



CITY OF STATESBORO
COUNCIL MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 16, 2025

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

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

ATTENDANCE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jonathan McCollar	Mayor	Present	
Tangie Johnson	Councilmember	Present	
Paulette Chavers	Councilmember	Present	
Ginny Hendley	Councilmember	Absent	
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 of a retirement award to John Dekle, Sanitation Superintendent, retiring effective October 1, 2025 after 15 years of dedicated service to the City of Statesboro.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar presented a retirement award to John Dekle, Sanitation Superintendent who is retiring effective October 1, 2025 after 15 years of dedicated service to the City of Statesboro.

B) Presentation of a retirement award to Tommy Sims, Water & Sewer Supervisor, retiring effective October 1, 2025 after 19 years of dedicated service to the City of Statesboro.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar presented a retirement award to Tommy Simms, Water & Sewer Supervisor who is retiring effective October 1, 2025 after 19 years of dedicated service to the City of Statesboro.

C) Presentation of a Proclamation recognizing September 2025 as Deaf Awareness Month.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar read and presented a Proclamation to Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated Iota Iota Zeta Chapter of Bulloch/Jenkins County recognizing September 2025 as Deaf Awareness Month.

D) Presentation of a Proclamation recognizing September 2025 as National Recovery Month.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar read and presented a Proclamation to Freedom through Recovery recognizing September 2025 as National Recovery Month.

Mayor McCollar announced the addition of a Proclamation to the agenda recognizing Constitution Week.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar read and presented a Proclamation to the Daughters of the American Revolution, Archibald Bulloch Chapter, recognizing September 17-23, 2025 As Constitution week.

4. Public Comments (Agenda Item):

Greg Calloway signed up to speak on agenda item #9 the distillery Ordinance. Mr. Calloway expressed his opposition to the proposed Ordinance 2025-09 to allow a local distillery. He shared that he does not object to new business but about protecting our community's character and public safety. The objection is because it allows both on-site consumption and off site bottle sales. Mr. Calloway continued, our downtown is a community hub and a distillery will fundamentally change that from a family friendly destination to one that focuses on high proof alcohol consumption. Studies from John Hopkins University found that access to hard liquor is strongly linked to violent crime more so than general access to beer and wine. Allowing this will increase the drain to our public safety resources. Mr. Calloway noted that in 2022 the Statesboro Police Department had 41,987 calls for service and in 2023, which is the year package liquor, stores were allowed in Statesboro the calls for service increased by 4.5% to 43,777. The 2024 data shows a 9.4% increase. Mr. Calloway urged council to vote no on this amendment.

Michael Spacek signed up to speak on agenda item #9 the proposed distillery Ordinance. Mr. Spacek shared his concern about the impact this may have on the community. Mr. Spacek referenced Atlantic City NJ, which has about the same population as Statesboro, and Las Vegas NV both with high crime rates and is concerned the crime rate will go up in Statesboro. He asked if it is worth the expense of future revenue and profit.

5. Consideration of a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda

A) Approval of Minutes

a) 09-02-2025 Council Minutes

b) 09-02-2025 Executive Session Minutes

c) 09-02-2025 Public Hearing Minutes – 2025 Millage Rate 6:30 pm

B) Consideration of a motion to approve the due date of December 20th 2025 for the City of Statesboro property tax bills.

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda.

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

6. Public Hearing and consideration of a motion to approve Resolution 2025-25: A Resolution setting the millage rate for Ad Valorem (Property) Taxes for the 2025 calendar year for the City of Statesboro, Georgia.

A motion was made to open the public hearing.

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

City Manager Charles Penny presented the City of Statesboro Fiscal Year 2026 operating budget. The objectives to this year's budget is to retain and recruit exceptional employees with an emphasis on public safety. The budget highlights show a 6% total expense decrease due to less transfers and an 8% increase in general fund expenses. Mr. Penny highlighted the city compensation and benefits that includes the continuance of pay for performance, and no increases to employee health benefits. Current and future opportunities are to position Statesboro for growth in the region and to keep the pay plan up to date. The concerns and unknowns are that nearly 25% of the total assessed property in Statesboro is tax exempt and we are still dealing with labor market challenges. Mr. Penny shared a graph comparing property tax millage rates with other communities around the state. The graph shows Statesboro somewhere in middle at 8.625. The current rates for Bulloch County are 11.350, the Board of Education at 10.400, and a proposed rate for the City of Statesboro of 8.625. While the city has experienced growth the tax base is smaller than that of the county which means it generates less revenue per mill than that of the county and board of education. Mr. Penny reviewed the General Fund and Fire Fund highlighting that the General Fund budget is 62.7% for salary and benefit costs. The police department budget is funded out of the General Fund and is \$12,665,715. In addition, the Fire Fund transfer from the General Fund is \$3,200,000. The estimated increase on a home with a \$250,000 value would be approximately \$66.25. Staff recommends keeping the millage rate at 8.625.

No one spoke for or against the proposed 2025 millage rate for the City of Statesboro.

A motion was made to close the public hearing.

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

A motion was made to approve **Resolution 2025-25**: A Resolution setting the millage rate at 8.625 for Ad Valorem (Property) Taxes for the 2025 calendar year for the City of Statesboro, Georgia.

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

7. Public hearing and consideration of a motion to approve: APPLICATION V 25-08-02: Lindsay Martin requests a Variance to allow a permitted use in the HOC (Highway Oriented Commercial) district under Section 2.2.10 of the UDC for the property located 240 North Main Street (Tax Parcel # S26 000079 000).

A motion was made to open the public hearing.

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

No one spoke for or 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, Chavers, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley

A motion was made to approve with staff conditions APPLICATION V 25-08-02: Lindsay Martin requests a Variance to allow a permitted use in the HOC (Highway Oriented Commercial) district under Section 2.2.10 of the UDC for the property located 240 North Main Street (Tax Parcel # S26 000079 000).

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

8. Public hearing and consideration of a motion to approve: APPLICATION V 25-08-05: Cody Rogers requests a Variance from UDC Table 2.2.9-B-Dimensional Standards for the property located at 24087 Highway 80 East (Tax Parcel# MS84000102 103).

A motion was made to open the public hearing.

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

Cody Roger with EMC spoke in favor of the request.

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, Chavers, Riggs, Barr
ABSENT:	Councilmember Ginny Hendley

A motion was made to approve with staff conditions APPLICATION V 25-08-05: Cody Rogers requests a Variance from UDC Table 2.2.9-B-Dimensional Standards for the property located at 24087 Highway 80 East (Tax Parcel# MS84000102 103).

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

9. Second reading and consideration of a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-09: An Ordinance amending Chapter 6 of the Statesboro Code of Ordinance to allow for a Local Distillery alcohol license classification.

Councilmember John Riggs acknowledged the concerns raised during public comments on this agenda item. He expressed his appreciation of the citizens who came forward to speak on this issue. He shared his own perspective That he has renewed confidence in our law enforcement and ordinance officials, and stated, because I've seen us go from what we were 15 years ago to with very few officers and now we have a full complement of the best officers. After weighing the effects of this ordinance being implemented, I am confident that the City of Statesboro in all of its capacity can address any of the issues that may arise from this. After much thought and prayer over this as long as we have been talking about this over the last two or three months I am in favor of it.

Mayor McCollar stated every single one of us talk about how we can take care of our people. We do not take anything lightly. Since our administration has been here our government has moved tremendously to help young people. We have set up partnerships to help people in vulnerable situations with rent, utilities, and food. This body of people and this staff are some of the most loving and sacrificing people that I have had the honor to serve with.

A motion was made to approve Ordinance 2025-09: An Ordinance amending Chapter 6 of the Statesboro Code of Ordinance to allow for a Local Distillery alcohol license classification.

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

10. Consideration of motion to approve Resolution 2025-26: A resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute documents relating to financing for the construction of Fire Station #3 with the Georgia Municipal Association and Queensborough Bank. Said documents are as follows:

- A) Installment Sale Agreement**
- B) Assignment and Transfer Agreement**
- C) Deed to Secure Debt and Security Agreement**
- D) Agreement Regarding Environmental Activity**
- E) Limited Warranty Deed**
- F) The financial terms of the Installment Sale Agreement**

A motion was made to approve **Resolution 2025-26**: A resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute documents relating to financing for the construction of Fire Station #3 with the Georgia Municipal Association and Queensborough Bank. Said documents are as follows: A) Installment Sale Agreement; B) Assignment and Transfer Agreement; C) Deed to Secure Debt and Security Agreement; D) Agreement Regarding Environmental Activity; E) Limited Warranty Deed; and F) The financial terms of the Installment Sale Agreement

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

11. Consideration of a motion to approve Resolution 2025-27: A resolution approving application for the Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Grant Program in the amount of \$400. No matching funds are required.

A motion was made to approve **Resolution 2025-27**: A resolution approving application for the Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Grant Program in the amount of \$400. No matching funds are required.

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

12. Consideration of a motion to approve Resolution 2025-28: A resolution approving application for the BRACE grant in the amount of \$2,500.00 from the Keep Georgia Beautiful Foundation. No matching funds are required.

A motion was made to approve a **Resolution 2025-28**: A resolution approving application for the BRACE grant in the amount of \$2,500.00 from the Keep Georgia Beautiful Foundation. No matching funds are required.

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

13. Consideration of a motion to approve Resolution 2025-29: A Resolution approving application for the Recycling and Waste Diversion Grant for \$13,700 to support waste reduction efforts and recycling events managed by Keep Statesboro Bulloch Beautiful. No matching funds required from City of Statesboro.

A motion was made to approve **Resolution 2025-29**: A Resolution approving application for the Recycling and Waste Diversion Grant for \$13,700 to support waste reduction efforts and recycling events managed by Keep Statesboro Bulloch Beautiful. No matching funds required from City of Statesboro.

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

14. Consideration of a motion to approve the purchase of 6 new patrol cars from Stivers Ford in the amount of \$239,520.00, and 2 unmarked detective vehicles from J.C. Lewis Ford in the amount of \$90,588.14 and the up-fitting for all 8 vehicles in the amount of \$250,299.02 done by West Chatham Warning Devices. This purchase will be funded using 2019 SPLOST funds.

A motion was made to approve the purchase of 6 new patrol cars from Stivers Ford in the amount of \$239,520.00, and 2 unmarked detective vehicles from J.C. Lewis Ford in the amount of \$90,588.14 and the up-fitting for all 8 vehicles in the amount of \$250,299.02 done by West Chatham Warning Devices. This purchase will be funded using 2019 SPLOST funds.

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

15. Other Business from City Council

Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr shared that the Annual Peanut Festival in Brooklet is taking place this Saturday from 10am – 8 pm. She also shared about a Family Resource Day that will be held on October 4, 2025 at the WD Kent Park on West Grady Street and next Saturday a Health Fair is being held at the Honey Bowen Building. Ms. Barr shared that we need more trees and there are two events coming up where you can receive free trees. The first one is October 24, 2025 in the afternoon at the Foodbank. The other event is on November 8, 2025, at the City of David Church.

16. City Managers Comments

City Manager Charles Penny shared that city staff will hold a meeting with the residents of Cobblestone Subdivision on October 13, 2025 at 6:00 pm in the Council Chambers to discuss the city's draft private street policy.

Mr. Penny also reported that this morning the County Commissioners approved the hiring of a new County Manager, Christopher Eldridge and he would be coming to work with the county on October 6th. We welcome him and look forward to working with him.

Mr. Penny announced that Bryant's Landing did not receive the Low Income Tax Credit for Phase III. It does not mean they will not try again but right now, they need to get Phase II completed.

Mr. Penny also mentioned since we have Councilmember Riggs, Councilmember Johnson, and the Mayor, Election Day is November 4, 2025, which is a day we have our City Council meeting so I just want to put it out there for you to consider whether you want to reschedule that meeting to November 5, 2025. Let us know what your interest might be.

17. Public Comments (General):

John Ratcliff shared information on the Thrill of The First Flight event that will be taking place on October 11, 2025 at 9:00 am at the Statesboro Airport. The event is for 3rd – 12th grade student interested in aviation. There will be free orientation flights, meet & greet with pilots, aviation career insights, food, plane tours, and flight simulators. Registration is required and can be done at www.firstflightga.org.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar expressed deep concern about the current political climate in the United States, stating that the nation needs to be "very careful right now." He cited several recent troubling events, including an incident involving Charlie Kirk, the death of a Minnesota state representative, and the attempted assassination of President Donald Trump last year, as examples of actions that should not be happening in the nation. He asserted his belief that "the greatest threat to this nation is its politics" and criticized cable news and social media for having "convinced us that other Americans are the threat," a notion he stated is untrue. He called for a change of course, emphasizing that all Americans are "God's gifts" and that the nation's liberties and freedoms, including freedom of speech, must be applied to everyone. Addressing the youth present, Mayor McCollar noted that they have a "heavy load to lift" to fix the problems of previous generations. He stated that what "has to be fixed in our country is our politics." In his closing, Mayor McCollar spoke about living through two Gulf Wars and the World Trade Center attacks, but stated that he believes the "current state of our politics is the most dangerous thing that we have." He concluded with a call for unity, reminding the audience, "we are all Americans."

18. 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 7:01 p.m., a motion was made to enter into Executive Session to discuss “Personnel Matters” in accordance with O.C.G.A. 50-14-3(b).

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

At 7:53 p.m., a motion was made to exit Executive Session.

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

A motion was made to appoint Logan Josey to the Planning Commission and Zach Clifton to the KSBB Advisory Board.

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

19. Consideration of a Motion to Adjourn

A motion was made to adjourn.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Jonathan McCollar, Mayor

Leah Harden, City Clerk