



MINUTES
WAYCROSS CITY COMMISSION MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2025 – 5:00 PM
WAYCROSS CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Waycross City Commission Meeting was called to order on Tuesday, January 7, 2025, at 5:00 pm by Mayor James. The meeting was held in the Commission Chambers of City Hall. Present were Commissioners Katrena Felder (in at 5:03), Shawn Roberts, Diane Hopkins, Alvin Nelson, and Mayor Pro Temp, Sheinita Bennett

A. Invocation: City Manager

Invocation led by, Dr. Earl Martin

B. Pledge of Allegiance

C. City Clerk to Read Section 2-66 (a) – Decorum

Read by Jacqueline Powell, City Clerk

D. Request Motion to Approve Agenda

Motion to approve was made by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Mayor Pro Temp, Sheinita Bennett. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

II. PUBLIC REMARKS ON OFFICIAL ACTIONS

III. EXECUTIVE DUTIES:

A. Employee of the Month:

Chief Cox presented Hayden Blackburn with the employee of the month.

B. WPD Life-Saving Awards

Chief Cox presented officers Hayden Blackburn, Devin Mccoy, Jahlil Gage, and Robert Jacobs

C. January Committee/Board Appointments:

1. Election of Mayor Tempore'

2. **Pronouncement of City Officers** (*Presented by Mayor and Confirmed by Commission*)

- a. **City Attorney:** Huey W. Spearman
- b. **Assistant City Attorney:**
- c. **Official Organ:** Waycross Journal-Herald
- d. **City Depository:** Ameris Bank
Waycross Bank & Trust
- e. **City Auditor:** Mauldin & Jenkins CPAs
- f. **City Engineer:** ESG Engineering
- g. **Municipal Court Judge:** Judge Douglas W. Gibson
- h. **Municipal Court Judge Pro-Tempore':** Andrienne Gibson
- i. **Insurance Agents:** Gallagher/Five Points
Oakbridge Insurance Company
Cigna Health, Anthem Vision, New York Life & AD&D
Gallagher Insurance
Travelers Liability & Workers Comp
- j. **City Election Superintendent:** Ware County Board of Elections and Registration

3. **Appointment to Executive Positions Recommended by Mayor and Confirmed by the Commission:**

(Mayor and/or City Manager are Automatic Appointees to the Southern Georgia Regional Commission, Waycross-Ware Development Authority, Transportation Planning Coordinating Committee and Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Waycross Development Authority)

- a. **Downtown Waycross Development Authority** Mayor
- b. **Library Board of Trustees:** *Ex-Officio:*
Board Member:
- c. **Waycross Convention & Visitors Bureau:** *Post 2: Clint Bowman*
(Reappointment)
- d. **South Georgia Regional Commission:** Mayor
- e. **Transportation Planning Coordinating Committee:** Mayor
- f. **Ware County Board of Health:** Mayor
- g. **Waycross-Ware Co Development Authority:** Mayor
- h. **Waycross-Ware County Chamber of Commerce:** Mayor

4. **Pension Committee for Retirement Fund***

(Recommended by Mayor and Confirmed by City Commission) (Mayor, City Manager, City Attorney, and Personnel Analyst & Risk Management Employee are Automatic Appointees:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| a. Mayor | Michael-Angelo James |
| b. City Manager | Ulysses D. Rayford |
| c. City Attorney | Huey W. Spearman |
| d. Finance Director | Greg Smith |
| e. City Commissioner | <i>(Appointment)</i> |
| f. Human Resources Director | Marissa Hendrix |

5. Ethics Board Recommendations – Clayton Nelson v. Comm. Katrena Felder, Case No. 2024-001

IV. OFFICIAL REPORTS:

- A. City Manager’s Report
- B. Mayor’s Report (To Include Any Public Service Announcements).

V. CONSIDERATION OF OFFICIAL ACTIONS:

A. Consent Calendar:

1. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. Waycross City Commission Planning & Information Session, Monday, November 4, 2024, at 5:00 pm
 - b. Waycross City Commission Meeting, Tuesday November 5, 2024, at 5:00 pm.
 - c. Waycross Special Called Meeting, Wednesday, November 6, 2024, at 5:00 pm.
 - d. Waycross City Commission Planning & Information Session, Monday, November 18, 2024, at 5:00 pm
 - e. Waycross City Commission Meeting, Tuesday November 19, 2024, at 5:00 pm.
2. Ordinance Second Readings: n/a
3. Privilege License Renewals:
 - a. Pop Bellies Seafood Steak & Grill, J. Mitchell, 1195 Ossie Davis Pkwy, Waycross GA 31501, Beer, Wine, and Liquor, Consumption on Premises.
 - b. Hampton Inn, K. Thomas, 1720 Brunswick Hwy, Waycross Ga 31501, Beer and Wine, Package Sales Only
 - c. Laxminarayan 13 LLC DBA Bunky’s, C. Patel, 1545 Ossie Davis Pkwy, Waycross, Ga 31501, Beer and Wine, Package Sales Only
 - d. Shri 13 LLC DBA Wally’s, N. Patel, 1565 Ossie Davis Pkwy, across GA 31501, Beer and Wine, Package Sales Only.
 - e. My Place Lounge, A. Wilson, 1007 Albany Ave, Waycross GA 31501 Beer, Wine and Liquor, Consumption on Premises.

Motion to approve the consent calendar was made by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Mayor Pro Temp, Shenita Bennett. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

B. Privilege Licenses: n/a

C. Bids: n/a

D. Ordinances: n/a

E. Resolutions

1. A Resolution Pledging to Promote Civility in the City of Waycross, Georgia.

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Nelson seconded by Mayor Pro Temp, Sheinita Bennett. Vote taken -District-1, Shawn Roberts-Yes, District-2, Sheinita Bennett-Yes, District-3, Katrena Felder-**Abstain**, District-4, Diane Hopkins-Nay and District-5, Alvin Nelson-Yes.

With votes being 3-Yes, 1-No and 1-Abstain, the Resolution Passed.

2. A Resolution to Establish Qualifying Fees For The City of Waycross Elections For 2025.

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Roberts. Vote taken -District-1, Shawn Roberts-Yes, District-2, Sheinita Bennett-Yes, District-3, Katrena Felder-**Abstain**, District 4, Diane Hopkins-Yes and District-5, Alvin Nelson-Yes.

3. A Resolution of the City of Waycross, Georgia to Reschedule City Work Session Due to the MLK National Holiday; and for Other Purposes.

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Bennett, seconded by Commissioner Roberts. All in favor and the motion passed.

4. A Resolution of the City of Waycross, Georgia To Approve Standard Utility Agreement Contract Item Agreement With The Georgia Department of Transportation (“GDOT”) To Relocate City Facilities In Connection With the Ossie Davis Parkway Overpass Project; and for Other Purposes.

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Sheinita Bennett seconded by Commissioner Nelson. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

5. A Resolution of the City of Waycross, Georgia, To Formally Appoint Certain Designated and Qualified Members To The City’s Board of Ethics; and for Other Purposes.

Motion to approve made by Sheinita Bennett seconded by Commissioner Nelson. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

6. A Resolution by The Governing Authority of the City of Waycross, Georgia Calling For An Amendment to the Charter of The City of Waycross, Georgia, To Change the Method and Manner of Filling Vacancies in the Office of Mayor and Commissioners; To Amend Section 9 of the City Charter Pertaining to Filling Vacancies for Reasons Other Than The Expiration of the Term of Office; To Request the Georgia General Assembly To Amend the City Charter Relating to Filling Vacancies in the Office of Mayor and Commissioners; To Repeal Conflicting Charter Provisions; and for Other Purposes.

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Sheinita Bennett seconded by Commissioner Nelson. Vote taken- District-1, Shawn Roberts-Yes, District-2, Sheinita Bennett-Yes, District-3, Katrena Felder-Nay, District-4, Diane Hopkins-Nay, and District-5, Alvin Nelson-Yes.

With votes being 3-Yes, 2-No the Resolution Passed.

VI. LAST CALL and/or ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Bennett. All voted in favor and the motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 5:51

CITY OF WAYCROSS

BY:



MICHAEL-ANGELO JAMES, Mayor

ATTEST:

JACQUALINE POWELL, City Clerk

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MAYOR: At this time, we look to our city manager to call for our invocation.

CITY MANAGER:

So, Let us stand and pray. Our Lord Jesus, Holy Spirit, Lord, we come before you with thanksgiving and praise. We thank you that we can live in this country at this time. We thank you that we live in this state, and we thank you that we live in this city. You have truly blessed us and we give you thanks for that. And Lord, we're reminded again that tonight that righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne. So, Holy Spirit, I pray that you invade this place with the spirit of wisdom and understanding. Overshadow our commissioners and our mayor to give them wisdom. To have eyes to see that don't others don't see and ears to hear that others don't hear. May you be glorified this day. May you be glorified in this place. In the mighty name of Yeshua Hamashiach Jesus, our Messiah and King. Amen. Amen.

SPEAKER 3: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands. One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for Thank you.

SPEAKER 1: Thank you. At this time we will hear our cities. Clerk read our decorum.

CITY CLERK: Section two Dash 66 decorum. The mayor, Commissioner, staff and persons in attendance shall conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner, except when expressly authorized by the mayor. All remarks, comments and questions shall be directed to the mayor and not to individual commissioners, staff or persons in attendance. A commissioner, staff or person in attendance shall not speak at a meeting until the Commissioner, staff or person in attendance has been recognized by the mayor and granted permission to speak or ask a question. All comments, remarks or questions made by Commissioner, staff or persons in attendance shall address the item or motion that is being discussed or be pertinent to the resolution, ordinance or agenda item before the For the commission. No one shall make or use inappropriate, insulting, vulgar, obscene and or profane language, or make any offensive remarks or comments while speaking. Nor shall anyone accuse any other person of being immoral, violating any law, rule or regulation, or committing any ethical violation. Further, no one shall use this opportunity for public comment to speak about any activity undertaken for political reasons or ends, such as campaigning for votes before an election, campaigning for another person, making speeches, attempting to raise funds, etc. or otherwise promoting oneself or one's private position. Back to you, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR: Thank you, Madam Clerk. At this time, do we have any public remarks on official actions?

CITY CLERK: No, sir, we do not.

MAYOR: Okay. Hearing none, we move to our executive duties. Employee of the month.

SPEAKER 4: Mr. listen, here's my question.

MAYOR: I just want to thank you before we go that route. Thank you so much, chief. If you stay right there, you might have to monitor me tonight. We are asking now that the commission look at the agenda, and then afterwards, give a motion to either approve this agenda or make corrections. Commission. What is your pleasure?

NELSON: Move for approval.

MAYOR: We have a motion for approval from our fifth District Commissioner. Commissioner Nelson, is there a second? Second. We have a second from our second district Commissioner. Commissioner

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Bennett, any questions or comments? Any corrections? Hearing none. We'll move into voting. All in favor? Aye. Aye. All opposed? No. Motion carries. The agenda is approved.

CHIEF COX: Chief. Good evening, Mr. Mayor. Commission. I'm speaking to you this evening about an event that took place on Christmas Day. A multifamily multi floor dwelling caught fire in our community. To describe the incident, I will share my observations based on camera footage and from written on scene testimonies. Sergeant Jaleel Gage and Officer Robert Jacobs were the first officers to arrive on the scene. When they arrived, the house was fully engulfed with fire and they entered the residence to assist the residents to assist with the evacuation. The officers searched throughout the residence, including the second floor. Officers Devin McCourty and Hayden Blackburn arrived shortly thereafter, sprinting up to the hilt, sprinting up to the house to help evacuate anybody unable to escape on their own. Officer Blackburn and Officer Jacobs were later seen carrying their residents to safety across the street. Meanwhile, Sergeant Gage and Officer McCoy continued their search inside the residence, but soon they began to be overtaken by smoke. Sergeant Gage ensured that everyone was out of the house and ordered officer McCoy to get out, after hearing part of the roof that started to cave. I can tell you, I remember I sat in on the interviews for these four officers who were here with us tonight to be interviewed as police officers, and I can also tell you in them interviews, each and every one of them spoke either of service or wanting to help others in the community. Those officers walked the talk, and their actions on Christmas Day is the definition of service and helping others that they proclaimed. Each one of these officers will receive a commendation not for their actions on Christmas Day. I am also announcing that Officer Hayden Blackburn is the City of Waycross Employee of the month, and it also Devin McCoy is the WPD employee of the month.

CHIEF COX: And just a great group sergeant gauge. He just received several performance awards for the work he's been doing with us down at the department. I've got a couple more that's waiting on my desk for him to receive. He's also a recent employee of the month, not only for the PD, but also for the city of Waycross. He's been a great leader in patrol for us. Officer Jacobs, you remember just a couple of months ago, he was the City of Waycross Employee of the month. He's the one that likes to work traffic. I was telling you all about him, but, um, it's just a great group. But first, I would like to ask Officer Hayden Blackburn if he would step up.

MAYOR: Officer Hayden Blackburn on behalf of the City of Waycross. We want to acknowledge your outstanding performance, and I want to hand to you this great reminder. Keep on doing what you're doing. And this is for January 2025, along with a check.

MAYOR: If you will. Let's commend them again. Congratulations. Thank you.

CHIEF COX: And I'll be at and I'll be asking the others to step up. They will be receiving this commendation. The commendation is an award. It's a ribbon they'll be wearing on their uniform. But the commendation says Waycross Police Department Certificate of Commendation. Let it be known that the officers have acted meritoriously in service to their fellow men on December 25th, 2024, and is hereby awarded the certificate in recognition of that service dated seventh day of January 2025.

MAYOR: Mr. Jacobs, congratulations. Thank you.

CHIEF COX: I'm sorry. Jaleel gauge.

MAYOR: Oh, congratulations.

CHIEF COX: Thank Officer Hayden Blackburn.

MAYOR: Thank you. Congratulations. I guess I got on the wrong blue today, right? Yes, sir. That's all right. Let's commend them.

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MAYOR: At this time, we look to our cities. Clerk. Well, actually, we know we're not. I'm going to be reading off the January committee board appointees. So that's my time to read a little bit. At this time, we will have the election of our mayor pro temp. I need a motion.

HOPKINS: Mr. Mayor. I nominate Katrina Taylor.

MAYOR: We have a nomination for Miss Katrina Felder. Is there a second? Hearing none. The motion dies for lack of a second. We still need a motion for Mayor Pro Temp.

NELSON: Mr. mayor, I'll make a motion to nominate Commissioner Bennett.

MAYOR: We have a motion for Commissioner Bennett. Is there a second? I'll second the motion. We have a second from our commissioner. District one, Shawn Roberts. We'll now move into voting. We'll do this by voice vote. District one. Yes, sir. District two, District three. I abstain, I abstain. District four. Nay. And district five. Yay! Well, I will say yes. And that makes it three votes. And at this point. Congratulations, mayor Pro Temp, this is Miss Sheinita Bennett. Thank you. All right. Pronouncement of city Officers. I will present these and we'll confirm them. City Attorney Huey Spearman, official organ Waycross Journal Herald City Depository will be the Waycross Bank and trust. Amaris bank. City auditor. Mauldin and Jenkins CPAs. City engineer ESG engineering. Municipal court judge. Judge Douglas W Gibson. Municipal court judge pro temp Adrian Gibson. Insurance agents. Gallagher, five points. Oak Ridge insurance company. Cigna. Health. Anthem. Vision. New York life and Adad. Gallagher. Insurance. Travelers' liability and workers comp city election superintendent, Ware County Board of Elections and registration. And those are the first pronouncements at this time I'll entertain a motion to receive these city officers. So, moved. Mr. mayor. You have a motion from our Commissioner Nelson, a second from our Commissioner Bennett. We'll move into voting district one,

HOPKINS: Mr. mayor Discussion.

MAYOR: Yes.

HOPKINS: Um, on the insurance. Um, is Gallagher still ahead of it or. We got all these other people following them.

CITY MANAGER: Y'all are still ahead of us. Yes. Mr. Mayor Gallagher is still ahead of Gallagher.

SPEAKER 3: Yes.

HOPKINS: Okay. What's all these others?

CITY MANAGER: They Are all actually part of Gallagher Commissioner.

HOPKINS: Okay, so Gallagher will be the one and only for the insurance. Correct. Including workman's comp and everything.

CITY MANAGER: The major ones. Correct.

HOPKINS: Thank you.

MAYOR: Thank you for the clarity. Okay. Any other questions, comments or statements? Hearing none. We'll move into voting starting with district one. Yes, sir. District two. Yes, sir. District three. Yes. District four. Yes. And district five. Yes, sir. Unanimous pronouncement is confirmed. Appointment to executive positions recommended by mayor and confirmed by the Commission. Downtown Waycross Development Authority. Mayor. Library Board of Trustees, Ex-Officio board

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member. We're looking at Needing a commissioner to stand in this spot. We need a nomination. I believe we mentioned Commissioner.

NELSON: I nominate Commissioner Bennett.

MAYOR: Commissioner. Bennett. Commissioner. Is there a second?

ROBERTS: I second?

MAYOR: There's a second for Commissioner Bennett. Be ex officio board member for the library board of trustees. Okay. And we'll do the vote when we do the vote. Okay. Waycross Convention and Visitors Bureau, post two. Clint Bowman is reappointed. South Georgia regional commission mayor. Transportation planning coordinating committee. Mayor. Where County Board of Health, the mayor, Waycross-ware County Development Authority mayor, and Waycross-ware County Chamber of Commerce. Mayor. I need a motion for the appointment to the executive positions.

NELSON: Move for approval.

MAYOR: You have a motion for approval, Commissioner Nelson, Is there a second?

BENNETT: Second.

MAYOR: Second from Commissioner Bennett. All in favor, say aye. All opposed? No. Motion carries. Appointments approved. Pension Committee for retirement fund. Mayor. Michelangelo James. City manager Ulysses D Rayford. City attorney Huey W Spearman. Finance director Greg Smith. City commissioner. We need an appointment. Is there a motion?

HOPKINS: Mr. mayor, I nominate Katrina Felter.

MAYOR: We have a motion from our commissioner. Commissioner Hopkins for Commissioner Katrina Felder to be appointed as city commissioner on the pension Committee. Is there a second?

MAYOR: There no second there.

MAYOR: We need a city commissioner to stand in the place of this appointment.

BENNETT: Mr. mayor, I nominate Commissioner Nelson.

MAYOR: We have a. Nomination from Commissioner Bennett for Commissioner Nelson, for city commissioner under the pension committee. Is there a second?

ROBERTS: I'll second it.

MAYOR: Have a second from Commissioner District one. Sean Roberts and human resources director Marissa Hendricks. Commissioner, we have heard the list of the retirement fund. Is there a motion to receive this list?

BENNETT: Move for approval. Mr. mayor,

MAYOR: We. Have a motion for approval. Commissioner Bennett, is there a second?

ROBERTS: I'll second.

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MAYOR: Second from our Commissioner Roberts. Any comments or questions concerning this list? Hearing none. We're moving to voting. All in favor Aye. Aye. All opposed?

HOPKINS: No. No.

MAYOR: One. No. Three yeses. Pension committee passes. At this time, we look to our ethics board recommendation. And I look to our city's attorney.

HUEY SPEARMAN: Mr. Mayor and commissioners, you have before you the board of ethics decision regarding the case of Clayton Nelson versus Carmena. I'm sorry, Commissioner Katrina, case number 2024 001. Uh, the board decision, which has already been submitted to the commission, recommended that um, Commissioner Felder, uh, receive a penalty of referral to city court for prosecution. So, at this time, the commission has to decide whether or not you will accept the recommendation of the Board of Ethics or whether you would do something different. Your choices according to the city code or affirm the decision of the Board of Ethics. Reverse the decision of the Board of Ethics and enter a decision of a less severe nature or remain the case to the Board of Ethics for further consideration. And just for clarification on the phrase less severe nature, the Board of Ethics had six options. Once they found that there was a violation of the Code of ethics. Those options were no admonishment and no further action.

HUEY SPEARMAN: A public reprimand and admonishment not to violate the ethics code in the future. A formal reprimand. Public censure. Recommendation for termination. Resignation or recall, or recommendation of prosecution in city court. And each one of those options are more severe when you start with the first one and go to the last one, and the last one last one is the most severe one. The Board of Ethics again decided to make the recommendation of prosecution in city court. Now that that order is before this city commission, you have your three options, which is to affirm that decision, reverse the decision, or remand the case back to the Board of Ethics for further consideration.

MAYOR: Okay. Commissioner, you have heard the recommendation made by the Board of Ethics. What is your pleasure, Mr. Mayor?

NELSON: I have a question, please. Yes. So if we were to. Um, the second choice you said to remand, not remand. But, um, what's the second one? You said reversed the decision. Reversed the decision? If we were to reverse the decision, the next option under that Under that reversal would be for us to do what.

HUEY SPEARMAN: The code says, enter a decision of a less severe nature.

NELSON: And that less severe nature, and that.

HUEY SPEARMAN: Less severe nature could be either one or the other five choices.

NELSON: Including termination.

HUEY SPEARMAN: Uh, yes, recommendation for termination, resignation or recall.

SPEAKER 3: Okay.

NELSON: Okay. Mr. mayor. I move to make a motion to. Reverse the decision and move for termination. Is that clear?

HUEY SPEARMAN: That's clear.

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MAYOR: Okay. We have a motion. To reverse the decision of the Board of Ethics and move. There's a motion for termination.

MAYOR: Is there a second?

BENNETT: Second. Second.

MAYOR: We have a motion and a second.

MAYOR: Any questions or comments, Commissioner?

HOPKINS: Yes, sir. Mr. mayor.

MAYOR: Commissioner Hopkins.

HOPKINS: Um, can I not make a motion?

MAYOR: Not at this time. There's one motion on the floor.

HOPKINS: Okay. After. Second.

MAYOR: Afterwards. That's correct. That's correct. So, we have a motion and a second. The only thing we can do now is have discussion on the motion.

HUEY SPEARMAN: Mr. Mayor, the only comment that I would offer is that with respect to termination, the code doesn't specify how that actually is implemented, whether that involves. The voters getting involved with, uh, with some sort of petition for recall, although it does mention recall here. I don't know if the if this board has the ultimate authority to terminate her. Uh, but, um, I just wanted to make it clear that the enforcing that particular option may be somewhat of a challenge.

NELSON: Mr. mayor. May I say something?

MAYOR: You may. Yes. This is discussion time.

NELSON: Given what he just said, I would like to retract that motion. Because I don't want any More confrontational or any more misunderstandings because they could go down a rabbit hole for a long period of time. So, I want to retract that motion if I can, Mr. Mayor.

HUEY SPEARMAN: You can retract the motion. Does the person who seconded also retract the second?

BENNETT: Yes.

MAYOR: So, there's a retraction on the motion, and the second has been retracted as well.

MAYOR: Now we open the floor again.

NELSON: Mr. Mayor. I would like to make the motion. I move to accept the board's decision and forward their findings to the City of Court for prosecution. Furthermore, in this motion, I propose that the court and our Chief of Police, Tommy Cox, notify the Georgia Bureau of Investigation to examine the evidence, including all credit card transactions from the last three years, to validate and determine if there are any more anymore criminal actions that have occurred.

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MAYOR: We have a motion from our commissioner Nelson. Is there a second?

BENNETT: Second of a motion and second. We move to discussion.

HOPKINS: Mr. mayor.

MAYOR: Commissioner Hopkins.

HOPKINS: Mr. attorney. Um. We cannot. We cannot proceed to remove her. Am I correct?

HUEY SPEARMAN: That's correct.

HOPKINS: So this is only a suggestion.

HUEY SPEARMAN: That's a suggestion. But that's not your motion. That's not the motion that's on the floor at this time, though.

MAYOR: The motion on the floor at this time, Commissioner, is to take the recommendation that the Ethics Board presented, along with submitting to the GBI and allowing all credit card transactions to be challenged or checked, along with any other criminal activities that may have been taking place. We have a motion and a second.

MAYOR: Any further discussion? Commissioner Bennett.

BENNETT: In lieu of this, can I ask the question lieu of this? Can we also pose that during the findings with the GBI that she be resigned?

HUEY SPEARMAN: No, you can't do that. I mean if you if the GBI is called in, in addition to the prosecution in city court, the court has to decide what happens at that point.

BENNETT: Okay. Thank you. Mayor. Okay.

MAYOR: Any further questions or comments?

SPEAKER 3: Yeah.

MAYOR: If you're ready, Mr. Mayor.

BENNETT: Ma'am. Point of order, Mr. Mayor. Okay, okay. Talking.

MAYOR: Okay, so we're going to move into voting.

HUEY SPEARMAN: Mr. mayor, just for the record, everyone can vote except Commissioner Felder.

MAYOR: Okay. Very good.

HOPKINS: Mr. mayor, I can come back with the motion. Right?

MAYOR: You can. You can have a motion.

HOPKINS: Okay.

MAYOR: But it would have to come after the vote. Okay.

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MAYOR: Is that correct?

HUEY SPEARMAN: That's correct. Okay.

HUEY SPEARMAN: I mean, but if the vote satisfies the disposals of the matter, I mean, there's nothing else to vote on.

MAYOR: Understood. Okay. I'll call a vote. This is a be a roll call. Vote. District one, Commissioner Shawn Roberts. Yes, sir. District two, Commissioner Sheinita Bennett. Yes, sir. District four Commissioner Diane Hopkins. Nay. District five, Commissioner Alvin Nelson. Yes, sir. We have three votes.

MAYOR: And for that reason, if I'm not mistaken, it's the three. I needed three.

HUEY SPEARMAN: Yes, ma'am.

MAYOR: It is now the consideration of the commission to send this to the city court.

HUEY SPEARMAN: And I will prepare an order of the city commission, very similar to the orders of the Board of Ethics that you've seen to that effect. Yes, sir.

MAYOR: Any further movement here on this matter? I think the matter is closed now. Yes. Okay.

HOPKINS: Except for my motion. Right.

MAYOR: And Miss Hopkins wants to make a make a motion.

HUEY SPEARMAN: Well, the motion carried. So, the matter has been disposed of?

MAYOR: Exactly.

HOPKINS: Okay. And if I don't know that I made some comments. I thought you all said that I could make a motion.

HUEY SPEARMAN: If it failed, like Mr. Nelson.

HOPKINS: I wasn't told that.

MAYOR: So, we're moving to official reports. City manager.

CITY MANAGER: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I don't have an official report at this time.

MAYOR: And we'll move to the consideration of our consent calendar.

CITY CLERK: Our consent calendar. Approval of minutes. Waycross City Commission planning and information session Monday, November the 4th, 2024 at 5 p.m. Waycross City Commission Meeting Tuesday, November the 5th, 2024 at 5 p.m. Waycross Special Call Meeting Wednesday, November the 6th, 2024 at 5 p.m. Waycross City Commission Planning and Information session. Monday, November the 18th, 2024 at 5 p.m. Waycross City Commission Meeting. Tuesday, November the 19th, 2024 at 5 p.m. There are no ordinance second readings at this time. We have some privilege license renewals. We have Potbelly Seafood Steak and Grill, J Mitchell, 1195 Ossie Davis Parkway, Waycross, Georgia 31501. Beer, wine and liquor consumption on premises, Hampton Inn, K Thomas, 1720 Brunswick Highway, Waycross, Georgia 31501. Beer and wine package sales only. Um buggies C Patel, 1545 Ossie Davis Parkway, Waycross, Georgia 31501. Beer and wine package sales only. Wallace N Patel,

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1565 Ossie Davis Parkway, Waycross, Georgia 31501. Beer and wine package sales only. My Place Lounge, A Wilson, 1007 Albany Avenue, Waycross, Georgia 31501. Beer, wine and liquor consumption on premises. Back to you, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR: Thank you, Madam Clerk. We have heard the consent calendar read by our city clerk. What is your pleasure?

NELSON: Move for approval.

MAYOR: We have a motion for approval. And a second. Motion by Commissioner Nelson. Seconded by Commissioner Bennett. Being that we don't comment on the consent calendar. We'll move into voting. All in favor? Aye. Aye. All opposed? No. Motion carries. Consent. Calendar passes.

CITY CLERK: Madam clerk, there are no previous licenses. No bids, no ordinances. At this time. We'll go on with resolutions. We have a resolution of the Waycross City Commission pledging to practice and promote stability in the city of Waycross, and for other purposes. By adopting this resolution, the City Commission will pledge to promote civility in the execution of their legislative duties and responsibilities between city officials, city staff, and members of public. The commission will also pledge to strive for mutual respect in order to achieve mutual goals, recognizing that tolerance and civility are imperative to success. Back to you, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Commissioner, you've heard the resolution read to promote civility in the city of Waycross. What is your pleasure?

NELSON: Move for approval.

MAYOR: Have a motion for approval from our commissioner Nelson. Is there a second? Second. Have a second from our Commissioner Bennett. Any comments or questions regarding this resolution?

HOPKINS: Yes, sir. I'd like for the city attorney to explain a little more to me, please. Okay.

HUEY SPEARMAN: Yes, ma'am. This is a resolution that the city adopts, I believe, every year, uh, in order to, um, recognize that civility among commissioners as well as civility, civility among your constituents and citizens is citizens is important in order to be successful as a as a city. And so, every year the city adopts this resolution, making certain pledges that are outlined in the resolution. One example civility by city officials in the execution of their legislative duties and responsibilities fosters respect, kindness, and thoughtfulness between officials. Um. It also states that civility between city officials and staff, uh, promotes civility. Uh, and it also indicates that, um, for the good and well-being of the residents of the city of Waycross. Uh, it is important that civility, uh, be practiced.

HOPKINS: Okay. Thank you.

MAYOR: Okay. Any further questions or comments regarding the resolution? Hearing? None. We'll move into voting district one. Yes, sir. District two. Yes, sir. District three. I abstain. District four. No. And district five. Yes, sir.

MAYOR: The resolution passes. At this time, we look to our city clerk.

CITY CLERK: A resolution to establish qualifying fees for the city of Waycross elections for 2025. By adopting this resolution, the City Commission will establish qualifying fees for municipal elections for 2025, including Commission District one, two and three. The commission will also set qualifying dates and times. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

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MAYOR: Thank you, Madam Clerk. We have a resolution establishing qualifying fees for the City of Waycross. Elections for the year 2025. Districts one, two and three. What is your pleasure? Commission.

NELSON: Move for approval.

MAYOR: We have a motion for approval by Commissioner Nelson. Is there a second?

ROBERTS: I second.

MAYOR: We have a second from our Commissioner Roberts. Any questions concerning this resolution?

HOPKINS: I would like to know if this date will be.

MAYOR: Commissioner Hopkins has a question.

HOPKINS: Approximately when will this election take place?

HUEY SPEARMAN: November the 4th, 2025. And the election will begin will be on Tuesday, November the 4th, 2025, August 19th through August 22nd would be the qualifying days for candidates wishing to run for election. Each day, qualifying hours are from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., closed from noon until 1 p.m. for lunch. Uh, and the resolution also indicates that, um, The deadline for qualifying to vote in the municipal election for the office of commissioner is October the 6th. Early advanced voting will begin October 14th and end October 31st, and the polls will be open from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. a mandatory Saturday voting will be on October the 18th and October the 25th, 2025, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Thank you.

MAYOR: Any further questions regarding this resolution? Hearing none. We'll move into voting district one. Yes, sir. District two. Yes, sir. District three. I Abstain. District four. Yes. And district five. Yes, sir. Resolution passes. Madam City Clerk.

CITY CLERK: A resolution of the City of Waycross, Georgia to reschedule city work session due to the MLK National holiday and for other purposes. By adopting this resolution, the City Commission will reschedule the mid-month work session currently scheduled for Monday, January 20th, 2025, at 5 p.m. to Tuesday, January the 21st at 3 p.m. due to the Martin Luther King Junior National Holiday that will be observed on the third Monday in January 2025. The regular city. The regular City Commission meeting will occur at 5 p.m. on January 21st, 2025, as scheduled. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Commissioners, you have heard the resolution read by our city clerk to move the January 20th meeting to January 21st at three and then the actual meeting at five. What is your pleasure?

BENNETT: Move for approval, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR: We have a motion for approval by Commissioner Bennett. Is there a second? Second. We have a second by Commissioner Roberts. Any discussion or questions regarding this resolution. Hearing none, we'll move into voting. All in favor? Aye. Aye. All opposed? No. Motion carries. Resolution passes. Madam clerk.

CITY CLERK: A resolution of the City of Waycross, Georgia to approve standard utility agreement. Contract item agreement with the Georgia Department of Transportation. GDOT to relocate city facilities in connection with the Ossie Davis Parkway overpass project and for other purposes. By adopting this resolution, the City Commission will approve a utility relocation agreement with the

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Georgia Department of Transportation to move and relocate city water and sewer facilities in connection with the Ossie Davis overpass project, at a cost of \$88,006.21 to be paid for from the water and sewer account. Back to you, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR: Thank you, Madam Commissioner. You have heard the resolution read by our City clerk regarding the approval of the standard utility agreement with the Georgia Department of Department of Transportation. What is your pleasure?

BENNETT: Move for approval. Mr. mayor.

MAYOR: We have a motion for approval from our Commissioner Bennett. Is there a second?

NELSON: Second.

MAYOR: We have a second from our Commissioner Nelson. Any questions or comments regarding this resolution? Hearing none. We'll move into voting. All in favor? Aye. All opposed? No. Motion carries. Resolution passes. Madam clerk.

CITY CLERK: A resolution of the City of Waycross, Georgia, to formally appoint certain designated and qualified members to the city's Board of Ethics and for other purposes. By adopting this resolution, the City Commission will appoint 12 members of the pool for the Board of Ethics previously nominated by the mayor and commissioners to serve in the event. A Board of Ethics members will remain in the pool for a period of two years, or until successors have been appointed. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Commissioner, you've heard the resolution read by our city clerk. What is your pleasure?

BENNETT: Move for approval.

MAYOR: We have a motion for approval from our Commissioner Bennett. Is there a second? Second. You have a second from our Commissioner Nelson. Any comments or questions regarding this resolution? Hearing none. We'll move into voting. All in favor? Aye. All opposed? No. Motion carries. This resolution passes. Madam clerk.

CITY CLERK: A resolution by the governing authority of the City of Waycross, Georgia, calling for an amendment to the charter of the City of Waycross, Georgia, to change the method and manner of filling vacancies in the office of. Of filling vacancies in the Office of Mayor and Commissioners. To amend section nine of the City Charter pertaining to filling vacancies for reasons other than the expiration of the term of office. To request the Georgia General Assembly to amend the charter, the city charter relating to filling vacancies in the office of mayor and Commissioners to repel conflicting charter provisions and for other purposes. By adopting this resolution, the City Commission will call for an amendment to the city charter regarding the filling of vacancies for the offices of Mayor and City Commission. Currently, the charter only provides for filling of a vacancy for reasons other than the expiration of the term of office by special election and does not include the mayor. The proposed charter amendment would provide that if a vacancy occurs for the office of mayor or commissioner within one- and one-half years after a regular election, the Board of Elections shall, within ten days after the occurrence, call a special election to fill the vacancy for the balance of the unexpired term. If the vacancy occurs more than one- and one-half years after the date of the regular election, then a person shall be appointed by a majority of the total membership of membership of the Commission, but prior to appointment, the appointee must obtain a signed petition with 10% of the district registered voters agreeing to the appointment. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Having heard the resolution, is there a motion to receive this.

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BENNETT: Move for approval?

MAYOR: We have a motion for approval by our Commissioner Bennett. Is there a second? Second. Have a second from our Commissioner Nelson. Any questions?

HOPKINS: Yes, sir.

MAYOR: Commissioner Hopkins.

HOPKINS: City attorney, to explain in depth what we're talking about, please.

HUEY SPEARMAN: Yes, ma'am. Uh, mayor and commissioners, the city charter currently provides that if there is a vacancy on the city commission, that that vacancy has to be filled by a special election. It does not make a provision for what happens if there is a vacancy regarding the office of mayor. Uh, there is no other provision in the charter for filling a vacancy other than waiting for the special election to be scheduled in order to fill that vacancy. And as you know, we, uh, we missed the first opportunity back during the late spring. And then we had to wait until November in order to fill the vacancy for district one. Uh, this resolution is based on how they do it in Columbus, Georgia, the city of Columbus. Uh, what that charter provides is that if there is a vacancy that occurs within one- and one-half years after a regular election, then the Board of Elections within ten days of that vacancy has to call for a special election and notify the newspaper and post it on their site. Um, that a special election will be held. Uh, if the vacancy occurs more than one- and one-half years after the election, which is what we had with Commissioner Davis. Then the mayor and commissioners appoint someone from that district to fill the vacancy, but the appointee has to get a petition circulated in that district and get the signatures of at least 10% of the registered voters of that district in order to be approved by the mayor and commission.

HOPKINS: Okay. And what district are you referring to? There are five districts.

HUEY SPEARMAN: Where, if any, district where there happens to be a vacancy, it would apply to all five.

HOPKINS: Okay. So, this would have to be approved by 10% of the voters in all five districts.

HUEY SPEARMAN: No. In the district where the vacancy occurs.

HOPKINS: Like if this mayor, something happened to him Damn that 10% would be only in his in his district.

HUEY SPEARMAN: Well, he's elected at large. So, it would have to be 10% of the registered voters in, in in all five districts with the mayor. But if it happened in district four, for an example or a district, well, district four, it would just be 10% of the voters in your district or district five, it would just be 10% of the voters in district five would have to sign the petition approving the person to be appointed.

HOPKINS: So basically, that's what we have now, other than we don't have anything that's that like Mr. Davis's situation, um, where we had to wait him out. Correct.

HUEY SPEARMAN: Well, no, we don't have that now. Uh, what we have now is just a special election. If there's a vacancy, it is filled by special election. There is no appointment of anyone in that to that particular.

HOPKINS: So, this so this this position will be appointed and not elected until.

HUEY SPEARMAN: Appointed until the term expires. Okay.

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HOPKINS: Right. Could it happen in March. And the election was in the following October or November. That's when it would take place.

HUEY SPEARMAN: That's right. That's when they elect. That's the person would have to be elected at that point. And the appointment would be up until the election.

HOPKINS: Okay. I thought we already had something in place because that happened when Marion, um, was elected because, um, we she had to be, uh, we had to go ahead and do it and let her let that position be elected because there wasn't anybody to fill that position.

HUEY SPEARMAN: I don't know what happened with that situation, but, If there's a vacancy, it has to be filled by special election. Okay, that's what I thought it provides. And that's all that it provides. Okay. Thank you.

MAYOR: Okay. Any further questions or comments? Hearing none. We'll move into voting. All in favor? Aye. Aye. All opposed? No.

HOPKINS: Nay.

FELDER: Nay.

MAYOR: We'll do a voice vote. District one. Yes, sir. District two. Yes, sir. District three nay. District four nay and district five Yes. Motion carries. Send it to the General Assembly. All right. We're now moving into last call. Do want to acknowledge the passing of.

MAYOR: Deacon, Albert Flynn, and also Mrs. Ruth Perkins. And we send our condolences to those families who I've mentioned. I'm sure others have acknowledgments as well. I'll start now at district one. Any last words before we close?

ROBERTS: I just like to thank everybody for coming and have a good night.

MAYOR: District two. Congratulations to everyone that received their awards. And, Mr. Mayor, if I can, I just want to remind everybody about the Martin Luther King parade and the purple one. Five K and there will be vendors and the vendor fee will be \$20. And you can contact Patrick Simmons, and he will give you further instructions on what to do. And I want to thank everybody for coming out and everybody have a safe week and a weekend. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR: Thank you. District three.

FELDER: Thank you, mayor. I appreciate everyone for coming out tonight. Thank you for your time. And thank you for your invested interest in this city and how we follow parliamentary procedure. I'd also like to extend my sincerest condolences to the Flynn Family, also Charles Johnson as well as the Davis family. Back to you, mayor.

MAYOR: Thank you. District four.

HOPKINS: Um, I'd like to thank everybody for coming tonight. Um, I don't think we had any guest speakers tonight, but, um, we thank you all for your input. And, um, I would like to say that, um, I think that the Katrina Felder situation, um, should be returned with no incident because she has done no more than other commissioners. And I think that that's the way that that should go. Thank you.

MAYOR: And district five.

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NELSON: Oh, I hate going last because everybody says everything. Um, ditto to everyone. Um, my sincere condolences to the Flynn family, of course, because they're friends. And thank the officers for coming up. And they always do a great job to me. But thank you all for coming out as well. That's it, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR: Thank you. And I want to thank Commissioner Felder for reminding me of the Davis family, because that's my family as well. And they're going to be that celebration will be Saturday at Greater Saint Paul, along with I know the Flynn family homegoing service will be this coming Thursday at one at the mother church at First Born Church of the Living God. Is there an executive session tonight?

CITY MANAGER: Uh, no, Mr. Mayor. Okay.

HUEY SPEARMAN: Mr. mayor, before you adjourn, uh, two resolutions call for the signature of the mayor and the commissioners. The civility resolution and the charter amendment resolution. Very good.

MAYOR: So before everyone disappears, we'll. I'll make sure you give it to them to let them sign. They can walk down and sign, or you can bring it up to sign however you choose to do. Okay. I'll entertain a motion for adjournment. So moved, Mr. Mayor. We have a motion for adjournment. The motion was made by Commissioner Nelson. The second was made by Commissioner Bennett. All in favor? Aye. All opposed? No. Motion carries. This meeting is adjourned. Everyone have a great evening.