

City Council of Peachtree City
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 15, 2025
6:30 PM

Call to Order

The Mayor and City Council of Peachtree City met in regular session on Thursday, May 15, 2025. Mayor Kim Learnard called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Others attending: Suzanne Brown, Clinton Holland, and Laura Johnson.

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

Presentation

A. UDO Status Update Presentation

Kenneth Hamner, chairman of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Steering Committee, accompanied by Planning Commission Chairman Scott Ritenour, presented a synopsis of the committee's work during its first six months. Hamner shared the Committee's mission and goals statement and said they had established a website and were sharing information via Microsoft Teams.

The committee intended to have a draft of the UDO by November 2025, with the final draft set for completion in December 2026. In between there would be countless revisions, with at least two information and input sessions for the public. Hamner emphasized the magnitude of the process, noting that the outline of the first draft, which they had just completed, was 104 pages long. They were looking to use technology to spot many of the inconsistencies and duplications they were trying to correct, but they would also need help from a professional, Hamner remarked.

Brown said she hoped the needed changes in the ordinance would be brought to Council as they came up, rather than slamming them with a lot of revisions at the end. Hamner said they would be keeping Council apprised of their work so that would not happen.

Johnson recalled the previous failed UDO attempt and asked if there was funding left over from that? Strickland said the money allocated for that went into the Capital Improvement Plan contingencies and could be extracted out. The original budget was for the whole process, so this cost should be much less if they only used the consultant for reviews.

This seemed to be a very aggressive timeline, Holland observed, and Hamner agreed, but assured him it was doable, although it could be adjusted if needed.

Announcements, Awards, Special Recognition

None

Public Comment

Brown moved to allow each speaker the full three minutes to speak. Holland seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Bev Ottone, a Newnan resident who had been involved in Peachtree City's roller hockey program for 14 years, noted that it was the largest roller hockey program for children and adults in Georgia. She asked Council to consider enclosing the rink so it could be air conditioned to allow for year-round play. She said they were losing players to other facilities because of this.

Jeremy Richardson talked about the unsafe conditions at the open air hockey rink, saying the floors were dangerous and slippery.

Lauren Reiss, a goalie, mentioned the dangers of dehydration and the impact of the heat at the beginning and start of the season. She also pointed out that the teams could attract more spectators in a climate-controlled environment.

Trina Bryant-Bynoe, owner of the Peachtree Bottle Shop, asked Council to consider lifting the prohibition on tastings at package stores. All surrounding counties allowed it, she reported, and the State had changed the law to allow these tastings.

Keith Larson noted that May was National Bike Month and thanked the City for acquiring new bike racks. He said an exhibition on 25 years of Biking for Life was on display at the library and the Ride of Silence would be next weekend.

Larson also asked Council to ban open air burning of debris because of the impact on air quality.

Landree Stoney, through her mom, also asked Council to ban burning because it sometimes impacted her playtime outdoors.

Halo Williams was another young person who wanted outdoor burning banned.

Sometimes the smoke was so pervasive, London Stoney recalled, that he had to stop playing in the park and go home.

Sandy Vongdashy remembered a day when she brought her kids to All Children's Playground, but they had to leave because of smoke from a nearby fire. She said she had planned to spend the day in Peachtree City, shopping and getting lunch, but that was canceled because of the burning.

Lecque Stoney told Council that sometimes he and his friends could not play outside because of the smoke from an outdoor burn. Sometimes smoke even got into their house, he reported.

Celeste Stoney urged Council to ban outdoor burning because it negatively impacted their health and their right to enjoy their home. Toxic pollutants harmed everyone, but especially the very young, old, and those with respiratory illnesses. Stoney noted that

some Council members were concerned that a ban would result in piles of debris in yards, but she pointed out that burning was already banned for six months out of the year with no consequences.

Outdoor burning sometimes cut their playtime short at All Children's Playground, said Mayson Williams, who called on Council to put a halt to it.

Ray Stoney related an unhappy experience with his neighbor, who often had large fires burning in his yard for several consecutive days. Stoney noted that the average home price in Peachtree City was about \$500,000, and he believed people who could afford to live here could afford to rent a truck and take their debris to be properly disposed of.

Agenda Changes

Holland moved to remove item D from the New Agenda section. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

A. April 17, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes

Brown said a paragraph on the final page should be changed to read: "Brown then added there was also a Public Service Commissioner election this year in addition to the municipal election, so all precincts would be voting. We need to be able to know which precinct to tell our voters to go to, either their municipal precinct or their General Election precinct. For over 2,480 of our citizens, their municipal precinct is not the same as their General Election precinct."

Brown moved to approve the April 17, 2025, meeting minutes with that change incorporated. Johnson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. April 17, 2025 Executive Session Minutes

Brown moved to approve the April 17, 2025, Executive Session minutes. Johnson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Holland moved to approve Consent Agenda items A-F. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

A. FY2025 Budget Amendment - Insurance Reimbursement - PD (Approved 4,0)

B. FY2025 Budget Amendment - Continued IT Consolidation, Server, and Camera (Approved 4,0)

C. FY2025 Budget Amendment - Back to School Bash Sponsorship Donation (Approved 4,0)

D. Meade Lacrosse Field Irrigation Renovation

(Approved 4,0)

E. Connected Vehicle Program - No Cost Lease Agreement
(Approved 4,0)

F. 214 Southwick Stormdrain Replacement
(Approved 4,0)

Old Agenda Items

None

New Agenda Items

A. 05-25-01 2025 Street Paving Bid Award

Public Works Director Jonathan Miller said they received six bids for the 2025 paving, ranging from a little over \$4 million to \$6.3 million. Staff recommended awarding the contract to the low bidder, Atlanta Paving and Concrete, for \$4,099,999.

Johnson moved to award the 2025 Street Paving Project to Atlanta Paving and Concrete in the amount of \$4,099,999. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. 05-25-02 Transportation Advisory Group 2025 Multi-Use Path Master Plan

Since December, Miller remarked, the Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) had worked diligently on the annual review of the Multi-Use Path Master Plan. TAG members were present to explain their process.

TAG Chairman Paul Schultz introduced the TAG members who were present: Vice Chair Keith Larson, Blake Hayes, and Amanda Toronto. Larson said they wanted the update to be ready for the County's annual master plan update, which would start in June. He noted that Peachtree City staff had not reviewed the master path plan since 2022. Larson went over the process TAG used, which included creating a vision, while Schultz explained the importance they gave to increasing safety and connectivity through path, bridge, and tunnel projects. Hayes ended the presentation with a comment this was TAG's recommendation on where the best value for paths would be. Of course, the plan was not set in stone; they would be looking at it every year. It was a long-range plan, he emphasized.

Learnard thanked the TAG members for their hard work.

Miller said he needed a motion to adopt the Multi-Use Path Master Plan Map for 2025, but Holland had an issue with the word "adopt," which he said meant to him that they would be obligated to do everything in the plan. He wanted to substitute "accept."

City Attorney Ted Meeker acknowledged there was a difference between the two

words but explained that adopting a plan was step one. Funding and prioritizing projects in that plan was done through the budgeting process.

Holland asserted that it still meant the projects would be done, but Learnard said it did not. Meeker likened it to the Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan. Adopting that map did not mean they immediately rezoned every property to conform with what they envisioned. They had adopted a Path Master Plan three years ago, Meeker noted, and asked Miller what percentage of projects had been completed. He replied that it was about 10%. Meeker noted that it was just a plan, and the reality could be much different.

Holland said using the word “accept” would mean that Council could adjudicate funding and prioritization at the appropriate time. Brown said she agreed with Holland, but Learnard remarked that adopting meant they agreed with the plan. Meeker again said if they voted to adopt the plan there would still be additional action Council would have to take. Learnard asked if adopting the plan meant they would be committed in any way, and Meeker said it did not.

Brown’s opinion was that citizens would be confused by the word “adopt” and think it meant all the projects in the plan were guaranteed to be started imminently. She said they were having the same issue with the Recreation Master Plan. Learnard agreed that was a valid point.

Meeker said his role was not to talk about the perception of citizens, but adopting this plan did not mean it would be funded.

Strickland noted that even the paths that were completed from the 2022 plan underwent changes from what was described on the map. Miller said the plan just showed a connection from Point A to Point B; paths could end up on the opposite side of the road, due to costs or other factors.

Holland told Miller this was an excellent plan, but he did not want to risk citizen misunderstandings. He said he wanted to make it clear that just because Council adopted it did not mean those projects would get done. Learnard said that was fair.

Holland moved to adopt New Agenda item 05-25-02, 2025 Multi-Use Path Master Plan. Johnson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

C. 05-25-03 Burn Permit Ordinance Change

As Council had requested at their last work session, Fire Marshal Jeff Felmet presented a draft ordinance that called for a complete ban on burning yard debris within the city limits.

Brown said she was confused by paragraph e., Implementation, under Section 1. It said, “The fire chief is authorized to publish rules, regulations and procedures to

implement the above requirements for controlled burning.” and she asked what type of procedures could be required.

Felmet told her the rules and regulations were that there would be no burning. No one would be able to burn yard debris if they adopted this ordinance.

Brown asked what would happen to violators, and Felmet said people who were sworn to uphold the law could issue them a citation, and the fine could be up to \$1,000.

To further explain the language in paragraph e., Meeker noted that the Fire Department might have a standard operating procedure (SOP) for issuing burn permits. If burning were banned, the Fire Department might want to develop an SOP for dealing with the ban and with violators. Felmet said they would follow the same procedures they used now during the summer burn ban or when people burned without a permit.

Holland said he was in favor of this, but wondered if they could commit to keeping the mulch yard open so people would have a place to take their debris? Learnard said they would keep it open even if it had to be relocated.

Johnson moved to approve New Agenda item 05-25-03 Burn Permit Ordinance Change as submitted. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

D. ~~05-25-04 Lighting Upgrades at Lacrosse and PAC Baseball Fields~~

E. 05-25-05 Construction Bid for City Hall Renovations

City Engineer Dave Borkowski recommended Council award the contract for renovations to City Hall to Diversified Construction of Georgia in the amount of \$2,240,510. He said this was originally an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) project, and they transferred those funds to CIP. The improvements at City Hall would include an elevator, roof replacement, HVAC improvements to IT, major electrical system upgrades, and renovations to the upstairs and downstairs lobby areas.

They received four bids ranging from \$2.4 million to \$2.2 million. They reviewed them all, plus documentation and references. If approved by Council, the next step would be for staff and the contractor to work out a schedule so the work could be conducted with minimal disruption.

Brown wanted citizens to know where the money was coming from, and Strickland reiterated that it was from ARPA, which was a federal grant in 2021 or 2022. Peachtree City got \$13.5 million. All of the City Hall projects were separate to begin with, but they rolled them together into one with a budget of \$2.27 million, very close to the bids they received. Brown noted this was not regular municipal tax

funds that were being used.

Holland asked Borkowski if the low bidder had done work for the City previously, and he said they had not. However, staff had investigated them thoroughly and interviewed them onsite. They got glowing references, he remarked.

Holland also questioned whether staff had asked the contractor if they had the proper resources in place to do the job correctly. They did not ask that, but the main subcontractors were subcontractors Peachtree City had used frequently, Borkowski replied, cautioning that he expected the issues with this project to arise in ordering and receiving materials promptly.

Finally, Holland noted that Southtree Commercial, a local firm, had submitted a bid only \$50,000 more than the lowest bidder. He said the city had used them before with good results. Did they take into consideration that one of the bidders was in the city?

That was not part of the bid evaluation process, Borkowski replied. Strickland noted that some cities did have a policy that said if a local vendor was within 5% of the lowest bid, then they could potentially be awarded the bid. Peachtree City did not have that policy. They went with the lowest responsible bid, and Learnard said that was to protect the taxpayers.

Johnson moved to approve New Agenda item 05-25-05, construction bid for City Hall renovations and award the contract to Diversified Construction of Georgia in the amount of \$2,240,510. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearings

none

Council/Staff Topics

House Bill 703

Learnard reported that State Rep. Josh Bonner had notified her that Gov. Brian Kemp had signed House Bill 703. That meant there would be a referendum in November so voters could decide on a property tax break for lower income seniors in Peachtree City. She said Bonner had requested to give Council a brief report on the session. Brown said June 19 would be a good date, but Johnson said she was going to ask that the June 19 meeting be moved to the morning because they would be traveling to the Georgia Municipal Association convention that day. Learnard said she would work out a date with Bonner.

Splash Pad

The fencing and the gate had been re-worked, and the Glenloch Splash Pad was open for free, Learnard stated, with Strickland adding that benches would be arriving the next day.

June 19th City Council Meeting

Johnson then asked about moving the June 19 meeting to the morning, and Council agreed it would be a good idea. There were no advertised public hearings on the June 19 agenda. The time change would be on the Consent Agenda at the June 5 work session.

Spring Clean Up

Brown noted that the City's spring cleanup would be Friday and Saturday for residents to bring in many types of unwanted household items.

E-Bikes over 19 mph

Holland said e-bikes had become a nuisance on the paths because of their high speeds. There were three categories of e-bikes, and the first two could go up to 19 mph, as a cart did, but the third type could hit speeds of up to 45 mph. He suggested the City Manager ask TAG to look at that and see what they could do.

Learnard asked what specifically he wanted. Holland said they needed to decide if the third category should be limited to the streets and banned on the paths. Learnard said she needed to know more before she tasked anyone with this. She wanted a chance to do her homework. Johnson agreed, saying she needed time to find out more.

Strickland said he believed they had an ordinance that banned certain types of e-bikes, and Meeker said it limited all vehicles on the paths to not more than 20 mph. Anyone with a bike that would go faster was in violation. Holland then conceded that his point was moot.

Learnard said advising people of this would be a good topic for a public information campaign.

Executive Session

Brown moved to adjourn to executive session at 8:01 p.m. to discuss pending or threatened litigation and real estate. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Holland moved to reconvene in regular session at 8:56 p.m. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Brown made the motion to deny the claim from Tinsley Mill. Johnson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn

There being no further business, Holland moved to adjourn the meeting. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.



Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary



Kim Learnard, Mayor