently approached City staff about an alternate land use, citing concerns about a surplus of housing units. Staff and the planning director began evaluating the request.

The ordinance drafted by Director Williams, which prohibits hyper-scale data centers within the city, limits campuses to no greater than 50 acres, and requires a closed-loop water system, a water management plan, a decommissioning plan, an ambient sound study, architectural compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood, and required setbacks and buffers. He noted that the ordinance provides stronger design controls through the special use permit process than are typically available under subdivision approvals.

On the land use question, Mr. Penny explained that the property owner petitioned for office zoning — not industrial — and that office zoning is compatible with and can serve as a buffer for residential zoning. He noted that Burkhalter Road currently carries over 5,000 vehicles per day and is expected to be widened to four or five lanes within the next three to five years, making office zoning with minimal employee traffic an appropriate fit for that corridor.

A fiscal impact analysis was prepared at the property owner's request. Over a 10-year period, a data center in Statesboro could generate an estimated $21.8 million in gross tax revenue to the City, with a net of approximately $16.9 million, while new City expenses attributable to the data center would be approximately $35,000. Additional annual franchise fee revenue to the City from Georgia Power was estimated at approximately $1 million at 40 megawatts of capacity, potentially rising to $2 million at higher capacity, which could bring total additional annual revenue to the City to nearly $3 million. He noted that City property taxes currently account for $9 million of the City's $27 million general fund budget, underscoring the potential significance of this new tax base. He emphasized that this fiscal information was intentionally withheld during the ordinance adoption process so that the financial projections would not unduly influence the land use decision. He also noted that data centers in other communities have provided additional community benefits such as strengthening the power grid or extending infrastructure.

Mr. Penny closed by affirming that City staff and the Mayor and Council would never recommend or approve anything detrimental to the community's quality of life, and that any future special use permit application would require identification of the end user before any approval would be considered.

Mayor McCollar followed with remarks emphasizing that there is currently no end user and no entity that has committed to coming to the community. He stressed that the rezoning action taken was solely a rezoning, and that the transparency exercised by the City stands in contrast to the misinformation circulating in the community. He expressed concern that some community members had used the issue as a political tool and condemned social media statements he characterized as threatening in nature, calling on the community to seek accurate information and trust the process.

Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr asked questions regarding the basis for the $35,000 in new City expenses (attributed to a single additional household from a data center employee), and whether the franchise fee revenue would be annual rather than a one-time payment, which was confirmed. It was also noted that franchise fees would increase proportionally with power consumption beyond the initial 40-megawatt estimate.

4. **Public Comments (Agenda Item):** None

5. **Consideration of a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda**
   - **A) Approval of Minutes**
     - **a) 08-18-2026 Work Session Minutes**
     - **b) 08-18-2026 Council Minutes**
     - **c) 08-18-2026 Executive Session Minutes**

A motion was made to approve consent agenda.

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

6. **Public hearing and consideration of a motion to approve <u>Resolution 2026-36:</u> A Resolution naming the unnamed street between East Cherry Street and East Vine Street "Nicolas Anciaux Lane."**

A motion was made to open the public hearing.

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

Daniel Vaughn, a resident of Smyrna, Georgia, and a documented descendant of Nicolas Anciaux addressed the Council in support of the resolution. He described his ancestor's arrival in the United States in 1788 as part of a French expedition under Rochambeau that provided critical aid to American colonists during the Revolution. He noted that Nicolas Anciaux remained in America after the war, conducted business in Savannah, and ultimately settled in the Mill Creek area in the early 1800s. He spoke to Anciaux's representation of the historic bond between the United States and France, and expressed gratitude to Dr. Anne Marie for her research and efforts in bringing the resolution forward.

No one spoke against the request.

A motion was made to close the public hearing.

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

A motion was made to approve **<u>Resolution 2026-36</u>**: A Resolution naming the unnamed street between East Cherry Street and East Vine Street "Nicolas Anciaux Lane."

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

7. **Consideration of a motion to approve the purchase and up-fitting of two 2026 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 Crew Custom 2WD pickup trucks and one 2025 Chevrolet Express 2500 cargo van vehicles for a total expenditure of $128,558.67. These expenses will be funded using 2019 SPLOST funds. The expenditure breakdown is as follows:**

    - **Buster Miles Chevrolet of Heflin, AL: $79,914.00 for two 2026 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 Crew Custom 2WD pickup trucks.**
    - **Rick Hendrick Chevrolet: $41,736.65 for one 2025 Chevrolet Express 2500 cargo van.**
    - **West Chatham Warning Devices: $6,908.32 for the up-fitting of the two 2026 Silverado pickup trucks.**

A motion was made to approve the purchase and up fitting of two 2026 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 Crew Custom 2WD pickup trucks and one 2025 Chevrolet Express 2500 cargo van vehicles for a total expenditure of $128,558.67. These expenses will be funded using 2019 SPLOST funds. The expenditure breakdown is as follows:

- Buster Miles Chevrolet of Heflin, AL: $79,914.00 for two 2026 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 Crew Custom 2WD pickup trucks.
- Rick Hendrick Chevrolet: $41,736.65 for one 2025 Chevrolet Express 2500 cargo van.
- West Chatham Warning Devices: $6,908.32 for the up-fitting of the two 2026 Silverado pickup trucks.

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

8. **Consideration of a motion to award a contract to Hubbard and Hudson to repair the exterior stairway at City Hall in the amount of $101,000.00. If approved, this project would be funded by the 2019 SPLOST.**

A motion was made to approve a contract with Hubbard and Hudson to repair the exterior stairway at City Hall in the amount of $101,000.00. If approved, this project would be funded by the 2019 SPLOST.

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

9. **Consideration of a motion to approve Task Order 2A with EMC Engineering Services, Inc., in the amount of $459,895 for engineering design services for the Creek on the Blue Mile Multi-Use Trail project, to be funded by a Transportation Alternatives Grant, and 2023 TSPLOST funds.**

A motion was made to approve Task Order 2A with EMC Engineering Services, Inc., in the amount of $459,895 for engineering design services for the Creek on the Blue Mile Multi-Use Trail project, to be funded by a Transportation Alternatives Grant, and 2023 TSPLOST funds.

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

10. **Consideration of a motion to award a contract to Xylem Dewatering Solutions, Inc for the purchase of two (2) Godwin 6 inch diesel backup pumps (Model # NC100S) per the Florida Sheriff's Association cooperative purchasing contract in the amount of $109,445.20. These items to be purchased with funds approved in the FY2026 CIP Budget, item #WWD-37, funded by the 2025 SPLOST.**

A motion was made to approve a contract with Xylem Dewatering Solutions, Inc for the purchase of two (2) Godwin 6 inch diesel backup pumps (Model # NC100S) per the Florida Sheriff's Association cooperative purchasing contract in the amount of $109,445.20. These items to be purchased with funds approved in the FY2026 CIP Budget, item #WWD-37, funded by the 2025 SPLOST.

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

11. **Public Comments (General):**

Sue Palmer addressed the Council regarding the ongoing issue of garbage cans being left in the street by residents after collection rather than being returned to the property. She cited specific locations, including 4 Carmel Drive and a local church on Lower Mill Creek Road, as chronic examples of this problem and described it as an issue affecting the overall appearance and quality of life in Statesboro.
City Manager Charles Penny acknowledged the concern, affirmed the City's commitment to educating residents and using the municipal court process where necessary, and noted that the enforcement process must be followed even if it is slower than residents would prefer.

12. **Other Business from City Council:** None

13. **City Managers Comments**

City Manager Charles Penny announced the following upcoming events and dates:

- Millage Rate Public Hearings: The first two public hearings on the millage rate will be held on September 8, 2026, at noon and at 6:00 PM. A quorum of the Council is required for both sessions. The final public hearing will be held at the regular City Council meeting on September 15, 2026. Staff has prepared a presentation for these sessions.

- Georgia Training Center for Industrial Operations (Robotics Center): A ribbon cutting is planned for October 15, 2026, at the facility on U.S. 301. Director Jane Moore is expected to appear at the September 15 work session to provide an update to the Council.

- Fire Station 3 Ribbon Cutting: A ribbon cutting and push-in ceremony for Fire Station 3 and the City's new quint fire apparatus is scheduled for September 15, 2026, at 11:00 AM.

14. **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).**

At 9:48 am a motion was made to enter into executive session to discuss "Personnel Matters and "Real Estate" in accordance with O.C.G.A. 50-14-3(b).

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

At 10:03 am a motion was made to exit executive session.

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

The Mayor called the regular meeting back to order.

A motion was made to appoint Rochelle Spencer to the Statesboro Tree Board.

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

15. Consideration of a Motion to Adjourn

A motion was made to adjourn.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

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Jonathan McCollar, Mayor

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Leah Harden, City Clerk