

MINUTES
WAYCROSS CITY COMMISSION PLANNING & INFORMATION SESSION
MONDAY, AUGUST 4, 2025, | 5:00 P.M.
WAYCROSS CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS
(417 PENDLETON STREET, WAYCROSS, GA)

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Waycross City Commission Meeting was called to order on Monday, August 4, 2025, at 5 pm by Mayor James. The meeting was held in the Commission Chambers of City Hall. Present were Commissioners Shawn Roberts, Katrena Felder, and Mayor Pro Temp, Sheinita Bennett (In at 5:18pm)

A. Invocation: City Manager, Ulysses Rayford

Invocation led by Pastor Rod Swinson, Family Worship Center

B. Pledge of Allegiance

II. GUESTS:

Ms. Shannon Gregory, 4855 White Hall Church Road, Waycross- talked about the proposed poultry facility in Douglas and her worry about them coming into Waycross to do business and the strong possibility of polluting out waters.

Dr. Earl Martin, 902 Elizabeth Street, Waycross- talked on concerns he has with the infrastructure and also the need to provide the homeless with a place to shower.

III. TRAVEL/TRAINING SCHEDULE AND REQUESTS

IV. PLANNING & INFORMATION SESSION

A. Discussion Items: *****SEE DISCUSSION NOTES*****

1. Vacation Time Rollover Discussion
2. Infrastructure Update
3. Code Red Tutorial
4. City App Tutorial
5. Parks Grant Discussion
6. City Hall Window Tinting
7. Appointment To Aging Advisory Council SGRC

B. Privilege Licenses Renewals:

1. Tienda Vallarta LLC, F. Banuelos, 914 Memorial Drive, Waycross Ga, Beer, Package Sales Only.

Section 6.00.02 –Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The ADA prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with a disability. The City will provide reasonable accommodation to qualified applicants and employees when necessary to permit them to perform the essential functions of their jobs.

C. Privilege Licenses: n/a

D. Proposed Ordinances:

1. An Ordinance To Amend the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Waycross, Georgia, and the Zoning Map; To Rezone The Property Described Herein Located At 910 Bertha Street Between Byck Street and Sylvan Street, Parcel WA0409 031, From R-50 Residential To R-50MH Residential Mobile Home, To Set An Effective Date; To Repeal Conflicting Ordinances; And For Other Purposes.
2. An Ordinance To Amend the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Waycross, Georgia, and the Zoning Map; To Rezone The Property Described Herein Located At 1200 Colley Street Between Martin Luther King Drive And Quarterman Street, Parcel WA0710076A From RS-Single Family To R-45 Residential; To Set An Effective Date; To Repeal Conflicting Ordinances; And For Other Purposes.
3. An Ordinance To Amend the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Waycross, Georgia, and the Zoning Map; to Rezone The Property Described Herin Located At 406 Gilmore Street Between Drane Street And Pendergast Street, Parcel WA1105 039A From R 50HD Historic To C2 Highway Commercial; To Set An Effective Date; To Repeal Conflicting Ordinances; And For Other Purposes.

E. Proposed Resolutions: n/a

F. City Attorney Report:

G. City Managers Report:

The Dailey Update Report will be discussed tomorrow.

H. Last Call

I. Adjourn to Executive Session

There was a motion to go into executive session for finance by Commissioner Felder, seconded by Commissioner Roberts. All voted in favor and the mayor adjourned to go into executive session at 6:03 pm.

J. Adjournment

CITY OF WAYCROSS

BY:

+ Michael Angelo James
MICHAEL-ANGELO JAMES, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jacqueline Powell
JACQUALINE POWELL, City Clerk



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MAYOR: We want to thank our city manager for calling for Pastor Rod Simpson. Thank you so very much for our invitation. We pledge at this time we look to our city clerk. Do we have any guests?

CITY CLERK: Uh, yes, sir. Mister mayor, we do. We have two. Our first guest, Miss Shannon Gregory. If you would step to the podium. Miss Gregory is here tonight to talk about a proposed poultry facility. Uh, in Douglas. Miss Gregory, if you will state your name and address. We request that you stated for the record, please. Thank you.

GUEST #1: I'm Shannon Gregory. My address is 4885 Whitehall Church Road. So, I guess you're probably scratching your head and wondering why I'm here talking to you about something that's going on in Douglas. Well, here's the thing. Hurricane Helene came through and really walloped the state of Georgia. Coffee County alone lost over 300 chicken houses. And now, let me state this to you. Be clear. I'm not against chicken houses. Not one bit. We all eat chicken. It's the location that I am upset about to fix this deficit of the 300 chicken houses. It has been proposed that on a 1000-acre plot of land, 60 commercial chicken houses will be placed on the banks of the Satilla River, with the closest chicken house being located less than 400ft from the Satilla River. Okay, so we got into the situation simply because the hurricane came through and flattened chicken houses. So, what happens when the next hurricane comes through and flattens those chicken houses? It is because of that risk that I think everyone downstream, including the city of Waycross, needs to pay attention to this, because where is all of that chicken waste going to go when a rain event happens? I was at the commission meeting this morning and there was a 30-minute delay because of flooding issues. This chicken facility will be built on a floodplain. So, when it rains, you will have chicken waste, chicken carcasses and everything involved with it flowing downstream to Waycross. And it is important for all of the city officials to know that this is an emerging threat. I will be hosting a town hall meeting in the Waycross Auditorium next week, on Monday at 6 p.m., to go over these issues as well as the concerns of citizens going over the issues that they are concerned about with the proposed facility.

MAYOR: Thank you. Madam clerk.

CITY CLERK: the next guest is, Doctor Earl Martin. Mr. Martin, you know the routine. Mr. Martin is here to talk about the infrastructure problems, Mr. Martin.

GUEST #2: Yeah. Earl Martin, 902 Elizabeth Street. resident in district three. And I wanted to bring up as a representative of the community and also speak for OATH Okefenokee Alliance for the homeless. the Okefenokee Alliance for the homeless is now, uh, they have moved in several different times over the years, but they are now presently at 115 Albany Avenue. And my concern is that, uh, when I have gone out of part of First Baptist Church, have been volunteering to go do meals and things like that, and found out, lo and behold, that the bathrooms are backed up and it's on the city side. They've tried several times to get it, and what's happened is that the bathrooms are not there. And this is a I think that sometimes the homeless are not viewed as, uh, they're kind of down on the list, a priority list, but I think that they someone sometimes they need a spokesman. So, I've appointed myself that spokesman. They have suggested the possibility of getting a porta potty. Perhaps the city coming in with getting a porta potty to be able to provide bathroom facilities for that, or we understand about infrastructure, and we're going to be dealing with that tonight, and we're going to be dealing with that in the future. But I think that it's something that particularly this is an acute issue related to both, which I consider a very important ministry in this city. Uh, also just in final and I may be an error if I. Step across the line. But I would like to congratulate yourself, Mr. Mayor and Miss Commissioner Felder related to the recent honors of being elected to officials in those in those situations. And I it is a feather in Waycross' cap. And we. And it's not a chicken feather. Thank you.

MAYOR: Thank you, Madam Clerk.

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CITY CLERK: Sir, that is all.

MAYOR: At this time, we will turn the remainder of our agenda to our city manager, Mr. Rayford.

CITY MANAGER: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. At this time, we have no traveling training scheduled or requests. Uh, we'll go ahead and move into the planning information session. Mr. mayor. The vision and mission remain the same. Big buckets as far as city priorities remain the same. As far as remain the same with one change missing, mayor as instructed I removed the word homeless and insert the word unhoused citizens as replacement. Canals and alleys. As we discussed three meetings back, we will touch on individual priority each meeting moving forward. The first one was the canals. And allies we had a long discussion on that. we talked about where we are at this time. The next discussion was on blighted properties. And although this is not the main discussion tonight, I'll touch on this for a few seconds. I did meet with some citizens after we did our test pilot and as you all know, we have discovered a probable issue with some of the inventory of properties in that area. one thing we found out yesterday, last week, the citizens that are boarding those areas where they property behind them or beside them was overgrown we find out now, in many cases, they tried to buy those properties or attempted to buy them. When they inquired about those properties, upon finding out these properties had a significant amount of back taxes on them and loans of course they decided not to buy those properties. So, a question was asked about maybe removing the lien on the properties as they wait for those citizens to buy those properties. And it's something I think that the commission should look at moving forward in those cases removing that lien, it'll get paid back once those citizens start paying taxes on those properties when they pick it up. So, it's a win for the for the citizens. we do need to discuss with the tax commissioner's office about how that will work moving forward. But again, that's one of those discovery learning that we found out that that might be a way, uh, of course not to mitigate all the properties, but some of the properties will cost way across the board by citizens wanting to just, you know, make those areas around them look better. So, it might be an option we could look at. So, I just want to let the commission know that to think about that. And we'll follow up on this in a few meetings down the road once we do some more investigations. Mr. mayor, the next, uh, actual product we're going to talk about tonight is going to be unhoused citizens. The commissioner where we're at on that, just the things that we're doing. so, as everyone knows, uh, this is a big problem across the country, unhoused citizens and unhoused citizens contains a lot of different groups of individuals. So, we're trying to do right now is kind of circle back and look at the problem scope to determine what it is that we're trying to fix or actually can fix. And we define the problem. And we've had many discussions with many groups so far. but I've decided that we probably need to go back and, and kind of live with some expectations on what actually can be done for the situation. We're doing that now. at the same time, we look at current policy, as we know there are some pending changes in policy at the federal state level that might force, local action here on the ground. So, we are kind of researching how that affects us, when it does go into place and then current procedures. So that would affect some of our procedures for our police and some of our other organizations that help out with our unhoused citizens.

And with that, Mr. Mayor some of the things that we continue to look at, of course, the shelter and we're missing the shelter, uh, it's always the main point of topic. but as the commission knows, it's not necessarily the one answer. but we do continue to look at options for a shelter. but I would like to know, just having the shelter without programs, without funding, without staff, uh, it's probably going to cause more problems than it can solve. But we continue to look at that. of course, programs out there and then, uh, community support. So, we welcome any kind of help from citizens. And to be honest, Mr. Mayor, we're going to need that. we do have a lot of people that say they want to help. And, uh, being transparent, honest, nobody really shows up when it's time to show up. So, we just want those who really care about unhoused citizens to show up as well or else will continue to be a problem? something we're trying to do as far as another I say inventory. I just mean just the location of where and how citizens are living right now. to build upon that and then resource certification. Uh, we did have a forum last week. We brought some agencies together; it was a pretty good turnout. This meeting was solely focused on how citizens direct dependency in other areas with citizens in need. Mr. Mayor and

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commissioner looking at probably doing that more than once a year, maybe quarterly. so, it can be consistent with it and hopefully that'll gravitate with more citizens and get more information, uh, moving down the road and that last piece, the education and training it goes back to the end to the shelter. So definitely going to need, uh, to see education and training, just ways to uplift those citizens, get them back on their feet so they can be sustainable and not fall back to the circumstances that got them there. So again, that might be something that's not in the city's will. it might be required by other agencies. And again, for that to happen, it's got to be some true collaboration. no one agency can do it by themselves. And we definitely got to work together. And I'll pause there for any questions or comments by the Commission on how citizens. Mr. mayor.

MAYOR: Thank you for the comments. I just wanted to share a couple of things on this topic. The National League of Cities is now producing and has produced a set of courses to help address some of these issues. One of these sessions will be August the 7th, and that time frame will be at 2 p.m. And then there's another on August the 11th at 12 p.m. And of course, I know that we have done some things here as far as meeting for the homeless, the various stakeholders. But I want to commend you on bringing this back to our conversation, because we do need to as a city community. Look to see what we can do to mitigate the problem or help assist those who are dealing with the unsheltered. And with that, I'll just open the floor for commissioners to have any questions regarding this conversation. And I'll start with district one.

COMMISSIONER ROBERTS: Yes, sir. About the housing, and some of the policies, if you don't mind when some of These Houses that we do have now and I think we have maybe sort of touched on this one time before, but do you think that it's any kind of way that we might adjust some of these codes?

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Point of order, Mr. Mayor Commissioner Roberts Is A landlord homeowner. And I think Those questions. You are a landlord who rents to two tenants, but to ask those questions that that is a conflict of interest because it may I finish because it gives the perception to the citizens that you could possibly be trying to persuade this commission to vote on a decision that could benefit you, and you don't want to give that perception, considering that you are limited.

COMMISSIONER ROBERTS: With that being said, I don't have a problem with telling someone that I have some stake in property, but at the same time, that's where it gives me the right to ask the question for the people That's not here. They can't ask the question. So, with that being said to me, with having some dealing with property, if somebody is holding up some of these houses that can't be back on the market. So that's why it's not about me. It's about what the other people that cannot make it to this meeting, they're having a problem that would like to buy property, but some of these codes is holding them back. So that's why I ask the question. So, anything else?

MAYOR: Thank you. But what we were looking at is mainly the unhoused citizens and the situation that's dealing with them. And I understand that they're bringing codes as a conversation, but I think that would be off of our topic. Correct. So, I wanted to bring us back around to our topic, and it's back to homelessness. And if there is a conversation about codes, then that needs to be a section to itself. At this point I would look to Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Thank you, mayor. I do agree that that needs to be a section by itself regarding codes but also our city attorney needs to speak to that, please. Regarding codes.

MAYOR: Okay, so if she's going to be speaking to codes, that means if there's going to be another section, it wouldn't fit here now. So that that may be something to research, something to look into or a later conversation. And thank you both. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Because we want to make sure that that we are adhering to our city's charter but also legal.

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MAYOR: I'll take this back to Our manager.

CITY MANAGER: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. We'll move on to the Next Section, Ten-year plan. Remain the same, Mr. Mayor. As you know, we're in the year two through four, actually. Uh, still a year. 2 or 3 right now. And I highlight some of that comes from what we've done so far. Uh, so, of course, we're still in the process of a complete overhaul of our IoT systems. I want to highlight again, a great job that the team has done with that. Right now, we're in the first. Actually, we're in the second phase of it. Changeover utility billing and done. Uh, next we'll move into two codes, and we'll get codes and then business licenses. as far as city clerk, all those things will be automated for what city? So, I'm very excited about that. It's going to make us way more efficient. many more get more capabilities. And it's going to be just a win, win for all the citizens. Uh, also, if you look at the long-term financial strategy, I want to highlight finance too, because finance has a big part in the IT chain., as far as, uh, getting the proper data in there. And that team is doing a great job. They have a lot of work to do. So, when I say finance, I mean both billing and utilities they're doing a great job right now. There's a lot of work and I think sometimes well, I know that our citizens can't see it. It's not tangible. but it's a lot of work going into it. a lot of data collection, a lot of changeover. And this time next year, they're going to really see the impact from it because it'll be done. So just want to shout out to those individuals because they're doing a great job. and with that I'll pause on this slide. We have any questions.

MAYOR: Commissioner, do you have any questions with our city manager concerning this area?

CITY MANAGER: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Next Mr. mayor, we're moving to the discussion items. The order tonight is going to be the human resource director followed by myself and then the business integration and information system director. And then I'll close it out. We have no bids, and then we have the director. Thank you.

MARISSA HENDRIX: Good afternoon, commissioners, Mr. Mayor. So, while going through our current policies. we currently can roll over 300 hours max per person in vacation, which sounds wonderful, but when you start digging into it, uh, we've got three job classifications, 80-hour employees, which is, you know, your clerical, your records technician, the finance cashiers. You've got your 86-hour employees, which are your detectives your police force. And then you've got one of our employees, which is your fire department. So, for 80-hour employees, 300 max hours of vacation rollover equates to 37.5 days. For police, it's 25 days. And for our fire department, it's only 12.5 days. So, what I'm proposing is that we give everyone equal rollover days. So, for 80 hours it would still be 300. for police, it would change to for 50 and for a fire department it would be 900. That way, every single employee equally gets 37.5 carry over days.

MAYOR: Any questions Commissioner. So, you're asking for this to be modified, correct?

MARISSA HENDRIX: Yes, sir.

MAYOR: And specifically, there are certain amounts that are given to each one of the department. Are you trying to give me, like, a less like an underlined statement? What do you really want to see done if you had recommendation.

MARISSA HENDRIX: Equality across the board. So, it's not fair that, you know the cashier can carry 37.5 days, but our fire department, they lose their time and they're left with 12.5 days. So, we would like to bring them up, so everyone is equal.

MAYOR: And so, are you saying all to 37? Okay. Thanks.

MARISSA HENDRIX: Yes. And it would be a handbook change.

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MAYOR: Having heard that, just you just need consent on making that decision. And what I will do is poll the commission that is here. Since we have four of them now, we can ask that question. So, the statement that our HR director is desirous of addressing this very issue of time frames of rollover for vacation and give each one of the departments the same amount of time. So, we'll look to district one.

COMMISSIONER ROBERTS: Yes, sir.

MAYOR: District two.

COMMISSIONER BENNETT: Yes.

MAYOR: District three?

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Are we having Discussion After the vote?

MAYOR: Well, just this is for consent you just saw if you bring it before us. But we can still have discussion.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Yes.

MAYOR: Because I believe with this consent, it gives us the opportunity to have this put on our agenda for voting for tomorrow. That's correct. Okay.

MAYOR: And do you agree as well?

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Yes.

MAYOR: So, we have all three consenting and there's some questions to be asked just for clarity. And at this time, we'll look into our city. Commissioner. Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Thank you, mayor. You mentioned equality across the board 37.5 carryover. So, does that include the time that they've been employed? Is that a factor into this their longevity with the city?

MARISSA HENDRIX: The longer that they're employed with the city, the more they accrue, the more vacation hours that they accrue.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: So how many employees do we currently have that would qualify for this? 37.5 if we were to vote equally across the board,

MARISSA HENDRIX: Half of our Workforce is police and fire department. So, we're looking at 104, 105 employees that would need to change.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Thank you.

MAYOR: You have your consent. Thank you.

CITY MANAGER: And before we move on to the point of further information, I just want to highlight Miss Hendrix and her team, because we're all trying to go back to use the word equality and in other words, equity, trying to make sure it's across the board. So, there will be other modifications with the handbook. We're going to make this change immediately. But the rest of them are going to wait to put them all at the same time and bring it back to the commission. Next, we are moving to the infrastructure

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update, and I'll go over some of the some of these have changed right before the meeting. So, I'll try to give you the most current update. with phase one for the wastewater treatment plant. So that was supposed to be done this month, but because of the weather, it looks like it's going to be pushed back to the end of the month. but there they made progress, had the rain not being so strong. We probably would have been done this week, but I gave him an extension of about 30 days. So, we're looking at end of month and completing that first phase of the project and then moving to phase two, which is estimated to be completed in 2026. Uh, next, two biggest sinkhole concerns in Sweat Street, Quarterman Street and Martin Luther King, uh, King Street. So, the mitigation for those will start this month. we did do all the survey and, we did put out for bids. So, we do have the bids back. So, all that work should start again this month. The thing with Quarterman Street and MLK, we're going to be working on coincide with the property owner on that area. So, we'll probably be doing what we call phase one of their projects, and then once that property owner bids on that, we complete phase two. but we all start later this month. I did update the 42 dirt roads that remain from the SPLOST 2023. Uh, the bids went out for the first group of roads, uh, last week. There seven roads. I don't have them offhand right now, but I did want to group the roads, uh, in 7 to 9 roads hoping to get through them by mid next year. hopefully we get multiple bids. Uh, probably we have right now. these bids are really for the worst case. Only eight companies bidding for them half the time. And then our city engineer has to go out and solicit other people to bid for them. I'm trying to figure it out, how to get other companies come here and do work that would make things move faster. but right now, it's just lessons learned. We only had really one company bids pretty much continuously. and it does slow down the work. I will say that because they get majority of the work, but we are trying to reach out to other companies. going to go to Tifton this week. They got a company from Tiffin just to see, why they're not, you know, come here and do work right down the street. and then some other work in Savannah. We're right down the street as well, so we'll see how that goes. but I definitely want to figure out why they not come here to do work. Uh, next, uh, paving roads. striping is ongoing. So, the first set of roads, roads are complete for the paving. And the city engineer firm is going through right now. Just checking everything out. They did start some striping. And just for a point of information, what happens is once all the rules are complete and everything, as far as the custom fields and anything that can be modified, once that's done, then they bring in somebody to do all the paper, we do all the striping, so they'll do striping after each road. They make sure everything is done first to our standard, and then they get a company to come back and do it. So right now, the city engineer is going through just, you know, there's a couple of things that need to be fixed. Once those are fixed, we start striving for those roles. As far as Canal. So, we did get eight out of the nine tribal areas mitigated. it's evident, uh, by this past weekend we had a lot of rain this weekend. Our rain the rest of this week. we did monitor the canals and our trouble spots. I want to also thank the team now for that, police, fire, and public works. They were all out this weekend on standby in case something happened. Uh, our one main trouble area, on Eagle Street. that's, uh, I can explain that, but I'm going to do is send a detailed message to the commission so you can get out to your constituents. Uh, right now, there's nothing the city can do but waiting on that project to be completed by the school and reroute that drain. Uh, once that's done, then that drains will go away as well. So, we can speak to them, ask them today, and they're going to make that a priority to get that fixed. And once that's fixed, the Eagle Street area should be Should you have any more luck? Uh, pass completion on schedule right now. I did sit down with the, uh, sitting in your firm. Uh, last Friday, we drove all the parks. I drove all the parks. Uh, a few things that we talked about. One thing that, we're slowing us down with Jordan power, uh, not turning the power on so we can get some things done. They did turn the power on today. so that. So, we should kind of get the timeline back on schedule, having the parks up and going probably early September so still be hot during that time frame. And the commissioners can get out of those parks this year.

And that is it for the infrastructure update. Mr. mayor and I will pause for any questions on infrastructure.

MAYOR: Open to the Commission. Any questions? Okay.

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CITY MANAGER: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Mr. mayor, we're going to have Mr. Simmons step in. And he's going to with the city app and code Red. And again, before he takes the podium, I just want to stress again how important it is that our citizens download the app. Again, this is going to be the most effective and fastest way to get anything Addressed. what I do now is I go around, and Director Simmons goes around and some of the other directors, and we take the app, and we show right there on the spot, citizens how fast response time is. the main thing being with the app is you'll get an email so you can track what's going on. if you don't use it that way, then you won't know. Uh, the same thing can be applied to Georgia Power's link as far as tree maintenance and downed power lines and downed power lines. It is highly encouraged that citizens call that in, because you'll get the email on response times and when it's going to get completed versus coming to me if I turn it in. So just encourage citizens to use these features that are available to them right now. The information and the fastest and most real time possible. I'm going to stop there and turn it over to Director Simmons.

PATRICK SIMMONS: Mayor commissioners, I created a short tutorial video. I'm going to add a little voice over to it and get it posted on social media and our website, but you can see. There we go. So here is just really simple. They go to their app store or Google Play Store. Search my Waycross, GA. Hit download. 0, it's the only thing that pops up. So, it's really easy to find, download and install. Doesn't take very much space on their phones. but like Mr. Rayford said, it allows them to see all of this so they can see the progress. They need to contact somebody. Our community calendar working really hard to make that community calendar robust. JD searches all of the events that are going on in the city and make sure they're on that community calendars linked to the tourism page. They can now pay their water bill payments there. We're going to focus on the reporting issue, but they can also search jobs as we post surveys. The link is their city services. They're not following our pages. The links right there to all of our social media pages. And also, we put things like the budget book and things like that that occurs from time to time. And it just slides up and down really easy to use. So, we're going to focus on this. But these they could submit. So, any issues they find no matter 24-seven any issue whether it's a water leak trash in the road trash can not picked up. And once we finish the Tyler conversion, they'll be able to do their business license and alcohol license also through the app. We hope to have that done by mid-September, but they just click that issue that they're having. And you can see all the categories from there that are available. Didn't kind of fine tune it. So, they say blight. And those are some of the suggestions that we have. And we can always add more. So, we kind of keep an eye on it. So, there's topics that are coming up frequently that we don't have. We add those to this. So, it's forever evolving. But overgrown grass they would just click that. It automatically pings the location based on their cell phone. But you know, just let's say if for some reason it's a little off, they can put in the address so specifically know where it is. I did this upstairs. So that's why it's pinging in City Hall. But also, then they can take a picture. And the picture is very vital because it allows staff to see exactly what the issue is. We don't have to guess or try to figure out. We had somebody call a few weeks ago and there was a dead animal in the road, and it was really decomposed. So, it was kind of hard for him to find. But had they taken a picture of it, he would have automatically been able to identify landmarks and figure out where it was. So, he wasted ten, 20 minutes trying to find it. But with this app and the picture, he would automatically know where it is so they can shoot, take a picture, or if the picture is already in their gallery, they can just do that. If you notice on the bottom, they can submit anonymous. I would encourage people not to do that. We don't share their information, but if they submit anonymous, we have no way of letting them know how we're progressing with it. So, if they put in their information, mine's already put in. So that's why it didn't come up. But you just put the name email, telephone number. That way we can follow up with them and say it's been done or we're working on it, or maybe some follow up questions, but staff only sees that it's just like any other code report they make. We don't share that with the public. I took a picture. So just know that. But then once they do that, it's simple. Hit submit and it's all done. So, it takes literally a couple of minutes to do it automatically, no matter what time of the day it is. I get an email; several key staff get an email. I get them all just so I can kind of keep an eye on the categories that are being reported. But if you take an example of public works, Matt will get it. His next in command would get it. And sometimes, depending on what it is, if it's a water leak, it might go to ESG. If it's a trash can issue, it might go to finance. But several people see that

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report community improvement. Mark gets it, Alli gets it. Then they're able to disseminate to who needs to get to work on it. So that's the good thing about it. They don't have to wait till we open that email is there automatically. So, when they get to work in the morning, Matt, when they assign the duties throughout the day, they automatically know to go ahead and sign that that morning or same way with Mark or anybody else. So, it's really, really good to use. again, this is kind of how it works. It's email immediate to the appropriate department, respond back to the citizens and say we're working on it, or it's been corrected. Citizen, citizen can, you know, follow up with follow up questions or thank you or whatever they want to say, or nothing at all. But as long as we have that contact information, we can do that. And this is just the email I wanted you to see. This is the email that actually come to staff. And you can see there it tells new status. It has a work order number. The issue types the subtype gives the address the pictures right there for them to see. It also tells who made the submitted the report. That's my name. So, it would be the person's name. Again, they can follow up with me if they have questions and things like that. And staff does always respond back to the citizen to let them know what's going on with the with the issue. So, it's just it's just really beneficial. It eliminates, again, some of the telephone calls that we get, you know, during the weekend and things like that. This is perfect for that because it's automatically addressed if it's a major issue, whether it's a major water leak, ESG will immediately send somebody out to take care of us on the weekend. It's good to have somebody on call. I wanted to highlight some other things that are in the app. If you, uh, the three lines that are at the top of here on the app, if you click that, these brings up some other options. Uh, and code Red is one we want to focus on. That's a service that's offered through the county. So, any storms things like that that are happening to get those alerts. And again, if they sign up for it, they get either sign up for a text message or a telephone call or both. So, it lets them know, hey, there's a thunderstorm in your area or tornado watch in your area, things like that. So, it's very vital that community members sign up for that again. That's a small. Takes a couple of minutes. You know, you could name email address, telephone number. So that way they know how to reach you. But again, it is based on your location. So, it could be citywide, or it could just be for your neighborhood. So, you might get it depending on where you live versus somebody else. So, I just want to encourage everybody to sign up for code Red, which is all built into the app. So, it's kind of like a one shot, you know, we try to put as many resources as we can into the app to benefit the community, but that's just the code red. Real simple. Just create a username and a. Password hit continue, then put in that contact information address telephone number email address. And that's really it. That's all they have to do. Unless they move or something like that then that's always in the system. That's the telephone number change. Any questions?

MAYOR: One question I have is how they would update it if they did change address and telephone number. Would you just go back in Code Red?

PATRICK SIMMONS: Just back into Code red. So, if you don't, you should remember, you know, I encourage everybody to write down their username and password and log back into it and just update that contact information. Perfect.

MAYOR: Commission do you have any questions.

PATRICK SIMMONS: Code Red is an app, so they can also download that separately on the phone if they choose to. Or they can just do everything straight. Straight through the My Waycross, GA app.

MAYOR: Commissioner Felder has questions for you. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Thank you. Mayor, I have a couple questions. Yes, ma'am. 0, so, Director Simmons, when did this app go into effect for the citizens?

PATRICK SIMMONS: The July last year, I believe it was. It was. It was the first thing we rolled out with the conversion. I think it was June or July last year.

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COMMISSIONER FELDER: Okay. So more recently, I'm assuming with the reports that are being submitted to the app. 0, I know you said that you will be tracking the data. Have you noticed a trend in terms of what's being reported the most that are impacting citizens in the city?

PATRICK SIMMONS: I would say there's mainly three, of course, blight, water leaks and issues with trash cans. Whether the trash wasn't picked up or the trash cans been broken. Things like that. Those are the three main.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: And what has been the response time for those reports? on average.

PATRICK SIMMONS: Pretty quick. Uh, unless it's something like a water leak that takes a really long time, you know, something under the road. But pretty much all of the, the, the majority of them are done in a day or two. I can say that, you know, community improvement when it comes through, they're right on it. And same with, public works.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Thank you. what about holidays? Does that impact the response time?

PATRICK SIMMONS: It depends on what the issue is. So, if it's if it's a water leak and, you know, Robert looks at ESG and they deem we need to send somebody. They send somebody out right then if it's, you know, dead animal in the road, that might wait for a while or till we come back from a holiday.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Thank you.

CITY MANAGER: Thank you, Director Simmons. Mr. mayor as a point of information. So, the report I send y'all, on the app, you will see the time spent on there. And somebody is unfortunately, it's kind of skewed. So, potholes you see when it says, uh, time to fix if we got a pothole, which is a sinkhole because it doesn't make any distinction between the two, like Sweat Street would be considered a pothole. And we know Sweat Street has been about six months now as an example. So, in that report you're going to see, and I think I see y'all a weekly report. You're going to see, uh, time to fix the potholes. It's going to probably say like 40 to 43 days. Uh, so it's not that every pothole is that it's just the last, the, the greatest or the longest pothole which would be sweat Street is, kind of skewing that. Now, if that makes sense.

Okay.

MAYOR: I had a question regarding that. Were you seeing the sweat street was a pothole or.

CITY MANAGER: I get a report, weekly I try to send to y'all bimonthly because it doesn't change that much. But when you read those statistics on there, it's going to say potholes never called in, uh, time resolved unresolved as long as unresolved. So, it doesn't make a distinction between pothole and sinkhole. So, if it's so the potholes in there, it's going to be the sinkholes, which take much longer. As the director just stated. sometimes for our locates it could be depending on what that issue is. It could be a month. If we're dealing with gdot locates, it could be even longer. so just to make that distinction when you're reading reports. Next, Mister Mayor, we move to the park grant discussion and I'm going to say this really quick, but I'm going to the slides and come back to this slide so we can kind of talk about this. Uh, so right now in this Splost 2023 funding, commission voted to have \$300,000 to protect on this Splost. When I briefed the plan, you talked about taking these monies out in November, and then we took it out in November. That would mean each commissioner would get, 60,000 per park. Well, this part grant is asking for a 25% match. So that would mean if we did 100,000 as an example, it would be 400,000. It would, you know, minus the 100,000. We will double our parking amount if that makes sense to everyone. I'm using an example we could match the whole 300 and get, you know, close to a million back. but I want to use this as an example. as far as the talking point, as you move down the slides. Any questions on that Mr. mayor?

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MAYOR: I have none, but I look to the commission. They may want to talk to you since they're the ones with the parks. District one? Did you have a question?

COMMISSIONER ROBERTS: No, sir. I'm good.

MAYOR: District two?

COMMISSIONER BENNETT: No, sir.

MAYOR: District three?

COMMISSIONER FELDER: And yes, I would just like a balance of my park funding that I have remaining and also expenses. Thank you.

CITY MANAGER: So, Mr. Mayor, like I said, and this is kind of what it is. It's the Georgia outdoors program Grant, it is due in September. at least applying for it. So, we do want to kind of if we do decide, we want to go ahead and get started. this is the overview and our grant team provided that, uh, they got multiple grants out here they sent to us. I'm focusing on this right now because of the time expense. Okay.

MAYOR: Real quick, just a quick question. Did you need any Information from the commission?

CITY MANAGER: I'm going to come back to that, Mr. mayor. I want them to get this. This part here will come back to it. So, this is where the funds park and trail development, land acquisition, water access, habitat restoration, Ada compliance, signage. At least something that categories that we use. Walking trails, biking trails, Ada compliance playgrounds, pavilions, resting areas. And the key thing here is if when we match, it cannot be split up. So, say we did the 100,000 and we matched that with 25% would be 400,000, \$300,000 back. That 300,000 must be applied to the same area in each park. So, we could not take that 300,000. And then district one say, I want to use it for walking trails, and if district two say I want to use it for Ada compliance. And three, I want to use it for, you know, lighting and kiosks and stuff like that. You have to be the same purpose. That's the only kind of caveat to this, and also because it is the city can use where it says at the bottom that matching funded may include local capital or general funds. That means if public works does the work, that can be the matching money. That means their salaries can be the matching money. So, we could actually not pay anything. So, if we decided as an example to do all trails and public works, starts the trails, starts the process off, that would be the match. Does everybody follow me, Mr. Mayor? So, and of course I'm going to go back to this again. It could be walking trails, biking trails, signage, amendments, Ada, water access points, playgrounds, pavilions, shaded rest areas, uh, restoration of parkland, native plants and seed banks, and then trailhead kiosk lighting, safety features and green infrastructure and requirements. The city must own the property to control the land which we do. It must provide broad public access, which it will. It's a minimum of 25% match. It's required. And then you see the numbers of the grant range can be 500 K to 3 million. And the project must align with local planning documents such as the comprehensive plan, which this is on our comprehensive plan, as far as park upgrades, I've already discussed how the funding can be matched. this is just ideas the Waycross based off of some of those on this is what the Grant team recommend. Of course, the commission can decide how they want to utilize it. It's really just moving off suggested ideas from the main talking point. So, with that, let's go back to that first slide. when I am asking for the commission is some type of concession. What they would like to do if they would like to do anything. I use the number 100,000 as a 25% max. It could be more. we're not losing money in any way. We are not appropriating money anyway. this is just using the seed money to, in some cases, double, triple or quadruple. Uh, our funding right now. And again, use an example. Right now, we have 300,000 that we pull from the t-Splost 2023. If we use 100,000 that is a match for this grant. we will get a turn, 400,000, which that's 300,000. So, we could double

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our 300,000, 600,000. And each park will go from each commission to gain 60 K to 120 K. And you can have different math on here adding numbers. but I would like to ask a date to go ahead and get it consistent. Go ahead and, 0, apply for the grant with a 25% match. 0, whatever the commission decides that match is. If they need more time to think about it. Mr. mayor, we do have one more. One more meeting that we could do. but I don't want to get too close to the submission time and miss out on this great opportunity. I think it's a great opportunity, uh, to maximize and pretty much double our funding for our parks.

MAYOR: I know that the date was September 15th. Correct? Yes, and you said that the first portion of this would be that the determine would take that amount of money which you have presently, which is 300,000, and divide it. About four or 5 to 5, and they would be able to utilize that money, or they could take it and take that one amount and put it toward the grant. But then if you get the grant, you can't do anything. Whatever one does, they have to do it in every park.

CITY MANGER: Correct, and that's what my recommendation would be. I use that 100,000 because you're doubling your money. And if they decided to all do part equipment, we all know we need parking equipment, new park equipment and other parks. Everybody could do new park equipment. New Park equipment. Equipment means swings. It means merry go rounds. It means lifted weights. It means a lot of different things. But it could be used for all those to those other parts that don't have new equipment.

MAYOR: So, my question to the commission would be. Would you like to go ahead and confer? Say yes if you want to go for the match for 25% before I read. If they want to do that, I'll just go one by one. If they say yes, then you have to say something. So, if there's one that says no and you don't have consensus, and then that will take us back up to this, the split.

CITY MANAGER: If I can't miss just one more point information. So again, we're not losing any money. So, if you put in for the grant 25% and we get to meet the requirements, then we're getting 300,000 back from \$300, which is 600,000. We're not losing any money. So, with no exchange of money, it's just a matching fund to get whatever the 25% amounts for. So again, if we did the whole 300,000, that would be close go to a million. But of course, I wouldn't want to do that because then we would be locked into a specific item to do the parks. So just make sure that's clear to everybody. It's not like we're giving away 100,000 and not getting anything in return, or some type of lotto type of situation. It's just a match to get the other funding.

MAYOR: The reason I said what I said is because I want to make sure, as I'm listening, you're only talking about taking 100 K out of the 300. Correct. I'm going to start with district one.

COMMISSIONER ROBERTS: I'll take a little more time. All right.

MAYOR: District two.

COMMISSIONER BENNETT: Yes, sir.

MAYOR: And issue three.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: We're just voting. Are we going to be open to discussion?

MAYOR: We're just going to get consent first and then we can go into discussion.

MAYOR: Okay. So, there are two that are abstaining for a time. So, what we can do is let them have some conversations amongst themselves and then come back and vote, because right now it isn't. It won't go on the agenda because we don't have quorum. Or should I say we won't have consensus.

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CITY MANAGER: Next question. We're moving to the city hall. Energy efficient project. Uh, this is an update. I did mention we're trying to, uh, cool this building down.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: --It says Discussion on the agenda.

MAYOR: Department grants discussion is what he's just doing. And he just said he asked us to comment on the whether we were wanting to allow for the 100 K so that it can be only 100 k out of 300 K to go into a grant. And what we got was abstain and let me think about it. And yes. So, because there was no consensus there was no more discussion unless you discuss it ultimately. Now if I'm wrong I need someone to correct me. But I'm believing that's our normal procedure is if we consent on it, then we have more discussion because we know tomorrow when it comes to if it should have come up to you or not. Now, if it came up tomorrow, then it would be another discussion. It could be discussed even at that time. So that's what has kind of eliminated it. We eliminated it by not giving consent.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: And that is correct, thank you. But I'm only going by what's stated on the agenda. Thank you.

CITY MANAGER: Yes, So item six, the city Hall energy efficiency project. so, with this, I have briefed the commission last month about trying to cool the building down. You know, we have an aging building, and it'd be too much to change the windows out. with the summer being so hot already extremely hot, especially upstairs on the third floor and it makes Its way down. Uh, so we took some of the money from the arpa interest funding which it makes interest every month. So, it was about \$100,000. we did a cost analysis and to do the complete project. Project, meaning we would tint all the windows here in the building and seal some of them. It would be 18 K originally. I had briefing was 10,000 but it's little bit more than that. I'd like to go ahead and move forward with this. because like I said, it's extremely hot for the workforce definitely upstairs. And there's no way for me to, uh, cool the building now without changing out the air conditioning or the windows. because this historical building, that would be really expensive. So, we took this approach. I don't have the actual cool down temperatures, but we did do some research on other historical buildings with tinted windows, and it seems really cool down the building. So, I'd like to go forward with this just to support our workforce on those hot days and hot days, meaning from the month of April to the month of October as far as this building. And Mr. Mayor I would need consensus to go ahead and move on with this purchase.

MAYOR: Okay. Let me clarify to the commission. I know that makes it a real good question mark. Go ahead. But when we're if we would give the consent to at least put it on the agenda, we can still have those discussions. If you cut it out, then you don't have right, or you won't have room to make that discussion. You can discuss it, but it won't make any difference because it's not going on the agenda. And then it will come back again for another discussion at a later date, which is going to be just a re-emphasis and a restatement or a change due to the fact that time frames can sometimes change the. As we see here from 10 to 18, we would be able to handle it by tomorrow. So, if you were to say, go ahead and put it up if you decide overnight. I don't feel good with this. I got buyer's remorse; you know you vote it down. But it could be a thumbs up or thumbs down tomorrow. And without having that consent, you can't put it on your calendar or on the agenda for discussion and or vote. So, if you will consider the City Hall Energy Efficiency Project, please let me know if you're going to consent to it to have more discussion on it and or a vote up or down tomorrow. So, I'll come to each one of the districts in district one. District one.

COMMISSIONER ROBERTS: Good with it.

MAYOR: District two.

COMMISSIONER BENNETT: Yes, sir.

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MAYOR: And district three.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Yes, sir. Yes.

MAYOR: Now we can put this on the agenda for tomorrow. And if there are any questions or comments concerning that, we can then in turn have those comments to question and then make the vote.

CITY MANAGER: Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR: If there's any question of the commission at this point concerning it, they might want to bring it up so the others can think it through at night and bring it back tomorrow or have all day that you want. And when we get into our meeting tomorrow, you might have some conversation tomorrow. So, I'll open the floor for any discussion or comments. And I'll start with district one.
District two.

COMMISSIONER BENNETT: when was the last time we had the windows replaced that you wanted?

CITY MANAGER: I'm not sure Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER BENNETT: Probably need to be done.

CITY MANAGER: But we can't replace the windows.

COMMISSIONER BENNETT: Yes

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Thank you. Mayor. When would this be having to be. All of this we put out for bid.

CITY MANAGER: You can't put out for bid. It could be a local purchase. I talked to the business in the city.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Is that where you received the quote from? 18k. Who is the business?

CITY MANAGER: It was two businesses. I had public works to do it/

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Who are the businesses?

CITY MANAGER: I don't know the business. I just got the cost.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Okay. Could you provide that to me, please?

CITY MANAGER: I'll get to you.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER BENNETT: So, we'll just cover all the windows. At one time, it's going to do it all at one time. Okay.

CITY MANAGER: Yes.

MAYOR: So, we do have consent for it to come up on the agenda tomorrow. I'm certain the question that was asked just a few months ago would also come back before, you know, the names of those

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places that you possibly could, that you are ready for putting it on the agenda. So, we have consent for our clerk's record. We have consent from all three.

Thank you.

Sir.

CITY MANAGER: Uh, next, Mr. Mayor, you have your nomination You have to make, uh, for the aging advisory board, Southern regional Commission. Your appointee is Miss Barbara King, so we have to do that in open format. So, we're doing it here.

MAYOR: Very good. The Aging Advisory Board has given me an opportunity to either serve on the board and or to utilize the person who served on the board in our previous time. That person desired not to go back on the board. And I because I'm on several boards, I want to make sure that I don't overextend myself. So, with that being said, I have nominated Miss Barbara King and I just need the consent from the commission to receive my nomination. And that is all. And just a little bit about this barber. She has been serving us on the Southern Georgia Regional Commission for as long as I've been there. So that's been about five years this year. By the end of December, we will be six years old. And she has served our community well. She has never been absent from one meeting in the entire time that we've been on the board. I cannot say that for me, but I can't say that for her. And with that, I just want to thank you for this award and as we consider her, maybe for voting tomorrow to place on the aging advisory Board. And I'll start with the district one district?

COMMISSIONER ROBERTS: Yes, sir.

MAYOR: And district two

COMMISSIONER BENNETT: Yes.

MAYOR: District three?

COMMISSIONER FELDER: Yes

MAYOR: Thank you very much.

CITY MANAGER: This concludes the discussion items. We're moving to the rest of agenda. Uh, we had one previous license renewal. We have no private licenses. We have currently three proposed ordinances, and I would defer to the city attorney. Just want to speak on any of those ordinances. We have no proposed resolutions. We have no resolution. We moved to the city attorney report. If the city attorney has a report this first time.

CHESLYN GREEN: No report at this time.

CITY MANAGER: Next we moved to the city manager report and my Report will reflect the daily update report, but I will go and deliver it before tomorrow's meeting. It will be updated with the new water leaks that have been resolved that I mentioned earlier in the discussion items. Mr. Mayor, we do have an executive session. Uh, finances.

MAYOR: With that, I'll entertain a motion to go into executive session for finance.

COMMISSIONER FELDER: I'll make a motion that we lead into executive session to discuss finances.

MAYOR: Do you have a motion from our commissioner? Is there a second?

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COMMISSIONER ROBERTS: I'll second.

MAYOR: We have a second from Commissioner Roberts. All in favor?

ALL: Aye.

MAYOR: All opposed? No. Motion carries. We're entering into executive session. Thank you.