

City Council of Peachtree City
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 8, 2025
9:30 AM

Call to Order

The Mayor and Council of Peachtree City met for a work session on Thursday, May 8, 2025. Mayor Kim Learnard called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Council members attending: Laura Johnson, Suzanne Brown, and Clinton Holland.

Public Comment

Jim Forestal, referencing problems with condensation and heat, asked Council for an enclosed roller hockey rink that could be used year-round, suggesting it be built between May and August 2026.

Amanda Reiss, whose husband and daughter were involved in hockey, pointed out that the current situation was unhealthy for participants because of the heat at the end of the season in the spring and at the beginning in the fall.

A member of the Peachtree City Hockey Association, Cliff Jackson, also mentioned the danger from condensation and heat and added that the ability to host tournaments would bring money into the city.

Leque Stormy requested that Council ban backyard burning because it caused breathing problems for him and for many other citizens.

Announcements

A. Declaration of Vacancy of City Council Post 4

The Mayor officially declared Council Post 4 vacant upon the resignation of Frank Destadio.

B. National Bike Month Proclamation and Unveiling

Learnard recognized local cycling groups in attendance and thanked Keith Larson for his advocacy for the cycling community. She proclaimed May as National Bicycling Month and Bicycling Safety Month. Council then unveiled four bike racks made in the form of the city's logo and featuring the city colors. Learnard said they would be placed at 30 locations.

Agenda Changes

Brown moved to move New Agenda item 6B before the Work Session discussion items. Johnson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Work Session Discussion Items

A. Fayette County Safe Streets for All Presentation

City Engineer Dave Borkowski introduced Richard Fangmann of Pond & Co. for an update about the Safer Streets and Roads for All action plan for Fayette County and its municipalities. The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), the

Federal Highway Administration, and the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) were also involved.

First, Borkowski said the goal was to update the action plan, and the Federal grant deadline was June 23, so time was of the essence. One of the projects that would qualify for Federal funding was 2023 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) project 30, the grade separation crossing of SR 54 East at Publix because it was on what the study deemed a high injury network. Also, it was near a school zone. The money was already there through SPLOST, which meant there would be no problem meeting the 20% required match. He said he could bring a resolution to Council to adopt the plan and the 20% match at the June 5 meeting.

Borkowski thanked the County for obtaining the grant to cover this study and noted they would be paying for the cost of the applications, as well.

Fangmann said a lot of work had gone into this from the community. The project started in April, 2024, and consisted of examination of safety data and development of an action plan. In addition to road projects, the plan included an education component. The public input portion of the process allowed citizens to point out areas of concern.

Fangmann said there were about 17,000 crashes in the county over the past five years, and 300 of those involved golf carts. The high injury network was defined by the rate and severity of crashes, and the safety improvements would focus on those. SR 54 obtained the highest ranking in terms of most accidents.

Safety recommendations included intersection and segment improvements, such as pedestrian refuge areas, rumble strips, and improved signalization. Brown asked about a bike lane on Robinson Road, and Fangmann said he would look into that. Learnard added that Dividend Drive also could benefit from a bike lane.

Johnson wondered if the golf cart crash numbers included those that occurred on paths, and Fangmann said they did, but many others were on local streets that approached a path. Fangmann said there were not many projects that could make the paths safer; that lent itself more to education.

Brown said she was glad to see this moving forward, and Learnard affirmed they would adopt the plan as soon as possible so they could get moving on the grants.

B. FY2025 Budget Amendment - Insurance Reimbursement - PD

Assistant Police Chief Matt Myers said this was to get the insurance company's reimbursement for repairs after an accident back into the correct account.

C. FY2025 Budget Amendment - Continued IT Consolidation, Server, and Camera

Finance Director Kelly Bush explained that this was just to reallocate funds from

one department to another to give them a clearer idea of information technology costs. Also, IT contingency funds were being used to replace equipment. Holland asked about disposal of old equipment, and Bush said all safety protocols were followed.

D. FY2025 Budget Amendment - Back to School Bash Sponsorship Donation

Bragassa Orthodontics was donating \$2,000 to the Back to School Bash.

E. Meade Lacrosse Field Irrigation Renovation

Three bids had been received for a new irrigation system at Meade Field, reported Assistant Recreation Director Harold Layton, with the lowest from Aabby at \$44,950. He said this was part of the renovation of two lacrosse fields that were more than 40 years old. The money was available from tourism and product development (TPD) funds.

Holland asked if the contract included a warranty that would guarantee Aabby would fix any problems, noting that citizens had come before them in the past with a problem that involved this company. Layton said they had specified good quality parts in the bids, and he said he could check on the warranty and come back with information at the next meeting.

Brown asked if they had a long-term relationship with any other irrigation company that they might want to stick with, but Layton said they previously done repairs in-house. Aabby had been doing business in the community for many years and had done good work when they had worked with the City, he remarked.

F. Lighting Upgrades at Lacrosse and PAC Baseball Fields

Borkowski stated that this project for lighting at several athletic fields was previously bid on and awarded contingent on the contractor showing they could satisfy all the bidding specifications. However, the contractor was not able to satisfy these, so the bid was rejected. Staff then determined that a change in specifications was necessary. The project was re-bid and they were reviewing those bids now for compliance, and the apparent low bidder was still Georgia Power at \$1.1 million.

Strickland noted this money was originally from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), but had been moved into the capital improvement projects (CIP) account to fulfill Federal requirements.

This was to convert existing lighting to LED lighting, Brown confirmed. Johnson asked who did the lighting at the softball fields, and Strickland said ESG, which was one of the three bidders here. He added that Georgia Power would be working in conjunction with Cooper Lighting on this.

Were the technical issues about the spread of the light? Holland asked. Borkowski said they could not meet the specifications of zero lumens at the property lines, so

they had to relax that. Strickland noted it would still be less light pollution than the current lights.

Holland then asked about lights at men's softball at Meade Field. Strickland said they would if Council wanted it, but staff's focus was to convert what they currently had to LED, but there was no funding for additional projects. Holland said men's softball seemed to be neglected, and Johnson pointed out that both men and women played in these adult leagues.

Learnard related that a faulty pole fell over in 2019, and all the poles were found to be decrepit and were removed. The 72 teams either disbanded or moved to Coweta County, which meant they had no adult softball program now. She said they could spend money on this or on hockey or something else. Holland said he just wanted citizens to know they had not forgotten softball.

G. ~~Drake Field Restrooms Design~~ (withdrawn by City Manager)

H. Connected Vehicle Program - No Cost Lease Agreement

The City had partnered with GDOT over the past few years to implement "connected vehicle" technology into most of the signal cabinets that would enable vehicles in the future to "talk" to each other and to the signals, Borkowski explained. A major benefit would allow emergency vehicles to hit a button and have the lights in their paths turn green. This agreement would allow the City to test equipment in a few Police and Fire/EMS vehicles at no cost

I. Multi Use Bridge B18/Cedar Croft Path Fencing Replacement

The fence along the approach to this path bridge over SR 74 was damaged and needed replacing, Borkowski reported. A better system would be to guard rails. They had four bidders show up to their meeting, but only one company submitted a bid. One company said they were unable to submit bond information on time. Borkowski said they would probably re-bid this, and Strickland said that was standard practice when only one bid was received. This would be on the west side of the bridge, Holland verified

J. Construction Bid for City Hall Renovations

This, too, was part of the ARPA funds that were transferred to the CIP. The project included an elevator, roof replacement, HVAC improvements to IT, major electrical system upgrades, and renovations to the upstairs and downstairs lobby areas. Staff received five bids that they were currently reviewing. He said \$2.2 million had been budgeted for this, and Council would vote on awarding the bid at their next meeting.

Borkowski said the bids were coming in right around the budgeted amount. Holland made sure all the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance requirements were being met with this project, and Borkowski said they were. Strickland said this

was touching every forward facing area at City Hall, and Borkowski said there might be a few small things.

The goal was to keep City Hall functioning as much as possible, he continued. Court would be moved to temporary facilities for staff and would be held on Fridays only. The timeframe was 12 to 18 months. The lowest bidder had promised a detailed schedule.

K. Huddleston Road Path & Sewer Project

This was another SPLOST project, and the plan was to create a multi-use path from Paschall Road to around SR 54 and also extend sewer lines. The first step was to secure a design consultant, and staff sent out requests for proposal (RFPs). Five were returned, which were being reviewed. Interviews would follow. The plan was to make a recommendation to Council at a June meeting, Borkowski stated.

Holland asked if the water lines would be moved, and Borkowski said that was unknown at this point. Holland asked on what side of the road the path would be, and Strickland said that was part of what the consultant would be deciding. What about stormwater? Holland asked, and Borkowski said the firm they hired would be required to have experience with handling runoff,

L. 214 Southwick Stormdrain Replacement

Borkowski reminded Council of the collapsed pipe that had resulted in a sinkhole on this property. They had a design on replacing the pipe system and received nine bids that they were evaluating with the intent of bringing a recommendation to Council in June. The \$124,000 left in stormwater and pipelining funds should cover this job.

M. 2025 Street Paving Bid Award

Public Works Director Jonathan Miller explained he would bring this annual plan to the next Council meeting. He said paving the Peachtree City Athletic Complex (PAC) parking lot was included, so that why the number of miles of paving was less than in some years.

N. Transportation Advisory Group 2025 Multi-Use Path Master Plan

The Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) had diligently worked since December on an updated path master plan map. They would have a brief presentation at the next Council meeting, Miller stated, then Council would be asked to vote. Strickland noted that Council had received the map in their meeting packet.

O. Burn Permit Ordinance and Process Review

Fire Marshal Jeff Felmet presented information on this at the last Council work session and was returning with answers to some questions. He reminded Council that the current burn ordinance allowed outdoor burning of yard debris between October and April, which was when the State allowed it, with a permit issued each day of burning. There were limits on the size of the fire, and permits were not

required for cooking or entertainment fires.

Council had asked what other jurisdictions did, and Felmet said the restrictions ran the gamut, with the City of Griffin banning burning entirely, while Newnan allowed burning with a permit if it was at least 200 feet from all structures. Fairburn's restrictions were basically the same as Peachtree City's. Fayetteville did not require a permit. Most counties allowed burning, either with or without a permit.

Brown had asked for the number of permits issued over the past 12 months, and Felmet said it was 1,423, far fewer than in the 12 months before that. They were issued at 542 addresses, with 57% of those going to the same 135 addresses.

Felmet provided two ordinances for Council to consider. Version 1 was a total ban on the burning of yard debris. Version 2 banned the burning of yard debris with exceptions to lots of a size to be determined by Council.

Felmet said he was not overly concerned about the danger to nearby buildings; most complaints were about smoke. Keeping a fire 200 feet from the property lines would require a lot of 3.57 acres or more. There were only 101 lots of that size or larger in the city. However, he added, having a large lot did not mean that smoke was confined to that lot. Only two lots among the top 10 permit acquisitions were more than an acre. Felmet also showed that burning was common throughout the city, but most was concentrated in the Crosstown/Robinson Road area.

Learnard thanked Felmet for his extra effort and said her opinion was unchanged that outdoor burning should be banned in order to provide relief to the people who were affected by the smoke.

Holland said he agreed. Brown said she was on the fence because they needed to provide an option to burning. If it was banned, the mulch pit needed to remain open so residents could bring debris there. Johnson agreed that they needed to provide another way to deal with yard debris and said she could support a ban if there was an option.

They agreed this should be on the next meeting's agenda. Brown said she wanted a guarantee that the mulch pit would remain open, and Learnard said that was an important conversation, but maybe not needed immediately.

Brown asked if they could make this a public hearing item at the next meeting?

City Clerk Yasmin Julio said the Mayor could open the discussion to the public, and citizens could also bring it up during the Public Comments section of the meeting.

Old Agenda Items

A. 112124-CA-C Capital Improvement Vehicle Purchases

Fire Chief Clint Murphy explained that Council authorized a list of vehicles to be purchased during the fiscal year on November 21, 2024, with the caveat that purchases would come back to Council if they were over budget. This vehicle was budgeted at \$53,000, but engine issues limited purchase options to "on the lot" vehicles, which brought the price up to \$54,462.47, about \$1,463 over budget. That cost included the addition of the required emergency lighting. However, he pointed out, the Fire Department was under budget \$3,814 in their financed purchase of the Lifepak 35 Cardiac Monitor, so no budget reallocation or amendment was required.

Holland moved to approve Capital Improvement vehicle purchases in the amount of \$44,985. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously

New Agenda Items

A. FY2025 Budget Amendment - United Pools Glenloch Splash Pad

Layton first stated that he had been in touch with Aabby, and there was a one-year warranty on the installation of the irrigation system at Meade. The materials would be covered by the manufacturer.

This was a budget amendment to cover increased charges by United Pools due to changes in the schedule at the Glenloch splash pad, which would open as a free splash pad on May 14. The current contract provided for one maintenance visit per day by United Pools from May 24 to September 1. The proposed amendment would allow for two maintenance visits per day from May 1 through 23 and two maintenance visits per day from September 2 through 30, plus one additional maintenance visit per day (for a total of two) from May 24 through September 1.

This was the first year the splash pad would be open past Labor Day, he noted. The expanded maintenance schedule should prevent expensive emergency calls. The splash pad would be open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and closed on Monday for maintenance except on Memorial Day and Labor Day.

With the approval of this amendment, the splash pad would be open for free the next day, and the Mayor noted the grand opening would be May 24 with free popsicles for all. The splash pad would now be open for almost two additional months, Holland remarked.

Brown moved to approve the FY 2025 budget amendment as presented. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Filling Vacancy on Council

City Manager Justin Strickland explained that since it was less than a year until the end of Destadio's elected term, Council had the option of either appointing a new member by following a procedure outlined in the City Code or letting the seat

remain vacant until it could be voted on in the November election.

Brown said she could not support the appointment process because it utilized ranked choice voting, which she believed could easily result in the appointment of someone who was not the best person. She said the ordinance needed to be changed, but that, like the Council civility issue, should wait until there were five members.

Johnson, after expressing her appreciation for Destadio, agreed that the appointment process was not the best way to move forward. She said she had faith that the remaining members could work together during this period and get things done.

Holland also did not want to go through the appointment process, saying the citizens should decide. He, too, said the ordinance should be revised, as should another ordinance that said the majority of Council must agree to put something on a meeting agenda.

Learnard said she also did not believe they needed to fill the seat at this time. City Attorney Ted Meeker then advised that Council did not need to take any action if that was their decision.

Holland paid tribute to Destadio, noting his retirement from the U.S. Air Force as a colonel, followed by two decades of service to the community as a member of the County Water Authority, the Peachtree City Planning Commission, first as a member, then as chairman for 11 years, followed by more than three years as a Councilman. He said Destadio set an example for all of them of honesty and diligence in service.

Brown added that Destadio was a good friend and said she had written a note to him about how proud she was of him and that she was glad he realized it was time to step back and enjoy his family and what he had.

Learnard noted that they wished Destadio well in his continued recovery and said cards could be sent to him at City Hall.

Council/Staff Topics

1. 4th of July Parade Grand Marshal

Registration for the July 4 parade had started the previous day, and the Georgia Mass Band would be performing this year, Layton announced. Two informational sessions for parade participants had already been held, and another was scheduled for May 20. Johnson asked Layton to explain about these sessions, and he said there was a 30-minute PowerPoint presentation, then staff would answer questions. Staff could email the presentation if needed, and there would be posts on social media about what would be allowed.

Holland asked if the parade lineup spots would be guaranteed or first-come, first-serve on the morning of the parade? Layton said it would be first-come, first-serve again this year because it was much easier on staff and participants due to road closures. This year, the registration deadline had been extended, and there was no limit on the number of participants, Layton stated.

Holland also wanted a float for City Council members to ride on, and Julio said they were investigating a float if Council desired it. Learnard asked if candy would be thrown, and Layton said yes. Holland then proposed that Frank and Sandi Destadio be the grand marshals for the parade. Learnard said that was something they needed to talk about with the Destadios

.2. Boundary and Impact Fee Study

Strickland mentioned that just one proposal was returned for the RFP for the boundary and impact fee study. The company that bid on it was a reputable company. He did not know the bid amount because they had not opened it. Strickland said he was bringing it up to Council because he did not want to waste staff time reviewing this if they wanted to solicit more proposals. Also, if they did send it back out, it would push the timeline back on getting the project started.

Learnard asked if the company submitted the proposal believing it was a competitive bidding process. Strickland replied that was true, and Learnard then said she had no problem going with it.

Johnson's hesitation was because Strickland had said earlier that in the case of getting only one bid, they usually re-bid a project. Was this a company the City had done business with before? Strickland said he was not aware of it, but they had done studies for several other cities in Georgia.

Holland asked Strickland if he was comfortable with this organization, and he said he was. Holland asked if Strickland thought the cost seemed fair. Strickland explained that during the RFP process, the bid was opened only after the proposal had been studied and scored. Holland suggested they contact the other companies and put this on the agenda for the next Council meeting.

Brown said she always liked to have more than one bid, but there were instances where they did not get them. Johnson asked what their budget was, and Strickland said it was \$120,000, which included the boundary study and evaluation of the formula used for distribution of impact fees. He said he could have information on the amount of the bid by next Thursday, and Council agreed with that. Learnard said there was no need to call other companies, and Strickland said he would call other cities this company had worked for.

3. Public Art

Holland said it was time for Council to institute a public art advisory group to advise Council on public art installations that could be placed around the city. He envisioned a

large regional arts festival at Drake Field. He offered to work on organizing this group himself and said he knew several people in the community who would like to be involved.

Brown stated she could support this, but they needed to understand what the impact would be on staff. Learnard agreed. Johnson said the use of staff time was her concern. Maybe this could fall under the Recreation Advisory Group's purview? They needed to know more about how other cities operated their art programs.

Learnard noted that art was subjective and could be controversial. She suggested they could reach out to their colleagues in other cities and see how they did it. Holland pointed to Woodstock as an example, saying they had a pamphlet about their arts program.

Did they want Council to do some research and come back in a work session in a few months? Strickland asked. Johnson proposed they wait until after the budget was approved, but Brown said they could gather information in the meantime. Learnard agreed.

4. Combining of Election Precincts

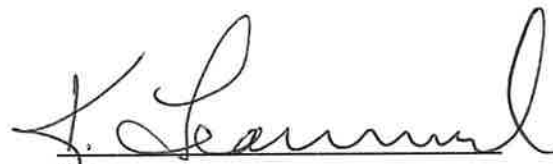
Brown said the Board of Elections had delayed its decision on combining and closing voting precincts until their next meeting.

Executive Session

Adjourn

There being no further business, Holland moved to adjourn at 11:57 a.m. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.


Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary


Kim Learnard, Mayor