



CITY OF STATESBORO
COUNCIL MINUTES
APRIL 21, 2026

Regular Meeting

50 E. Main St. City Hall Council Chambers

5:30 PM

1. Call to Order

Mayor Jonathan McCollar called the meeting to order

2. Invocation and Pledge

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

ATTENDENCE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jonathan McCollar	Mayor	Present	
Tangie Johnson	Councilmember	Present	
Paulette Chavers	Councilmember	Absent	
Ginny Hendley	Councilmember	Present	
John Riggs	Councilmember	Absent	
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:

Mayor McCollar called on Statesboro Fire Chief Tim Grams to make an announcement.

Fire Chief Tim Grams announced that the city has officially received the ISO Class 1 rating, the highest possible classification for fire departments. Out of over 37,000 fire departments nationwide, only about 500 achieve this status. Chief Grams credited this achievement to the staff's training, professionalism, and pride.

A) Presentation of the City's Fiscal Year 2025 Audit Results by Richard Deal, with Lanier, Deal, and Proctor.

Richard Deal from Lanier, Deal, and Proctor presented the audit results, reporting that the city is in excellent financial condition. The city's government-wide financials showed total assets of almost \$236 million and a total net position of \$183 million, representing a 9% increase of over \$15 million for the year. The general fund had an ending fund balance of approximately \$6.9 million, with a slight decrease of \$640,000 but still maintaining a strong 27% of total annual expenditures. The enterprise funds showed a total net position of approximately \$81.5 million.

4. Public Comments (Agenda Item): None

5. Consideration of a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda

A) Approval of Minutes

a) 04-07-2026 Council Minutes

B) Consideration of a motion to approve the surplus and disposition of equipment in the Central Services Department that have exceeded their useful life.

A motion was made to approve consent agenda.

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

6. **Public hearing and consideration of a motion to approve APPLICATION RZ 26-03-01: Jake Reynolds and Elliot Wilson requests a Zoning Map Amendment on East Olliff Street from R-3 (Medium Density Multi- Household)/R-4 (High Density Residential) & LI (Light Industrial) districts to R-3 (Medium Density Multi-Household District). The proposed project site is three (3) separate tracts flanking East Olliff Street with A.C. Dunlap Cemetery sitting between two parcels on the Southside on the street. The proposed project is sixteen (16) separate lots consisting of duplexes, open and green spaces. (Tax Parcel # S49 000018 000).**

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, Barr
ABSENT:	Councilmembers Paulette Chavers and John Riggs

Randy Dykes, representing the petitioner, spoke in favor of the request and clarified that the project includes 19 lots rather than 16 as initially stated.

No one spoke against the request.

A motion was made to close the public hearing.

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

A motion was made to approve **APPLICATION RZ 26-03-01**: a Zoning Map Amendment on East Olliff Street from R-3 (Medium Density Multi- Household)/R-4 (High Density Residential) & LI (Light Industrial) districts to R-3 (Medium Density Multi-Household District). The proposed project site is three (3) separate tracts flanking East Olliff Street with A.C. Dunlap Cemetery sitting between two parcels on the Southside on the street. The proposed project is sixteen (16) separate lots consisting of duplexes, open and green spaces. (Tax Parcel # S49 000018 000).

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Barr
ABSENT:	Councilmembers Paulette Chavers and John Riggs

- Public hearing and consideration of a motion to approve APPLICATION RZ 26-03-03: PMM Properties LLC requests a Zoning Map Amendment of 115 Park Ave from R-15 (One Household Residential) to R-3 (Medium Density Multi-Household). The parcel is 0.69-acres and is proposed to convert the single-family house into a multi-family with four dwelling and an attached accessory dwelling unit (ADU). Totaling five (5) units (Tax Parcel # S40 000056 000).**

A motion was made to open the public hearing

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Barr
ABSENT:	Councilmembers Paulette Chavers and John Riggs

Chris Gohagen, a local attorney for PMM Properties, stated that the conversion would address the city's identified housing shortage and diversity needs as outlined in the 2025 comprehensive plan. He presented evidence of existing multi-family properties throughout the neighborhood, including duplexes and apartment buildings, arguing this wouldn't constitute spot zoning. The property would be converted from existing rooms with minimal exterior changes, primarily enclosing a carport for the ADU.

Opposition came from neighborhood residents led by homeowners Missy Bennet, Steve Brownlee, and Scott Marchbanks, speaking on behalf of residents from Park Avenue, Savannah Avenue, College Boulevard, East Grady Street, East Inman, Jones, and Brannen streets. Over 100 signatures were collected opposing the rezoning. Key concerns included:

- The property's designation on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Savannah Avenue Historic District
- The home's 102-year history as single-family residence since 1920
- Incompatibility with the existing neighborhood character
- Current tenant issues including police incidents and code violations
- The property owner's history of unpermitted work and absentee ownership

Leigh Ames, whose property directly faces the subject property, described ongoing problems with current tenants including noise disturbances, trash dumping, and police incidents including a SWAT team response. She expressed concerns about increased density potentially bringing 25 or more vehicles to the area.

In rebuttal, Mr. Gohagen emphasized the community-wide need for diverse housing options and disputed characterizations of renters as inherently problematic neighbors.

A motion was made to close the public hearing.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr shared that Councilmember John Riggs, who was absent, opposed the zoning change. She agreed with the need for housing diversity but felt the neighborhood's character should be protected from further change.

A motion was made to deny **APPLICATION RZ 26-03-03**: a Zoning Map Amendment of 115 Park Ave from R-15 (One Household Residential) to R-3 (Medium Density Multi-Household). The parcel is 0.69-acres and is proposed to convert the single-family house into a multi-family with four dwelling and an attached accessory dwelling unit (ADU). Totaling five (5) units (Tax Parcel # S40 000056 000).

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

Mayor McCollar expressed concern about how other multi-family properties in the area came to exist without proper documentation, directing staff to investigate these unpermitted conversions.

8. Consideration of a motion to approve Resolution 2026-15: A Resolution to terminate the Memorandum of Understanding with Agape Worship Center and Habitat for Humanity regarding the redevelopment of residential real property on the Johnson Street area.

A motion was made to approve **Resolution 2026-15**: A Resolution to terminate the Memorandum of Understanding with Agape Worship Center and Habitat for Humanity regarding the redevelopment of residential real property on the Johnson Street area.

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

9. Consideration of a motion to approve Resolution 2026-16: A Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute the Georgia Department of Transportation Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant Safety Action Plan Application for FY 2026.

A motion was made to approve **Resolution 2026-16**: A Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute the Georgia Department of Transportation Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant Safety Action Plan Application for FY 2026.

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

10. Consideration of a motion to approve Resolution 2026-17: A Resolution of the City of Statesboro, Georgia declaring its official intent to issue its Tax Allocation District Refunding Revenue Bond (Old Register TAD Projects), series 2026 for the purpose of refunding its outstanding Tax Allocation District Refunding Revenue Bond (Old Register TAD Projects), Series 2023; authorizing the Mayor and other officials of the City to take such further actions as are necessary to provide for the sale of such bond; and for other purposes.

A motion was made to approve **Resolution 2026-17**: A Resolution of the City of Statesboro, Georgia declaring its official intent to issue its Tax Allocation District Refunding Revenue Bond (Old Register TAD Projects), series 2026 for the purpose of refunding its outstanding Tax Allocation District Refunding Revenue Bond (Old Register TAD Projects), Series 2023; authorizing the Mayor and other officials of the City to take such further actions as are necessary to provide for the sale of such bond; and for other purposes.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Barr
ABSENT:	Councilmembers Paulette Chavers and John Riggs

11. Consideration of a motion to approve a Water/Sewer Agreement with North Point Oak Grove, LLC in order to serve 39.05 acres at Hwy 67 and Elmer Phillips Drive outside the City Limits.

A motion was made to approve a Water/Sewer Agreement with North Point Oak Grove, LLC in order to serve 39.05 acres at Hwy 67 and Elmer Phillips Drive outside the City Limits.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Barr
ABSENT:	Councilmembers Paulette Chavers and John Riggs

12. Consideration of a motion to award an extension of the solid waste landfill agreement with Waste Management of Georgia, Inc. for a one (1) year term of with an option to renew for one (1) additional year. Terms of the contract extension will be in accordance with the current contract with the City of Statesboro.

A motion was made to approve the extension of the solid waste landfill agreement with Waste Management of Georgia, Inc. for a one (1) year term of with an option to renew for one (1) additional year. Terms of the contract extension will be in accordance with the current contract with the City of Statesboro.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Barr
ABSENT:	Councilmembers Paulette Chavers and John Riggs

13. Consideration of a motion to award an extension of the solid waste transportation agreement with Atlantic Waste Services for a one (1) year term of with an option to renew for one (1) additional year. Terms of the contract extension will be in accordance with the current contract with the City of Statesboro.

A motion was made to approve the extension of the solid waste transportation agreement with Atlantic Waste Services for a one (1) year term of with an option to renew for one (1) additional year. Terms of the contract extension will be in accordance with the current contract with the City of Statesboro.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Barr
ABSENT:	Councilmembers Paulette Chavers and John Riggs

14. Consideration of a motion to award a contract to D. Lance Souther Inc. in the amount of \$153,000.00, for the Belair Subdivision Gas Main & Service Replacement Project with the approval to spend up to \$250,000. Project to be paid for with funds in the Natural Gas CIP budget item # NGD-106 using 2025 SPLOST.

A motion was made to approve an award of contract to D. Lance Souther Inc. in the amount of \$153,000.00, for the Belair Subdivision Gas Main & Service Replacement Project with the approval to spend up to \$250,000. Project to be paid for with funds in the Natural Gas CIP budget item # NGD-106 using 2025 SPLOST.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
SECONDER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Barr
ABSENT:	Councilmembers Paulette Chavers and John Riggs

15. Consideration of a motion to approve Task Order 2 with Michael Baker International, Inc., in a not-to-exceed amount of \$958,977.31 for engineering design services for the Bridges on the Creek on the Blue Mile project, STM-34, to be funded by GDOT.

A motion was made to approve Task Order 2 with Michael Baker International, Inc., in a not-to-exceed amount of \$958,977.31 for engineering design services for the Bridges on the Creek on the Blue Mile project, STM-34, to be funded by GDOT.

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Barr
ABSENT:	Councilmembers Paulette Chavers and John Riggs

16. Public Comments (General):

Newman and Donna Samples addressed concerns about sewer system failures on Bedford Street. They experienced significant property damage when their sewer line collapsed, backing up into their house and requiring extensive repairs and remodeling. This marked the second time they had to remodel due to sewer issues, following flood damage in 2021-22. The couple had to pay for both the sewer repair from their house to the road and the road restoration, totaling approximately \$20,000.

They explained that the street uses older "tar paper" sewer lines from the 1960s that are failing throughout the neighborhood, affecting multiple residents. She requested the city take responsibility for sewer repairs within the street right-of-way, noting that many neighbors lack the financial resources for such expensive repairs.

Mayor McCollar reiterated his longstanding position that the city should be responsible for infrastructure within city streets, noting this issue was previously addressed in 2023 without sufficient votes for passage.

City Manager Charles Penny indicated staff would bring a recommendation to council within 60-90 days, emphasizing the need for a sustainable long-term policy while acknowledging the financial assistance program implemented in 2023.

Kathy Dixon addressed abandoned and dilapidated properties throughout the city, presenting photographs of numerous neglected residential and commercial properties on Main Street, shopping areas, and neighborhoods. She detailed the progression of property deterioration leading to health hazards from mold, rodents, and disease; safety concerns from vandalism, fire risks, and dangerous conditions for children; and negative impacts on neighbors through reduced property values and tax revenue.

Dixon noted that eight such properties exist along planned West Main and East Main corridor improvements, questioning the city's priorities in spending millions on corridor development while allowing deterioration of existing properties. She called for stronger code enforcement and urged council members to tour the city to witness the extent of the problem.

17. Other Business from City Council

Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr made three announcements:

- The Averitt Center is hosting a free Chamber Orchestra Spring concert at 7:30 PM this evening.
- Tomorrow is Earth Day and the Statesboro Regional Art Association, is sponsoring a kindness rocks event at West Main Gallery from 4-6 pm, featuring painting of recycled plastic rocks.
- Introduction of visibility bands sponsored by the City of Statesboro Greener Boro Commission in an effort to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety. A local resident sponsored the first 2,500 bands in memory of her late husband. The bright green bands are reflective and will be available free at City Hall and the Police Department.

18. City Managers Comments

City Manager Charles Penny highlighted the successful ribbon cutting for Whitesville Park, expressing pride in the new addition to the city's park inventory. He announced the longest table event scheduled for May 2nd at 4:00 pm on East Main Street and the budget work session scheduled for May 12th at 2:00 pm.

Mr. Penny addressed Ms. Dixon's code enforcement concerns, explaining the legal process requirements and court system constraints that affect enforcement timelines. He noted the city's commitment with two dedicated code enforcement staff members and last year's \$250,000 demolition budget that successfully removed long-standing problem properties.

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 adjourn

RESULT:	Approved (Unanimous)
MOVER:	Councilmember Tangie Johnson
SECONDER:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley
AYES:	Johnson, Hendley, Barr
ABSENT:	Councilmembers Paulette Chavers and John Riggs

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Jonathan McCollar, Mayor

Leah Harden, City Clerk