



City Council Meeting Minutes February 9, 2026 7:00 PM

- I. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones.

Also present was City Administrator Tony Phillips, Assistant City Administrator Jamila Criss, City Attorney Rory Starkey, Deputy City Attorney Serena Nowell, and City Clerk Deannia Ray.

- II. Roll Call by City Clerk, Deannia Ray found the following members present:

The Honorable Anatavia M. Benson
The Honorable Fannie Mae Houser
The Honorable Samuel Perry

The Honorable Linda J. Davis
The Honorable Shanita Nichols
The Honorable Ulysses J. Smallwood

- III. The invocation was provided by City Administrator Tony Phillips.

- IV. Pledge of Allegiance was in Unison.

- V. Presentations and Proclamations:

Mayor Portis-Jones presented a Proclamation on behalf of the City of Fairburn to Minister Danita Jones and her younger sister Sandra who lost their mother, Essie Lee Harden High. Mayor Portis-Jones had the honor and pleasure of knowing her for years, they commuted from Barnesville until she moved to Fairburn. Her unwavering dedication to her family, faith, and community has left an indelible mark on the hearts of all who knew and loved her.

- VI. Adoption of the City Council Agenda

Council Member Benson made a motion to approve the agenda. Council Member Davis provided the second. **The motion carried unanimously.**

- VII. Public Comments:

State Representative Lydia Glaize thanked the new council members for their willingness to take the time to serve and for their willingness to ensure that the city continues to thrive. She said the State House is in session, they are done with the amended budget and there are a lot of bills coming forth. She said she is here for Fairburn and other cities in District 67.

Jodi Gray, Executive Director for South Fulton Community Improvement District, said the CID is proud of the long-term partnership with the city. On behalf of the Board of Directors of the CID, she is here to express their concerns regarding the proposed formation of a new special services district and its special tax for citizens and businesses of Fairburn. The proposed special services district duplicates some of the same services already provided by the South Fulton CID. While imposing an additional tax burden on the same set of property owners who have already opted into a voluntary tax for the purpose of community improvement. The CID model was intentionally designed to ensure accountability through property owner consent, efficiency, and close coordination with local governments, including the City of Fairburn. South Fulton CID has served as the primary vehicle for delivering enhanced services and advancing strategic transportation and economic development initiatives that benefit both the city and the broader South Fulton region. The CID has spent millions of dollars within the city limits of Fairburn and has partnered directly with the city in planning, seeking grants for, and implementing projects together. She is currently working on an application for GDOT's infrastructure grant for \$2 million and a \$5 million loan for the extension of Oakley Industrial Blvd to Gullat Road.

Ernie Brooks talked about the World Cup and wanted to see how we could capture the overflow once the hotels are filled. He said former Mayor Avery suggested AirBnb, renting your house. A lot of people have campers, or RV's and asked if we could waiver the rules guiding that. Code enforcement could look at the RV's to make sure they comply. He suggested a command center on Cedar Grove and use Marta for transportation.

Elijah Thompson said he is a small business owner and has been here since 2011. He voiced his concerns of being double taxed with the formation of the new special services district. He said the tax burden would affect his business and his customers and asked for consideration of being double taxed.

Lee Walton thanked mayor and council for their vision and enthusiasm. He said the LCI plan was great. The City of South Fulton is completing their comprehensive plan and hopes the city will be on the lookout and ready to provide review comments on the adjacent properties to Fairburn. He is in support of the courthouse and understands there could be work done on that soon and he encouraged council to support that.

Jonathan Strack spoke on the special services district and said he grew up in Fairburn, and his business has been here since 1979. They gave land for the Howell Avenue extension, and they just built a three-story building off Hwy 74, and he believes in investing back in the community. They already pay taxes to the South Fulton CID and was surprised to find out they will create another district that will levy another tax. He works with a lot of businesses, he is a contractor and everything in the world has gone up 30%. He is not sure what kind of due diligence has gone into comparing millage rates, but they will eventually get passed on to renters and tenants and he encouraged council to look into that.

VIII. Approval of the Minutes:

1. Approval of the minutes: Council Meeting Minutes of January 12, 2026.

Mayor Pro Tem Smallwood made a motion to approve January 12, 2026, minutes as written. Council Member Perry provided the second. **The motion carried unanimously.**

IX. Consent Agenda:

Council Member Davis made a motion to bring the item to the floor. Council Member Houser provided the second.

Council Member Davis made a motion to pull item numbers 2 and 3 off the consent agenda and put them on the regular agenda. Council Member Benson provided the second. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Council Member Houser made a motion to approve the remaining items on the consent agenda. Council Member Davis provided the second. **The motion carried unanimously.**

4. Memorandum of Understanding – GRPA Summer Camp Grant Award

Recommendation: Request Mayor and Council approval of the Georgia Recreation and Park Association BOOST 2.0 Program 2025 reimbursable grant award in the amount of \$12,500.00 and execution of the Memorandum of Understanding & Assurances for Contractors Receiving State Funding in partnership with GSAN.

5. Memorandum of Agreement for the Development of the South Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Recommendation: Request Mayor and Council approval of the Memorandum of Agreement for the Development of the South Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan and the local match of \$18,536.00.

6. RFP 25-019 Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) – Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) – Commercial Energy Auditing Service for Efficiency

Recommendation: Request Mayor and Council approval to award the contract for RFP # 25-019 for the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) – Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) Commercial Energy Auditing Services to Smith Seckman Reid, Inc. (SSR) in an amount not to exceed \$23,842.00.

X. Regular Agenda:

2. ITB 25-021 Fairburn Youth Center – Basketball Court Installation

Mayor Pro Tem Smallwood made a motion to bring the item to the floor. Council Member Perry provided the second.

Parks and Recreation Director Chapin Scott presented this item and said this is for the Fairburn Youth Center basketball court installation, ITB 25-021. This is a rehab of our current basketball court, we will completely remove the court we have and put down a new court. Our court is extremely old, some places are deteriorating and this was presented in the FY26 budget and went out for a formal bid. They had thirteen vendors to bid, and they selected the lowest bidder, Southeastern Surfaces and Equipment for \$40,995.00.

Council Member Davis asked why the cost sheet has labor listed at \$0. Ms. Scott said they put their cost all into one formal price. The \$40,995.00 includes removal of the court, labor, and installation of the new court.

Council Member Davis asked what the additional cost of \$1000.00 was for. Ms. Scott said during the ITB process, they extended the court a little to make sure it was ADA accessible and that is included in the \$40,995.00 cost.

Council Member Nichols asked when they would start and finish the project and if there are plans on how we could utilize the court for the community. Ms. Scott said our basketball season is slated to end at the end of February and this is the largest space they have to house any type of events and programming. We are working around our senior programming and our youth program that will be outdoors during that time. We are hoping for March but once the agreement is executed, she will have more information to share. Our goal is to have it completed prior to summer camp, giving them a two-to-three-month window to get it installed.

Council Member Nichols asked if she had a visual of what it would look like. Ms. Scott said she will send it to City Administration and said our facility does not allow ages over twelve, this will help with our youth basketball and senior programming request for an indoor pickle ball court. Our current court was assessed to see if we could do pickle ball on the current court, but with the surfacing we cannot. The new surface that we have is a multi-use surface and we will be able to utilize it for pickle ball.

Council Member Benson made a motion to award ITB 25-021 to Southeastern Surfaces & Equipment in the amount of \$40,995.00 for the installation of a basketball court at the Fairburn Youth Center. Council Member Davis provided the second. **The motion carried unanimously.**

3. Spring 2026 Kids with Goals Facility Usage Agreement

Council Member Davis made a motion to bring the item to the floor. Council Member Perry provided the second.

Council Member Davis asked about Kids with Goals agreeing to pay the City of Fairburn \$15 per participant and the usage fees for staffing at \$25 per hour for games and a security fee. Ms. Scott said the \$15 is a general participation fee, Kids with Goals have been with us for three years and they practice every Tuesday and Thursday for two hours at our youth field. When we host games, we do not charge for the rental of the facility, but we do have to have a staff member there. The staffing fee is \$25 per hour per staff member and because it is a youth sporting event, our Police Department requires an officer to be there.

Council Member Perry asked if this was the first year we will have games and how do you see Duncan Park growing with the World Cup coming. Ms. Scott said yes, this is an ongoing partnership with Nancy Sanchez. Right now, they have two to three games per month on Saturdays.

Council Member Nichols asked if the new basketball court could be repurposed for soccer, during bad weather. Ms. Scott said Ms. Sanchez has about 120 students in the soccer program and there is no way they can accommodate that for outdoor sports, they do not have the space or parking.

Nancy Sanchez spoke and said she is the founder of Kids with Goals, this is a soccer program that started in Fairburn. Our program has about 125 kids that are registered from ages five to seventeen. Our girl's high school soccer team which is primarily a minority of Hispanic and black has been undefeated for the last four seasons and were recognized by Atlanta United. Our boy's high school soccer team which is also predominantly Latino and black has won the Georgia Soccer State Cup, they are going nationally, and all of these kids are Fairburn residents.

Mayor Portis-Jones said she is happy about the collaboration we have and we have been talking about soccer in the community for some time. We do not have a lot of spaces and trying to coordinate the use of the fields between little league football and soccer has been challenging. The city is working together to create a series of events in honor of the World Cup, there will be more information to come.

Council Member Perry made a motion to approve the Facility Usage Agreement between the City of Fairburn and Kids with Goals to provide soccer programming. Council Member Davis provided the second. **The motion carried unanimously.**

7. Resolution Pledging to Practice and Promote Civility in the City of Fairburn

Mayor Portis-Jones said the mayor's office is bringing forth this Resolution asking for the City of Fairburn to commit to and pledge to be a City of Civility. This program has been

established by the Georgia Municipal Association. We have had some challenging times, some things went on that surprised many of us and a lot of residents said they did not like it. They did not like the behavior, and they did not like what was going on. They ask and expect that we remain professional at all times. We will disagree as we should and we all have been elected to bring forth our ideas, but at the end of the day our residents expect us to come to an amicable resolution. We live in a democracy where the majority rules and this is a commitment to say we will do so.

City Administrator Tony Phillips said this resolution is simple in form, very important in practice to promote civility in the City of Fairburn. This item aligns with the Georgia Municipal Association's Embrace Civility Initiative and comes at a time when civility in public discourse has become increasingly less common at all levels of government and public life. While debate and disagreement are essential to democracy, the way those disagreements are expressed too often has shifted away from respect and professionalism. Notably, a recent national survey found similar responses to what we hear from our citizens in Fairburn. 93% of Americans believe civility is a problem and 68% identify it as a major problem. While public discourse may be growing louder, Fairburn citizens still prefer civil, respectful, and professional engagement. This resolution does not discourage robust debate. In fact, it explicitly affirms free expression, diverse viewpoints, and open discussion. What it does call for is disagreement without disrespect, focusing on issues rather than individuals, and engaging in a way that strengthens rather than erodes public trust. As elected and appointed officials, our meetings are public. Our words are visible, and our conduct sets the tone not only for city staff, but for the community we are all committed to serve. This resolution reinforces the expectations for how we treat one another, how we engage staff, and how we interact with residents, whether in person, online, or in written communication. At its core, this is a pledge of leadership. It reflects a shared commitment to civility, mutual respect, thoughtful listening, and constructive dialogue even when perspectives differ. While this resolution carries no budget impact, it has meaningful value. Affirming the standards of conduct that help cities like Fairburn function effectively and maintain public confidence. The recommended action before council tonight is approval of the resolution pledging to practice and promote civility in the City of Fairburn.

Mayor Portis-Jones asked if you adopt this resolution, each of you along with myself will sign the resolution committing to that pledge.

Council Member Davis made a motion to approve a Resolution pledging to practice and promote civility in the City of Fairburn. Council Member Nichols provided the second.

Council Member Benson recommended if the resolution is accepted, we make sure it is put front and center for our residents to see so they can refer to it as well. If it is placed on the website, if it is placed somewhere within city hall so that residents coming in know we are pledging this and hold us accountable.

Mayor Portis-Jones agreed and said they went on a site visit at another city and said it reminds them of the pledge at every meeting. Our Communications Director is here, and she will put this out for the public to see. I want all of you to know what it is that we are pledging to do and if we fail to do so, I also ask you to hold us accountable.

Council Member Davis thanked the mayor for bringing this item to the floor, and said we appreciate this.

After discussion, **the motion carried unanimously.**

8. Contract Award to Piedmont Paving for the Duncan Park Road Project

Public Works Director Lester Thompson said the Duncan Park Road Project is a TSPLOST project and is a new location roadway project that extends from Park Road to Virlyn B. Smith Road. Currently, there is only one way in Duncan Park and one way out of Duncan Park, which creates all sorts of safety concerns. This project will address those concerns and allow new parcels to be developed for future use. It is envisioned that this new roadway will be the location of a new community center. This project will also extend water and sewer services to the newly created City of Fairburn parcels to accommodate this desired project. The Invitation to Bid for the Duncan Road project was advertised on November 12, 2025. The bid opening date was December 19, 2025. We received eighteen bids that were read aloud and it was determined that Piedmont Paving was the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, with a bid price of \$4,566,732.55. The first \$2.8 million will be funded by the Capital Projects, Public Works Administration account. The remaining expenditures of \$1,766,732.55 will come out of TSPLOST funds.

Council Member Davis made a motion to approve the contract award for the Duncan Park Road Project to Piedmont Paving, Inc. for a bid price of \$4,566,732.55. Mayor Pro Tem Smallwood provided the second.

Council Member Perry asked if the infrastructure they are laying down would support the rec center. Mr. Thompson said they are installing water and sewer on both sides and the newly developed city parcels will be created by the roadway that will be road frontage. Council Member Perry asked if they would prep for future enhancements to Duncan Park. Mr. Thompson said yes.

Mayor Portis-Jones is excited about this project is coming to fruition, she talked about this when she ran in 2013. We were limited in some of the things we wanted to do in Duncan Park because we only had one way in and one way out. For safety reasons, we could not do that. She thanked the citizens of Fairburn for helping us to see the vision and equally important to the previous leadership that helped establish the funding strategies that we have put in place.

After discussion, **the motion carried unanimously.**

9. American Towers License Agreement

Utilities Director Derek Hampton said this item is a lease agreement between the City of Fairburn and American Towers. They own the tower that is located on city property at Howell Avenue. Fairburn has been gradually making the transition from a manual utility reading system into an automated system. It has been going on for the last three to four years, where we have been replacing the meters and installing the hardware to start talking to those meters. The lease project will allow us to mount equipment on their tower so we can start remotely communicating with the meters. This will be one of three collectors they will install on the tower, two more will go up on this side of town. The first one will read 60% of our system from one location because of the elevation being high on the tower. The other ones will be located on normal utility height poles. The cost of the lease is \$750 a month with an annual escalation of 4%. Right now, 42% of our entire system of meters has been changed, the majority of them have been water. We will come back before you with an order for enough electric meters for the changeover.

Council Member Perry made a motion to execute the license agreement between American Towers LLC and the City of Fairburn for usage of the tower facility located at 106 Howell Avenue, Fairburn, Georgia. Mayor Pro Tem Smallwood provided the second.

Council Member Nichols asked if three collectors would be sustainable for everyone in Fairburn. Mr. Hampton said yes, we are locked in and cannot expand outward, the three will read our whole system. Council Member Nichols asked if we were leasing the collectors at \$750 a month and for how long. Mr. Hampton said no, this is to lease space on the tower to mount our equipment at \$750 per month for a year and then they built in a 4% annual escalation.

Council Member Benson said you mentioned the point of being landlocked, but we are still aiming to bring more housing into the city, but will this allow for more residents, therefore more usage. Mr. Hampton said yes, there is no limit on how many meters can sync within the system.

After discussion, **the motion carried unanimously.**

10. Software as a Service Agreement for AMI Equipment

Utilities Director Derek Hampton presented this item and said we talked about the tower and mounting the equipment, this is the second part. This agreement is the equipment that goes on the tower, it covers the collector installation, integration of our billing system, annual support, cloud storage, and provides training for our employees. The total cost is \$177,500.00. It will not be this much each time we buy a collector, which runs around \$100,000.00. This is important for us, as it allows us to manage water cut off requests in real time, we are allowed to get the read off the meter remotely and finalize and complete the request. It also monitors for water leaks, if you have a meter that has constant flow on it, that is a sign of a leak, and it can generate a

report for that. If we have meters that stop communicating, it will alert us. We have an option to enable prepaid power, pay as you go. The best part is there will be an accuracy improvement.

Council Member Benson made a motion to approve the Software as a Service Agreement between the City of Fairburn and Sensus USA, Inc. Council Member Perry provided the second.

Council Member Davis asked what we used to detect the leak before. Mr. Hampton said we go out and look for wet spots in the ground, this would be a pipe leak. We instruct people over the phone on how to look for toilet leaks. Council Member Davis asked how they determined a leak at a home, does the city determine that or does the owners determine that. Mr. Hampton said if it is visible and we identify it, we will show the homeowner the wet spot in their yard and we tell them to shut off the main valve in their house and if the meter is running outside, they have a leak in their house. Once it gets inside the home, it is outside our scope. We will not be able to find a leak until the end of the month, when they have a huge increase in the bill. This software will catch it in a matter of hours.

City Administrator Tony Phillip said it is especially important that there is a clear delineation between the areas that the city is responsible for maintaining versus homeowners. If it is inside a private home, it is the responsibility of the homeowner. However, once the new system is implemented, it will indicate that there is a leak so we can alert the homeowner. We will check on the city's side of the meter to see if there is a leak, and by process of elimination we can let them know earlier, opposed to waiting for the bill to come out. Council Member Davis said she wanted the citizens to understand the cost before and how this will make it a whole lot better. Mr. Phillips said this type of technology will give us better outcomes to accuracy and consistency.

Council Member Nichols said she loves utilities and likes the idea of being more accurate when we get the new system and we see things are working, how realistically will we be able to notify customers they have a leak. She asked if there is a communication plan in place, will someone contact that homeowner and will our citizens have access to see their daily usages. Utilities has been a big issue in Fairburn, so, the more we can communicate the new updates and these resources it will be beneficial. Mr. Hampton said once everything is implemented on the system and it is integrated, he will work with city administration on affordability to get more applications to enable that type of analytics. Mr. Phillips said what they are seeking to do is an enhanced level of customer service. A lot of those issues that are on the homeowner side are not in the system that the city controls. This system has the capability to provide the service that will notify you of something on your side of the meter. We have roughly 8,000 customers in the city and a portion of the city's responsibility is checking for leaks on our side and making sure our system is working well. Council Member Nichols said she understands technology is supposed to make everything accurate and efficient but does not want to lose touch of the human part of it. Mr. Hampton said we will still get the phone calls, we would still have staff here.

That is not going to change. Council Member Nichols asked if this was the best technology out there. Mr. Hampton said I think so, a lot of cities use it. Mr. Phillips said there are approximately 49 cities in the state that provide utilities, this is the most commonly used system.

Mayor Pro Tem Smallwood asked when we see a leak on our end, are we calling people. Mr. Hampton said yes, we get reports from our system and our customer service team reaches out manually, either by email or a phone call to explain what is going on.

Mr. Phillips said our Operations Manager Chelsea Logan runs a report at the end of the month. This is intended to identify billing anomalies, and they proactively reach out to residents. Our customer service is extremely busy, and we think this system will help us to do it quicker.

Council Member Perry said 42% of the city is on the new system and asked for a timeline for the rest of the city. Mr. Hampton said we have gotten it approved in this year's current budget to order 2,500 electric meters, we did not have enough to completely finish the water system in this budget, but they are farther along than power because they hired a contractor to install and they are already at 56% on the water side. We should be able to get the water finished next year. Council Member Perry said about a year, we have the collectors that should be phased in over the next year as well. Together, with the new software, we are looking to enhance the efficiencies and accuracies to our Fairburn residents. Mr. Hampton said the residents that are updated with the new meter now will instantly be on the system. Council Member Perry said he understands new technology, it does take time to implement, put in place, and training. He is looking for a realistic timeframe. Assistant City Administrator Jamila Criss said the vendor we use for the meters is used by a lot of municipalities that provide utilities in the state and some of our meters have been on delay because they have gotten orders from larger counties with over 6,000 meters. We are trying to get them as fast as they can come in. We will continue to collaborate with the vendor to get those meters in as soon as possible.

Council Member Nichols recommended using technology when we alert residents when they have a leak. Some type of an alert system through an app and she understands not everyone is technology friendly, but it could save staff time to automate calls or send out alerts.

Mayor Portis-Jones said we are on a schedule to bring technology before this body. Technology is not cheap, and we can only do so much at a time. We will be bringing before you a series of these as we upgrade our technology.

After discussion, **the motion carried unanimously.**

XI. Reports:

11. Finance Director Monthly Report

Finance Director Kenneth Abidde presented the General Fund October 2025 month to date revenues. The revenues exceeded expenditures by \$1 million. Year to Date the General Fund revenues received \$2.8 million, and disbursed expenditures for \$1.8 million. As of October 2025, the city collected 7.7% of budgeted revenues and expensed 5% of budgeted expenditures.

The Enterprise Fund for October 2025 exceeded expenditures by \$1.8 million. Year to date, the Enterprise Funds revenues received a total of \$2.57 million, and expenditures disbursed is \$758 thousand. As of October 2025, the city collected 9.3% of budgeted revenues and has disbursed 2.7% of budgeted expenditures.

The General Fund for November 2025 exceeded expenditures by \$186 thousand. Year to date the General Fund revenues received \$4.8 million, and expenditures disbursed \$3.6 million. As of November 2025, the city collected 13% of budgeted revenues and has expensed 10% of budgeted expenditures.

Council Member Perry asked about the graph displaying sanitation expenses during 2025 -2026. Mr. Abidde said the value is minimal. Mayor Portis-Jones said as a reminder that our fiscal year is October 1, we are only five months in, and a lot of expenses are yet to come in.

The Enterprise Fund for November 2025 exceeded expenditures by \$1 million. Year to Date the Enterprise Funds revenues received total \$5.75 million and expenditures disbursed \$2.9 million. As of November 2025, the city collected 20.8% of budgeted revenues and has disbursed 10.5% of budgeted expenditures.

The General Fund for December 2025 exceeded expenditures by \$2.7 million. Year to date the General Fund revenues received \$10.6 million and expenditures disbursed \$6.7 million. As of December 2025, the city collected 29% of budgeted revenues and has expensed 18% of budgeted expenditures.

The Enterprise Fund for December 2025 exceeded expenditures by \$1.9 million. Year to date the Enterprise Funds revenues received a total of \$8.15 million, and expenditures disbursed \$4.4 million. As of December 2025, the city collected 29.5% of budgeted revenues and has disbursed 16% of budgeted expenditures.

Council Member Nichols asked a question regarding electric on the two-year comparison and wanted to know where the almost \$2 million surplus came from and about the expenditures being low. Mr. Abidde said purchases increase toward the end of the fiscal year, this is just the beginning of the fiscal year. Tracking revenue over

expenses is where I put a lot of focus because I want to make sure, we are spending less than we are bringing in. The trends will fluctuate throughout the year, based on several factors.

Mayor Portis-Jones said the cost of electricity has gone up and it reflects that. Mr. Phillips said cost for electricity is not consistent throughout the year, it is also seasonal. When we have a hard cold snap and there is more demand on the system, the sources that provide us with electricity, their prices fluctuate. All those variables play into that month over month, and we are able to track it.

Council Member Nichols said it would be more helpful for her to see the trends and asked if they could prepare a yearly graph of the trends. Mr. Phillips said understood.

12. City Administrator's Monthly Report

City Administrator Tony Phillips said it is not typical to get three financial reports in one meeting. The meetings with the holidays get a little difficult. I am here to present the City Administrator's monthly report covering those same three months.

The full report is always provided in advance both for you and our residents posted in our public agenda. Overall, the final months of last year demonstrated steady operations. Strong service delivery and meaningful progress across multiple departments. We focus heavily on collaboration, execution, and shared commitment to public service and that is reflected in this report. A couple of operational highlights, from an infrastructure standpoint, we completed a huge important project on Rivertown Road with burying our overhead power lines underground.

Public Works secured a \$400,000 Federal Safe Streets and Roads grant, which will reinforce our long-term commitment to transportation safety and mobility planning. Economic Development and Growth, and Planning & Zoning remain strong. We currently have \$72 million in development projects under review. 91 building permits were issued over those three months and more than \$878,000 in fees was collected. These are clear indicators that private sector investment and responsible growth management is still moving in a positive direction.

Economic Development continued site selection tours and downtown activation discussions to support the revitalization efforts we discussed previously. Public Safety is always a priority to us in Fairburn.

The Fire Department responded to 328 calls for service while maintaining robust prevention and outreach efforts.

The Police Department continued its community policing focus and closed the year with a 4% reduction in part one crime trends, breaking the record set in 2024, and in doing so, setting a new record for the lowest level of part one crimes in the city's

recorded history. The men and women who serve our citizens and the police department have made that happen.

We saw a strong Community Engagement through Parks & Recreation. Youth sports, senior activities and signature events like the Tree Lighting and fireworks show we held in December. These efforts support quality of life and community connection.

December marked the successful launch of the city's new official website. Thanks to our Communications team, it was one of the most significant digital infrastructure upgrades in the city's history, improving transparency, access to services, and public communication during a peak engagement period. Taken together, this report reflects a city organization that closed 2025 with strength and momentum and one that is well positioned to support the mayor and council's priorities in the year ahead. He thanked the department directors, our hardworking and dedicated city staff, for their professionalism and dedication.

Mayor thanked city administration for the revised presentation of the report, it is succinct and to the point and extremely easy for us to read and digest.

XII. Council Comments:

Mayor Pro Tem Smallwood thanked everyone for coming out. He put out a caution on a project going on at Exit 61 and said there are huge potholes developing. He had a neighbor approach him on the damages and he told him that is GDOT's jurisdiction. Mr. Phillips said that is a state road, if you could have them contact our office, we would be happy to help them.

Council Member Nichols thanked everyone and said she appreciates the tone and thoughtfulness of today's discussion. As someone still getting my feet wet with this role, this has been a welcoming experience and thanked her fellow council and mayor. She values how collaborative we are working together, and how transparent this council has been, and I am looking forward to continue to learn, ask good questions, and work together in service of our citizens.

Council Member Davis said she would like to bring some attention to the property tax relief. There are several bills going on in legislature that will affect some of the things we are used to. We should be concerned about a couple of bills HB 422, this bill will change our elections more on a federal level. Also, in reference to property tax, HB 1114 and 1116, which will take a constitutional amendment. We need to really look at this and see how it will affect us.

Council Member Houser said I am so glad to be a part of this council and as we come together and talk about the municipal affairs which entail the daily services and matters for this great city. She thanked the residents, the community, and the mayor and council, and said they care about what is going on in the city. I am still learning, you can always reach her, if you have any questions that I can communicate those questions or

concerns. She thanked the Police Department for the 4% crime rate. We are one of the safest cities in Georgia. I am happy to be here, and we will continue to do our best to provide the best services as we can.

Council Member Benson said she echoes the sentiments and thanked everyone for coming.

Council Member Perry said thanks all glory to God, without him none of this would be possible. He thanked everyone that came out tonight and he wants to build on what has already been spoken about regarding Fairburn Utilities, there is a Fairburn Utilities Department Amnesty, which is where you can try and clear your past dues without penalties, fees, or shutoff. That runs from the 23rd through the 27th from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., right here in this building located at 56 Malone Street, Fairburn. On February 26th, you can come in from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. for one-on-one conversations regarding your bills. Huge shout out to the Fire Department, Chief Robinson, and your team. 328 calls, which is amazing, that is a quarter of a calendar which includes the holidays for them responding to the needs here in our community. Chief Bazydlo and the Police Department, you continue to break records in our community, and all of our citizens feel that they can come up to a local police officer to ask a question, without a negative experience or remark. He thanked the mayor for continuing to have us here, we are always going to be professional, and we will take the matters that the citizens have to heart.

Mayor Portis-Jones thanked Council Member Perry for mentioning the customer service day coming up and the amnesty program. We will continue to remind the citizens of that and asked Communications Director, Jacqueline Howell, to talk about the Black History Month program that is coming up on February 28th. Ms. Howell said we are inviting our citizenry as well as mayor and council and anyone else that would like to participate in the Voices of Legacy, a black history experience which will be held on February 28th, beginning at 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. The program starts at 4 p.m. and we will have the Legacy Market which features over 20 vendors that will open at 3 p.m. This will be held at the Frankie Arnold Stage and Courtyard. It is featuring Orchestra Noir, Spirit and Truth Choir, Sky Dance Academy, Theresa Mingo, and the South Fulton Studios. It is going to be amazing experience.

Mayor Portis-Jones gave a special thank you to council for buying into the Resolution of Civility and that you were willing to sign on with that. We are all human, we all make mistakes sometimes, but the fact that we are wanting to sign on the dotted line to say we will be very intentional about being civil and professional with each other as we all are in the various workplaces. As suggested by Councilwoman Benson, we will make sure the public knows what it is to which we have committed. I want to say for the record I am asking, I am expecting and I am sure there will not be any problem with residents holding us accountable and telling us we violated the pledge. I look forward to seeing all of you at our Black History Month celebration.

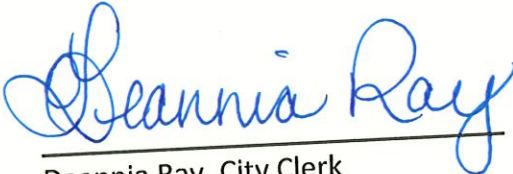
Council Member Benson made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss litigation at 8:52 p.m. Council Member Davis provided the second. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Council Member Davis made a motion to reconvene into regular session. Council Member Perry provided the second. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Council Member Benson asked about the retreat and the mayor said more information is forthcoming.

XIII. Adjournment:

Mayor Pro Tem Smallwood made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. Council Member Davis provided the second. **The motion carried unanimously.**


Deannia Ray, City Clerk


Hattie Portis Jones, Mayor