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## **Work Session and City Manager's Briefing**

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The work session was held at 12:30 p.m., in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Media Room. Mayor Van R. Johnson, II called the meeting to order, then recognized Ald. Kurtis Purtee to offer a prayer.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding  
Alderman Carolyn H. Bell, Post 1 – At-Large – **[ABSENT]**  
Alderman Alicia Miller Blakely, Post 2 – At-Large  
Alderman Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1  
Alderman Detric Leggett, District 2  
Alderman Linda Wilder-Bryan, District 3 – Vice Chair  
Alderman Nick Palumbo, District 4 – Chairman  
Alderman Dr. Estella Edwards Shabazz, District 5 – Mayor Pro Tem  
Alderman Kurtis Purtee, District 6

**ALSO, PRESENT:**

City Manager Jay Melder  
Assistant City Manager Taffanye Young  
Chief of Staff Daphanie Williams  
City Attorney Bates Lovett  
Clerk of Council Mark Massey  
Deputy Clerk of Council Gwendolyn Jones

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

1. Boards, Commissions, and Authorities Discussion. **[FACILITATED by Mayor Johnson]**
2. Executive Session Regarding Personnel, Real Estate and Litigation; As Needed. **[HELD at 1:00 p.m. All members were present except Ald. Bell who was absent, including the City Manager, the City Attorney, outside legal counsel Mat McCoy, and the Clerk of Council. The executive session was adjourned at 1:37 p.m.]**
3. ~~City Manager Updates.~~

The workshop was adjourned upon conclusion of the executive session, and no action was taken.



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## **Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Aldermen**

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The regular meeting of the City Council was held at 2:05 p.m., in Council Chambers. Following the roll call, Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order. He then recognized Ald. Kurtis Purtee who introduced Reverend Ricky Hester, Pastor of Asbury Memorial Church, to offer the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States was recited in unison.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding  
Alderman Carolyn H. Bell, Post 1 – At-Large – **[ABSENT]**  
Alderman Alicia Miller Blakely, Post 2 – At-Large  
Alderman Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1  
Alderman Detric Leggett, District 2  
Alderman Linda Wilder-Bryan, District 3  
Alderman Nick Palumbo, District 4 – Chairman  
Alderman Dr. Estella Edwards Shabazz, District 5 – Mayor Pro Tem  
Alderman Kurtis Purtee, District 6

**ALSO, PRESENT:**

City Manager Jay Melder  
Assistant City Manager Taffanye Young  
Chief of Staff Daphanie Williams  
City Attorney Bates Lovett  
Clerk of Council Mark Massey  
Deputy Clerk of Council Gwendolyn Jones

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

1. Adoption of the Regular Meeting Agenda for January 8, 2026.  
**(ADOPTED/APPROVED #1 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

2. Approval of the Minutes for the Work Session and City Manager's Briefing Held on December 11, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. **(APPROVED #2 & #3 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**



**SAVANNAH CITY COUNCIL**  
**(Preliminary)**  
**ACTION MEETING MINUTES**  
**January 8, 2026**

3. Approval of the Minutes for the Regular Meeting Held on December 11, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. **(APPROVED #2 & #3 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**

**\* Mayor Johnson entertained a motion that an executive session regarding litigation and real estate was held earlier, following the work session presentation for which no action was taken. The motion passed unanimously, 8-0-0. All members were present, except Ald. Bell, including the City Manager, the City Attorney, outside legal counsel Mat McCoy, and the Clerk of Council.**

#### **PRESENTATIONS**

4. An appearance by the Savannah Martin Luther King, Jr. Observance Day Association to announce the 2026 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Observance activities. **[PRESENTED by Mayor Johnson. Mayor Johnson also recognized State Representative Edna Jackson, former mayor, who was in attendance.]**
5. An appearance by Ms. Amaris L. Johnson, Southern Regional Director, and Ms. Me’Kia Davis, President of the Savannah Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., to receive recognition commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Sorority’s Southern Region and the 50th Georgia State Cluster, which will be hosted in Savannah from January 15–18, 2026. **[PRESENTED by Mayor Johnson]**
6. An appearance by the Savannah Interagency Diversity Council (SIDC) to formally announce Traffick Jam 2026, to be held January 23–24, 2026, at Savannah State University, highlighting its mission to raise awareness and prevent human trafficking. **[NOT PRESENTED]**
7. Recognition of the Graduates of the 2025 New Directors Academy Cohort II. **[PRESENTED by City Manager Melder and Organizational Development Officer Dr. Jennifer Blalock]**



**ALCOHOL LICENSE HEARINGS**

8. Approval of a Class E (Beer, Wine) Alcohol License to Pankilkumar Patel for Shady Food Mart at 2215 Martin Luther King Blvd. The establishment is located between West 38th Street and West 39th Street; a Convenience Store in Aldermanic District 1. (New Owner/Existing Business).

**Mayor Johnson declared the hearings open for agenda items #8, #9, #10, and #11.**

**No speaker(s).**

**CLOSED ALCOHOL HEARINGS UNANIMOUSLY for agenda items #8, #9, #10, and #11, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.**

**(APPROVED #8 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**

9. Approval of a Class C (Liquor) (By the Drink) Alcohol License with Sunday Sales to Gary Gordon for Five Twenty Wings a Restaurant at 2701 Bull Street. The establishment is located between West 43rd Street and Victory Drive in Aldermanic District 2. (New Owner/New Business)

**Mayor Johnson declared the hearings open for agenda items #8, #9, #10, and #11.**

**No speaker(s).**

**CLOSED ALCOHOL HEARINGS UNANIMOUSLY for agenda items #8, #9, #10, and #11, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.**

**(APPROVED #9 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**

10. Approval of a Class C (Liquor, Beer, Wine) (By the Drink) Alcohol License with Sunday Sales to James Massey for The Laundry Diner a Restaurant at 1401 Paulsen Street. The establishment is located between East 31st Street and East Anderson Street in Aldermanic District 2. (Existing Business/New Request).

**Mayor Johnson declared the hearings open for agenda items #8, #9, #10, and #11.**

**No speaker(s).**

**CLOSED ALCOHOL HEARINGS UNANIMOUSLY for agenda items #8, #9, #10, and #11, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.**

**(APPROVED #10 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**



**SAVANNAH CITY COUNCIL**  
**(Preliminary)**  
**ACTION MEETING MINUTES**  
**January 8, 2026**

11. Approval to add a Class C (Beer) (By the Drink) Alcohol License to the existing Class B (Beer) (Manufacturing) Alcohol License to James Massey for Two Tides, a Brewpub, at 12 West 41st Street. The establishment is located between Whitaker Street and DeSoto Ave in Aldermanic District 2. (Existing Business/New Request).

**Mayor Johnson declared the hearings open for agenda items #8, #9, #10, and #11.**

**No speaker(s).**

**CLOSED ALCOHOL HEARINGS UNANIMOUSLY for agenda items #8, #9, #10, and #11, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.**

**(APPROVED #11 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**

#### **PETITIONS**

12. Motion to Consider Appeal by Ashbritt, Inc Concerning Award of Storm Debris Removal Contract.

**(Mayor Johnson stated this item was pulled by mutual agreement, and it will come back if there is a need.)**

#### **PURCHASING ITEMS**

13. Notification of an Emergency Purchase for a Switchgear Control Upgrade with Current Edge Solutions, LLC (LOCAL) in the Amount of \$566,473. (Stormwater Department). **(APPROVED #13, #14, and #15 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**

14. Authorize the City Manager to Execute Contract Modification No. 2 with Great Southern Recreation for Splash Pads in Windsor Park and Daffin Park in the Amount of \$46,000. (Capital Projects Management). **(APPROVED #13, #14, and #15 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**

15. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Modification to the Existing Services Contract with Hazen and Sawyer, PC for Georgetown Water Reclamation Facility Engineering Design services in the Amount of \$5,315,000.



**SAVANNAH CITY COUNCIL**  
**(Preliminary)**  
**ACTION MEETING MINUTES**  
**January 8, 2026**

(Water Resources). **(APPROVED #13, #14, and #15 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**

16. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for the Benton Boulevard Resurfacing Project with C. W. Mathews Contracting Company in an Amount Not to Exceed \$1,763,160. (Street Maintenance) **(APPROVED #16 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**

**BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

17. Boards, Commissions, and Authorities – Consider Appointments.  
**(APPROVED #17 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**

As read/follows:

- Reappointing Taffanye Young to the Land Bank Authority
- Reappointing Danielle Barboza and Dennis Murphy, and appointing Tarcia Bush and Simone Smith to the Cultural Affairs Commission
- Appointing Lillian Breitbart, Gregory Jackson, Nicole Wiggins, and Austin Mallory to the Greater Savannah International Alliance (GSIA)
- Reappointing Patricia McLeod, and appointing Margaret Pringle, Lillian Breitbart, Larry Ricks, Ja’Quan Oliver, Peter Van Brusse, and Shakuria Smith to Keep Savannah Beautiful
- Reappointing Erika Archibald and Jake Henry, and appointing Kathryn Erickson to the Park and Tree Commission
- Appointing Dr. Jose de Arimateia da Cruz to the Board of Health
- Reappointing Eileen Baker, and appointing Chloe Cavner to the Historic Sites and Monuments Commission
- Reappointing Robert James, and appointing Dwayne Stephens to Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA)
- Appointing Larry Ricks and Ja’Quan Oliver to the Recreation Commission
- Reappointing Armand Turner and Michael Condon to the Zoning Board of Appeals



**AGREEMENTS**

18. Authorize the City Manager to Accept the Second Allocation FY26 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Grant Awards for Adult (\$656,783) and Dislocated Worker (\$1,109,723) Programs. (WorkSource Coastal) **(APPROVED #18 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**
  
19. Authorize the Approval of a Development Agreement with VYOM 5920, LLC for 5920 Ogeechee Road in Unincorporated Chatham County. (WR- Planning & Engineering). **(APPROVED #19 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**

**REAL ESTATE ITEMS**

20. Authorize the City Manager to Approve an Easement for Georgia Power Company at Daffin Park – 1401 E. Victory Dr. (PIN 20076 29001) (Real Estate Services). **(APPROVED #20 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**

**CITY ATTORNEY ITEMS**

21. Settlement #1. **(APPROVED #21 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)** Authorizing the City Attorney's Office to settle the claim of HDD and ASTRA for \$4,550,000, with financial contribution from Hussey Gay Bell.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

22. Authorize the Approval for an Interpretive Marker Installation on the Oglethorpe Lane Building in Aldermanic District 1 (25-004765-HM) (Planning & Urban Design). **(APPROVED #22 UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0-0. Ald. Bell was absent.)**

**Following announcements made by the Mayor and Aldermen, Mayor Johnson adjourned the regular meeting at 3:05 p.m.**