City Council of Peachtree City
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 7, 2025
9:30 AM

Call to Order

The City Council of Peachtree City met for a work session on Thursday, August 7, 2025, in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Kim Learnard called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Also present were Mayor Pro Tem Clinton Holland, and Councilmembers Suzanne Brown and Laura Johnson.

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

Presentation

A. 2025 Intern Presentation

Human Resources Director Dr. Teaa Allston-Bing led a goodbye to this year's cohort of summer interns. Cohort president Alexis Hollett introduced a video in which the interns summarized their experiences. The interns were Hollett, Public Communications; Lauren Baxley, Public Works; Emma Bednarowski, Recreation & Special Events; Sophie Castellon, Tourism; Mahika Kumar, Engineering Services; Kaitlyn Marmolejos, Library Services; Mia Morrow, Human Resources; and Mackenzie Sarna, Fire and Rescue.

Public Comment

Jim Forestal said a new travel hockey club had formed, but it could not be considered for reserved practice time at the hockey rink until it received a 501 (c) as a non-profit from the Internal Revenue Service. However, the status might not be granted until after the season started. He asked Council to grant the club a conditional recognition so they could book a standing time for practice at the City's rink.

Loyd Smith said Peachtree City-Fayette Pickleball Club members had been training local schoolteachers to teach pickleball to students. He said he was surprised how many young players were playing incorrectly and knew the new courts would benefit them. He asked that members of the club be consulted when the new courts were being designed.

Jeff Williams hoped the plan Council adopted called for 18 pickleball courts. He said 12 would be inadequate. John Riley followed and echoed those comments, as did Sue Reed, who remarked that building just 12 courts would be a waste of time and money.

Michelle Bahr added that it was important to have a sufficient number of public courts and that 18 or more made sense if the City wanted to host tournaments. Dan Fink agreed.

Agenda Changes

Learnard, commenting that most of the audience was there to hear about pickleball plans, suggested pushing that item nearer to the top of the agenda. Holland moved to move item 7.F. to the beginning of the list of Work Session Discussion items. Johnson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Quarterly Reports

A. 2025 Q2 Reports

The Mayor said the quarterly reports had lots of good information. Brown said she had talked with the City Manager about clarifying some of the Planning Department data and mentioned that some colors were hard to read.

Holland pointed out that crime statistics showed a drop of 25% over the same period last year and commended the Police Department.

Work Session Discussion Items

A. Pickleball Meade Site Update

Assistant City Manager Chris Hobby said the Recreation Advisory Group (RAG) had recommended the Meade Pickleball Concept design for City Council discussion. The initial concept had the location at the site of the compost area on Rockaway Road, but that proved unfeasible, and it was decided to look at the adult softball complex at Meade. Hobby said that location would still allow for the recommended 500 feet of distance between the courts and the nearest residences.

The City then issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for design-build services at the Meade site. Three proposals were received, and after a thorough evaluation and scoring process, staff was recommending awarding the contract to Tarkett Sports. Tarkett had proposed a fee of $191,358.10 to design and manage construction of a 12- court facility, and $214,243.81 for an 18-court facility. Hobby reported that the final construction cost would be determined upon completion of the design process.

He introduced Scott George of Tarkett, joining via Microsoft Teams, to explain more about their proposal. George said the firm worked exclusively in sports construction, and he specialized in design-build projects, using a collaborative design process. He said they could present costs for both 18 and 12 courts, along with costs of optional amenities. Tarkett would provide guidance, but the City would have the final say on what was built.

George went over the benefits of hiring a firm that did both design and construction. He explained the steps that would be involved in the construction, focusing on the advantages of post tension concrete, which used steel cables to strengthen it, and noting that Tarkett provided a 50-year warranty on the concrete courts. The acrylic surface carried a 10-year warranty, he added.

He presented designs for both an 18-court and 12-court facility, but explained they were very basic because there had been no input from the City as of yet. He pointed out an area for stormwater detention. The layout could shift either east or west, George remarked, depending on what the City wanted. A construction schedule showed that the courts could be completed by February 2026 if they got started within a few weeks. He presented information and photos about four other pickleball facilities they had constructed.

Learnard asked him if they could work on the dates on the timelines for plan review so that they coincided with Council meetings, and George said that would not pose any problems and would be one of the topics at the kickoff meeting between Council and Tarkett.

Holland asked if Tarkett had done any work with city governments? George pointed out an indoor facility they had done for Point Mallard, Alabama, and said the majority of their work was with city parks or public schools.

Holland also noted they the construction portion would be during winter. He was especially concerned about the 28 days of required setting time for the courts. George told him a large portion of their work was in Indiana, so they were familiar with working in cold weather. However, the schedule might need to be adjusted if there was extremely cold weather, and he said they would cover that in the contract.

Holland then asked about the warranty. George told him there was a 50-year warranty on the concrete slab and a 10-year warranty on the playing surface. The fencing carried a one-year warranty, and the warranty on the lighting could go up to 20 years, depending on what they chose.

Holland also wanted to know about seating, and George replied that would be a discussion to have during the design phase. Learnard mentioned that the RAG could synthesize the input from the pickleball club members and report what they desired. She thought at least one championship court would be required, and bleachers could be three- or five-tier. Deciding all that was part of the process, she remarked.

Brown asked if the court surface would be raised or flush with the surrounding ground? George said it would be raised slightly. The courts would be placed north to south and the water would sheet to the east or west.

Johnson asked how often courts needed to be resurfaced. At 10 years, George said, they recommended an inspection to see how they were holding up and usually found that a new acrylic resurfacing was needed due to fading and to prevent further damage.

Holland asked about the detention pond, and George said it would take the stormwater and meter it out, but it would usually be a dry pond. The location shown was just a placeholder. They also could use an underground water detention system, but that would be more expensive.

Holland returned to the warranty, and George told him it was a complete warranty, backed by an insurance policy.

Hobby finished by saying the beauty of design-build was that Peachtree City would control the process and the budget. The RFP contained placeholder numbers of $1 million in total costs for 12 courts and $1.3 million for 18, but that would change based on the final design. If Council approved this, the next step would be to return to RAG's Monday meeting for their input.

Johnson asked if there was space at this site for more courts in the future. George said that would require getting too close to the nearby houses unless they utilized underground water storage, which might free up space for up to six more courts. They could master plan the entire area during this process and focus on phase one, if the City wanted.

Riley Field had been discussed as an option for additional courts but was ruled out due to the proximity to the elementary school, Brown noted. She mentioned that Council had been told that some residents of Gates Entry were going to show up to object to the Meade location due to noise concerns. They did not, possibly due to intimidation from the vocal pickleball cadre, Brown remarked. However, noise was a concern, and she wondered if some of the pickleball club members would help conduct a sound test at Gates Entry. Council could make approval of this location contingent on the results of that test, she proposed, saying that should be done before such a large expenditure.

Learnard said a contingency might give the impression that they would not choose this site, but Brown said it would mean the difference between 12 or 18 courts. Learnard continued, saying they had a great location that exceeded 500 feet from the nearest homes with a sound buffer of a grove of trees, then a street with no houses on the pickleball side of the street. The front yards were on the other side of the street, which meant backyards were even farther from the pickleball courts. They had considered sound issues throughout this process, which was how this site was chosen, the Mayor commented, adding she was not interested in entertaining the idea of a contingency.

Holland and Johnson agreed that a sound test was not necessary, and Learnard called for a motion.

Johnson moved to approve the award of design-build services for pickleball courts in the amount of $214,243.81 to Tarkett Sports for a minimum of 18 courts. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. List of vehicles and/or equipment for surplus

The purchasing ordinance required Council approval when disposing of assets with a value over $5,000, Public Works Director Jonathan Miller explained. He presented a list of vehicles from various departments that they were looking to take to auction. No action was required at this meeting from Council, but it would be on the Consent Agenda at the next meeting.

Brown said she at first had questions, wondering if all the vehicles needed to be removed from service. She said City Manager Justin Strickland and Miller had sent her a list that explained everything and assuaged her doubts, and it would be helpful to Council to get an explanation along with the list in the future. She also told Miller she missed Public Works on her tours of City facilities when she first took office and would be visiting him soon in order to learn more about their operations.

Holland said he now had a better understanding of what was being done. He suggested that in the future they check with the Airport and with the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) to see if they needed these vehicles. Miller replied that would be a question for Purchasing because the procedures were dictated by the ordinance.

C. Huddleston Dual Left Construction Bid

City Engineer Dave Borkowski said they received three bids with prices ranging from $181,650.59 to $595,000. They had checked experience and references and talked with the low bidder to make sure they understood the scope of the project. He would bring this to the next Council meeting for a vote.

There were big discrepancies in the bids, Holland noted. Borkowski told him he had talked about this with the low bidder and was satisfied with his responses. They would not need to travel because they had a laydown yard nearby, and their quote for the pole was much lower than the others. Also, they would do most of the work themselves, not contract it out.

Strickland noted there was a grant from the Fayette County Development Authority that would pay for part of this. Also, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) was covering a portion because they missed some things in their initial review.

D. Proposed Fence Ordinance Text Amendment

The fence ordinance did not include the Limited Use Commercial (LUC) and Limited Use Residential (LUR) zoning classifications, Planning Director Shayla Reed said. She was asking Council for approval to draft a text amendment to include those categories.

Brown said speed was of the essence in making this change. Johnson asked if existing fences in those zoning districts would be allowed to remain, even if they were not in compliance with the ordinance, and Reed said they would.

E. Proposed Sign Ordinance Text Amendment

This was another instance of staff asking for clarity from Council regarding a text amendment. Reed explained that the zoning code identified a roof sign as any sign placed upon or above the roof structure or upon the roof, and roof signs were prohibited. However, another section of the code said no sign should extend above the eave line or at the top of a parapet on the wall to which is was attached, which meant that those signs were allowed.

Did Council want the ordinance amended to prohibit all roof signs, including those on the parapets, or to make an exception for parapet signs? Reed asked. Staff was asking for clarity and permission to take this to the Planning Commission for discussion. The text amendment would come back to Council for a final vote.

Brown asked if there was a limit on parapet height? Reed said there was not. Brown noted that, from the ground, there was no way to tell how high the parapet wall was. She was afraid people would start building very tall parapets to make their signs more visible if there was no limit. Reed said the parapet had a minimum height, but not a maximum. City Attorney Ted Meeker said the International Building Code dealt with roof heights somewhat, and Reed said she would investigate.

Brown moved to refer this to the Planning Commission. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

F. Building Department Services RFP

Reed said the Planning and Development Department had issued an RFP for inspections and plan review for buildings, erosion control, and engineering, and five companies provided proposals. The current contracts ended on September 30, and Reed said she would bring a recommendation back to Council at their next meeting.

Holland pointed out that building inspections and erosion control were two totally different types of expertise. He said they should make sure the erosion control personnel had either a Georgia Blue or Red Card.

New Agenda Items

A. 08-25-01 Fire Station 83 Renovation

Hobby explained that a project to expand and renovate the kitchen at Fire Station 83 was proposed in the FY25 budget. Frontier Design/Build was the documented preferred vendor of the City for this type of work. The cost was $97,500, and Hobby said the goal was to complete the project by September 30.

Brown noted the renovations were sorely needed. She asked how the staff would be accommodated during the renovations, and Fire Chief Clint Murphy said they would be re-deployed throughout the city during the day while they were working. The bunk rooms were not involved, so the night shift would not be majorly impacted, except for not having access to a kitchen or day room. Murphy was optimistic about meeting the timeline, saying the contractor had told them the only possible delay would be on getting the cabinets built.

Holland asked if the living quarters at 83 would be renovated soon? Murphy said he and Strickland had looked at all the stations and were trying to spend the money efficiently. The living quarters at 83 were newer than the kitchen side, he stated.

Brown moved to approve New Agenda item 08-25-01, Fire Station 83 renovation with Frontier Design/Build in the amount of $97,500. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. 08-25-02 Addition of Two Full-Time Positions - Building Permit Technician and Planning & Zoning Technician

This piggybacked onto the previously discussed RFP for inspection services, Strickland commented. The current contracted firm provided the positions of Building Permit Technician and Planning & Zoning Technician and billed them back to the City. These positions were not included in the RFP because Strickland was recommending they be transitioned into in-house positions.

There was no need for a budget amendment because it would be net-neutral, he said. The amount they were paying for the contractors would be about the same as what it would cost to hire them as City employees. The City would then have control of the employees and how they did their jobs. He said this would take effect October 1, and they needed approval to go ahead and start advertising the positions.

Johnson moved to approve New Agenda item 08-25-02, addition of Two Full-Time Positions - Building Permit Technician and Planning & Zoning Technician. Holland seconded.

Brown said she wanted to add a clarification because adding two City staff sounded like something they did not want to do. However, they were already paying them indirectly through a contract. There was a difference of $2,000, and Brown said that seemed like a reasonable amount in order to have control over the positions, which were first-line customer service roles.

Motion carried unanimously.

C. 08-25-03 FY25 Budget Amendment and Acceptance of Recreation Program Donations

Assistant Financial Services Director Dustin Farron said there had been some donations to the Recreation Department, and he was asking Council to approve them and the corresponding budget amendments. They were: $500 sponsorship from Fourth Corner Boxing and Fitness Gym for the Back to School Bash; $500 donation from Pace-Lynch in support of the Home Run Derby; $1,577.49 donation from Robert Seaman for the purchase of a memorial bench; $2,367.56 donation from Cindy Farr for the purchase of a memorial bench.

Brown moved to approve New Agenda item 08-25-03 FY25, Budget Amendment and Acceptance of Recreation Program Donations as listed. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

D. ~~FY25 Budget Amendment – Engineering Professional Services~~

E. 08-25-04 Hearing- 1117 Hip Pocket Road Dock Entitlement Appeal

Meeker reported that he and the then-Planning Director did a deep dive on this issue last fall and came to the conclusion that, while the property owner had access rights to Lake Peachtree, they did not have the right to build a dock on the City-owned property bordering the lake. However, of the eight lots in this area, seven had built docks.

Meeker said he was not taking a position for or against granting a permit to allow the property owner to build a dock. It was the City's property, and if they wanted to grant a permit, Council had that power, and staff did not, which was why the permit was denied.

Meeker went on to say that residents on the west side of Lake Peachtree were very protective of their area, so he thought it was good from a transparency standpoint to have this appeal come before Council and allow the neighbors to weigh in on the matter.

Todd Strickland presented the property owner's case, noting that this was one of the oldest parts of Peachtree City. He said he had a contract to purchase the property last year and discovered he would not have permission to build a dock. These lots were deeded a common area along the lake directly from Equitable in 1980, and Strickland said the eight property owners all assumed they had the right to construct docks in that area, and seven of them had done so.

Strickland wondered if he had done these property owners a disservice by pointing this out, since the other owners had gone ahead and constructed docks with no repercussions. He said the lack of a dock negatively impacted the value of the property. The Lake Peachtree Association Board had written a letter in support, and surrounding neighbors also said they had no problems with a new dock.

He noted that the six interior lots all had access to the lake via a perpetual easement, so it had always been intended for those lots to have enjoyment of the lake. Docks were not explicitly mentioned, but neither were they excluded. Council would not be setting precedent by allowing a permit for the dock, Strickland advised, because there were no similar situations anywhere else around the lake. He asked Council to consider what was the fair thing to do.

Property owner Ed Nelson told Council his wife purchased this property in 1968, and his family spent weekends and vacations on the lake for many years before moving there permanently. They now had to move due to his wife's health and had discovered this issue with the dock, which lessened the value of their property.

Learnard read the letter from the Lake Peachtree Association. She said she saw no reason why this property should be singled out and not permitted a dock.

Brown said she was reassured they were not setting a precedent and thought it was time to make things right.

Learnard requested that Meeker compose a motion seeking approval. He indicated the motion should state that they "move to approve the issuance of a dock permit for this lot."

"So moved," said Holland. Johnson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

F. 08-25-05 Removal of North East Collector from Tranportation Plan

Meeker said this road had been on the City's transportation plan for a long time and was on the most recent plan, approved in 2010. There had never been any effort to move forward with this road, which would connect Peachtree City with unincorporated Fayette County, and there were now houses on the County's side where the road would have gone.

He said this was relevant now because there was a development in this area coming forward for plan approval. That road was still on the books as a north east connector and would have to be build to a much different standard than a normal street, Meeker remarked, and this would impact lot sizes and several other things.

Meeker said this was a road that he did not believe would ever go forward, but staff could not ignore what was in the plan. Council was being asked to take a vote to remove the road from the current transportation plan so staff could go ahead with the review of the proposed development.

Holland moved to approve New Agenda item 08-25-05, Removal of North East Collector from Transportation Plan. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

G. 08-25-06 123 Interlochen Stormwater Pipe Lining

The stormwater drainage pipe between 123 Interlochen Drive and the adjacent cart path had critically failed due to adjacent utility work, posing an immediate risk to underground utilities, the structural integrity of the home at 123 Interlochen Drive, the stability of the cart path, and the safety of both residents and cart path users, Borkowski stated. Bumping the lining up with concrete would halt the damage and give them time to further evaluate the situation. Staff solicited three quotes, and the lowest was from Utility Asset Management.

Brown moved to approve New Agenda item 08-25-06, awarding the contract to line the pipes at 123 Interlochen to Utility Asset Management for the quoted price of $58,500. Johnson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearings

A. 08-25-07 New Alcohol License - Trader Joe's, 258 City Circle

City Clerk Yasmin Julio said Mitchell Nadler had requested to be appointed as the Licensee and Reginald Jones as the License Representative. Both they and the location met all the requirements to be granted a license.

The Mayor opened the public hearing. No one wished to speak either in favor or in opposition, and she closed the hearing.

Brown moved to approve a new alcohol license for Trader Joe's, 258 City Circle. Johnson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. 08-25-08 New Alcohol License - Apsilon Management Kedron Hills, LLC, 400 World Dr

Julio said this was for the new Residence Inn. Kashav Patel had requested to be appointed as the Licensee and as the License Representative. The business location and Patel met the requirements of the alcohol ordinance to be granted a license.

The Mayor opened the public hearing. No one wished to speak either in favor or in opposition, and she closed the hearing.

Holland moved to approve a new alcohol license for Apsilon Management Kedron Hills, LLC, 400 World Drive. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

C. 08-25-09 New Alcohol License - Swiss Digital Concepts, 200 Kelly Dr

This company, a wine wholesaling business, had been operating in the city without an alcohol license for the last three years, although they did pay occupational tax, Julio reported. A new process had been put in place for businesses providing massage services or selling alcohol, and that was when the lack of a license was discovered. The owners also were working to come into compliance with State requirements.

Altai Negaty-Hindi had requested to be named as the Licensee and as the License Representative. Both he and the business location met the requirements of the alcohol ordinance to be granted a license, Julio stated.

The Mayor opened the public hearing, asking first who wished to speak in support of this license.

Negaty-Hindi told Council he had always paid the occupational tax, but it was never mentioned to him until this year that he needed an alcohol license. His business imported Swiss wine for wholesale to restaurants and retailers, and he held a wholesale license from Fayette County.

No one else wished to speak either in favor or opposition, and the Mayor closed the public hearing.

Holland moved to approve item 08-25-09, New Alcohol License - Swiss Digital Concepts, 200 Kelly Drive. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Council/Staff Topics

Food Truck Thursday

This was Food Truck Thursday at Drake Field, the Mayor noted.

Purple Heart Ceremony

Learnard said there was a wonderful ceremony and gathering that morning in honor of Purple Heart Day and recalled that former Councilmember Frank Destadio was instrumental in Peachtree City gaining Purple Heart City status.

Post Office Cleanup & Dedication

The Peachtree City Post Office was getting a much-needed exterior spruce-up, the Mayor remarked.

Elementary School Resource Officers

They were in the process of placing a school resource officer at every elementary school.

Back to School Bash

Learnard also mentioned the Back to School Bash set for August 9 at Glenloch.

Hockey Non-Profit Discussion

Holland asked if there was any way they could grant conditional approval for the travel hockey club to use the rink for practice, but Meeker said policy required groups using facilities on a regular basis to have the 501 (c) status.

Brown asked how long that would take. Meeker replied it had been his experience that there was about a six- to eight-month turnaround time.

Holland said he would be in favor of Council giving the conditional approval with a time limit, even though it was something they had never done before.

Learnard remarked that there was process in place for a reason. Meeker commented that associations had to have non-profit status before the City would enter into a facilities use agreement with them.

Holland said he hated for the kids to lose an entire season waiting on this. Brown thought that since they just wanted access for a few hours on a Sunday, which seemed like a minor concession. Learnard said the requirements had to be the same for everyone.

Assistant Recreation Director Harold Layton added that the City ordinance did not allow recurring rentals to non-association groups. Strickland recalled that a for-profit company wanted to use the baseball fields every Sunday, and the City told them they could not.

Meeker asked why the travel club could not coordinate a Sunday practice with the league? The travel club could be part of the existing hockey league until it got the non-profit status. Layton said he would ask the hockey president if that was something they would be interested in. He also said the RAG would be discussing this at its next meeting.

Liquor Store Tastings
Holland asked if the City could change its ordinance to allow tastings at liquor stores. Julio said tastings were allowed for wine and beer, but the State law had recently changed to allow them for spirits, but the City had not changed its ordinance.

Learnard said she would be fine with that, and Brown and Johnson agreed.

Holland moved to put this on a future agenda. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Suspension rule of STR for World Cup
Holland asked if there was any interest in suspending the short-term rental (STR) ordinance to allow for rentals during the World Cup in 2026? The other Councilmembers said they would be in favor of that, with Meeker saying he and Reed needed to look at the STR ordinance to see what they needed to do. They could bring it back to Council at a future meeting. Holland said it would be good to see what Fayette Forward was doing in regard to this.

Burn Ban amendments
Holland thought there should be exceptions made to the burn ordinance for properties three acres or larger. He thought it should be only for yard waste, but not leaves, but Brown pointed out that leaves were yard waste.

Learnard said they considered the acreage when they adopted the burn ordinance and heard from families who were affected. Smoke wafted for many miles, and there were options for getting rid of yard waste other than burning.

Brown said it was difficult for larger landowners to haul away their debris, so she would be in favor of revisiting it.

Johnson said she would have appreciated advance notification that this issue would be discussed. She was not prepared to have this conversation now. Brown told her they could put it on a future agenda, and Johnson said she was not ready to revisit the burn ban, in any case.

E-Scooter Safety

Brown mentioned an article she had read questioning the safety of electric scooters. She had referred it to the Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) and thought it would be good for parents to check on the safety, as well.

Deer Management

Deer management would be on the agenda at the next meeting, Brown said, and she urged citizens with an interest to attend or watch online.

School Traffic Safety

Brown also said schools were open and reminded drivers to pay attention in the morning and afternoon.

Executive Session

Johnson moved to adjourn to executive session at 12:42 p.m. to discuss the sale, lease, or acquisition of real estate and pending or threatened litigation. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Johnson moved to reconvene in regular session at 12:48 p.m. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 12:49 p.m.

Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary

Kim Learnard, Mayor