

**City Council of Peachtree City
Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 5, 2026
8:30 AM**

Call to Order

The Mayor and Council of Peachtree City met in special called session at City Hall on Monday, January 5, 2026. Mayor Kim Learnard called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Council members attending: Laura Johnson, Suzanne Brown, Clinton Holland, and Michael Polacek.

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

Oath of Office Council Post 4

The Mayor administered the oath of office to new Council Member Michael Polacek.

Selection and Oath of Office Mayor Pro Tem

Johnson moved to nominate Brown as Mayor Pro-Tem. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The Mayor administered the oath of office to Brown.

Public Comment

None

Agenda Changes

None

Consent

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

- A. New Alcohol License - Biscuit Belly, 238 City Circle, Suite 1020
APPROVED 5-0**
- B. FY26 Budget Amendment – Acceptance of Opioid Settlement Proceeds
(McKinsey Subdivisions Settlement)
APPROVED 5-0**
- C. 2025 Walmart Local Community Grant
APPROVED 5-0**
- D. Resolution # 01052026-CA-D Indemnification of Public Officials
APPROVED 5-0**
- E. Legal Organ - Fayette County News
APPROVED 5-0**
- F. Appointment of Public Facilities Authority Board Member
APPROVED 5-0**
- G. Agreement with Capella University and Liberty University
APPROVED 5-0**

H. Library Painting Proposals
APPROVED 5-0

I. Approve purchase of new cardiac monitor for Fire Department
APPROVED 5-0

J. Grinding and Removal of Organic Matter at the Recycling Center
APPROVED 5-0

Work Session Discussion Items

A. Personnel Policy Revisions

Human Resources Director Dr. Teaa Allston-Bing introduced several proposed updates to City personnel policies. These included providing double pay in emergency situations, allowing City employees to be promoted during their probationary period, revising the merit pay policy so a promotion no longer disqualified someone from receiving a merit pay increase, eliminating redundancies in the disciplinary policy, and formally revising the Police overtime policy to 84 hours rather than 86.

Other revisions included adding one hour for each day of field training pay, removing the charges to employees for take-home vehicles and eliminating a few eligible positions for those vehicles. Bereavement leave would be changed from calendar days to hours. Juneteenth would be added as a holiday, and values had been increased for retirement awards and parties to keep up with inflation.

She said these changes were long overdue and would bring the City in line with best practices and in legal compliance. They should help with recruitment and retention.

Holland noted that he had not had time to go through these changes in-depth and might have questions later.

Brown said she had emailed the City Manager about the take-home vehicle policy, and he had described some things that had taken place and also said it was nebulous exactly when some of these practices had been changed. If there was a written policy and a decision was made that went against it, Brown asserted, the policy should be changed immediately to reflect what was being done in practice. She did not think they should stockpile all these changes until it became a major document and noted that it was easy to change a policy as needed. Strickland said he agreed, and that was why they were bringing this forward. He said he always wanted policy to reflect current practice.

Learnard asked Holland if he would be ready to vote at the next meeting, and he said he would if Strickland was available to answer questions, which he said he would be.

B. Introduction to Upcoming Text Amendments

Planning and Development Director Shayla Reed had six updates on various text amendments—four that had been discussed by Council and two new ones. An amendment to the sign ordinance regarding roof parapets was scheduled to come before Council at the January 15 meeting, and the changes regarding cosmetic tattoos and microblading would also be on an upcoming agenda.

Reed said the Planning Commission was still refining the ordinance on invasive and native plants and would see the ordinance amendment allowing for short-term rentals during the World Cup at its next meeting.

The Planning Commission also was asking Council to consider requiring commercial and industrial developments to include a minimum of five designated golf cart parking spaces. Another ordinance change Reed said they wanted Council to initiate was allowing LED lighting, which was now the standard, for commercial and industrial developments.

Learnard asked if changing the schedule to hold one February meeting on the 12th would affect the roof and microblading amendments, and Reed said she would just have to advertise the hearings accordingly.

Learnard also asked if the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Committee would be addressing golf cart parking. That was where this originated, Reed said, explaining that the UDO Committee thought this change was something that could be accomplished quickly, while the entire UDO process itself was going to take more than a year to complete.

Would there be enough time for the short-term rentals to be ready for the World Cup? Holland asked. Reed said the World Cup was taking place over the summer, so there should be enough time if this came to the Planning Commission this month and Council next month.

Holland then said he would like to see a requirement for bicycle racks in addition to the golf cart parking. Reed replied that they would be looking at the entire parking ordinance, per the City Manager's request.

Brown asked if they needed a consensus. Strickland said they would need a motion to initiate the text amendment process for the parking ordinance and the lighting ordinance, and Holland said, "so moved." Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Crosstown Tunnels Design

One of the 2023 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) projects was to evaluate the existing corrugated metal tunnels, City Engineer Dave Borkowski remarked, with an emphasis on the Taco Bell Tunnel and the Regions Bank Tunnel

on Crosstown Road. Feasibility studies had determined that it was possible to replace them with bigger tunnels without having to significantly raise the road. The study estimated a construction cost of about \$1.4 million per tunnel.

The next step would be to design the tunnels and create construction plans. This would involve surveys and hydraulic modeling, plus re-configuration of the path connections and making the paths compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The City had been working with POND & Co. as the design engineer, and they had provided an estimate of \$300,000 for the entire design scope of work with a timeline of 12 to 18 months. Borkowski again noted that this project was funded by the SPLOST and said he would bring this to Council for a vote at their next meeting.

Learnard verified that the \$300,000 design was for both, but the \$1.4 million was per tunnel, and Borkowski said that was correct. She went on to verify that they replacements would be concrete box tunnels; Borkowski said that was right, and they would be 14 feet wide and eight feet tall, which was higher than the present tunnels where height was an issue. Would they be addressing the drainage issues? Borkowski said they would.

Holland asked if anyone knew the number of carts that could not fit through the tunnels, and Strickland said they did not, but newer carts were getting higher. Holland estimated that the very large carts were just 5% of the total. He questioned the wisdom of spending \$1.4 million per tunnel for this small number of users when there was a need for new paths in other parts of the city.

Because this was a SPLOST project, Strickland said, it had to be done, and the money could only be spent to upgrade corrugated metal path tunnels, as stated in the SPLOST project description. The reasoning behind this project was because these tunnels, especially the Taco Bell Tunnel, were among the most highly traveled in the city. It was dangerous because it was so low, but the biggest safety hazard was that the tunnels were not wide enough to accommodate two carts going in opposite directions, and sight distances did not allow drivers to see an oncoming cart when they entered the tunnel.

Holland said this project seemed to have come out of the blue. He thought the paths should get priority, and Strickland said the paths on the east side that were in the SPLOST were already in design.

Brown said she had ripped the rain fly on her cart in the Taco Bell tunnel, and Learnard said they had all had problems. Brown said she understood this was a SPLOST project, although she also had questions about prioritization. Polacek said 10 to 20 years from now, golf carts would probably be even bigger, so they needed to start on this. Johnson reflected on a time in the 1990s when the tunnel flooded.

D. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Grant Application - Grade

Separated Crossing to Connect Booth Middle School and McIntosh High School

Borkowski explained that the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) had put out a call for transportation grant project applications for the 2027 and 2028 fiscal years. They requested scoping studies or construction projects that were intersection, safety and/or pedestrian related.

The construction projects must be included in an officially adopted transportation plan, and the cost must be at least \$4 million. Staff had determined that the grade separated crossing to connect Booth Middle School and McIntosh High School, a 2023 SPLOST project, met the criteria for construction projects. The grant window for this would close on January 23, Borkowski continued, and they needed to submit a resolution of support from Council. He said they anticipated a total project cost of around \$10 million with a local match of \$2 million, which could come from the 2017 and 2023 SPLOSTs. The total cost would include the bridge and path connections from the bridge to the Peachtree East Shopping Center.

Fayette County had agreed to sponsor the City in this application. The City would do all the work with the assistance of a consultant, and the County would function as the funding agency to distribute money to the City from the ARC. The bridge was in the 2023 SPLOST and the path connections were in the 2017 SPLOST. Borkowski said there was adequate funding for the bridge match, but they might need to transfer some funds from the contingency in the 2017 SPLOST for the path connections.

He said he would be back at the next Council meeting to ask for approval of the resolution. Brown asked how much contingency money remained in the 2017 SPLOST, and Strickland said he would send her that information.

Holland noted that most grant applications asked if there was a safety issue and wanted proof, such as crash data. Did they have that? Borkowski reminded him of the Safe Streets for All program that they had worked on with the County. This corridor was listed as a common area for crashes, and that data would be submitted with the application.

Would it be helpful to vote today since the deadline was so tight? Johnson asked. Holland moved to approve the resolution of support included in the meeting packet and the submission of the grant application, inclusive of the crash data. Polacek seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Resolution - Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Grant Application - SR 54 Corridor Study

This was a second application under the ARC's same call for Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) grant applications. This was for a study of the SR 54 corridor from Fayetteville into Coweta County. Fayette County was taking the lead on this application, and Peachtree City needed to provide a resolution of support.

They didn't have a final cost estimate, but Borkowski said the County estimated about \$500,000, which would be split among all the jurisdictions.

Holland noted this study had been his pet project and moved to approve the resolution and the TIP grant application for a SR 54 Corridor Study. Johnson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

F. Public Participation Ordinance

Brown had prepared a presentation, but Learnard asked if what she wanted was for each speaker to get at least four minutes to speak and to eliminate the 30-minute total time for public comments, and Brown said that was it. Learnard said she believed Council was in agreement with this change.

Brown moved to amend the public participation ordinance to allow four minutes to each citizen making a comment and to remove the provision that restricted comments to 30 minutes. Johnson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

New Agenda Items

A. 01-26-01 HVAC Replacement Purchases for Fire Station 84

Two split HVAC systems at Fire Station 84 needed replacement, Borkowski stated. The cost would be \$40,574 through Shumate Mechanical.

Johnson moved to approve the purchase of two new split systems in the amount of \$40,574 from Shumate Mechanical under the terms of the annual contract. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. 01-26-02 FY25 Budget Amendment/Meade Field Paving

Public Works Director Jonathan Miller explained that staff had prepared cost estimates for paving Meade Field Drive, completing additional paving throughout the Meade Complex, and constructing a new entrance to access the lower parking lot from Rockaway Road.

The estimates were developed using the unit bid prices from the 2025 Paving Contract awarded to Atlanta Paving and Concrete. They had completed all the original contract roads in the paving bid, Miller stated, and he had included a budget amendment to add about \$595,000 of additional Local Maintenance and Improvement Grants (LMIG) funds into the paving budget. That LMIG money and what was left in the paving bid came to a little \$1 million, and the projects at Meade would be about \$1.3 million.

He was asking Council to approve the budget amendment and a \$400,000 change order to Atlanta Paving.

Holland said he remembered discussions with the developer of the adjacent

townhomes about splitting the cost of this access drive. Strickland said that would still happen. This would eliminate a planned curb cut from the townhomes to Rockaway. The City was legally required to use Atlanta Paving, and it would be the cheapest measure, too. Miller said the townhomes should be providing about \$200,000, which was what they would have spent on the curb cut they were eliminating.

Holland asked City Attorney Ted Meeker if they needed a written agreement with the developer about payment for the use of the driveway. Meeker said he believed they were protected. Strickland said he had been talking to them, and they wanted to use the new driveway. It would either be that or creating another curb cut, which would require permission from the City. Strickland stated he was confident the reimbursement details would be worked out.

Brown moved to approve New Agenda item 01-26-02 FY25, budget amendment/Meade Field paving in the amount of \$400,000. Johnson seconded. Motion carried 4-1, with Brown, Johnson, Learnard, and Polacek voting in favor, and Holland against.

C. 01-26-03 Appointment of Board Member to the Fayette County Development Authority

City Clerk Yasmin Julio said that the term of Peachtree City's appointed representative on the Fayette County Development Authority (FCDA), Jim Kuo, had expired in October, but he had been serving since then. The bylaws said the Mayor and Council should appoint one taxpayer residing in the city for a four-year term.

Brown nominated Holland for the remainder of the four-year term. Holland seconded. Motion failed 2-3, with Brown and Holland voting in favor; Johnson, Learnard, and Polacek against.

Johnson moved to appoint Virginia Gibbs. Polacek seconded. Motion carried 3-2, with Johnson, Learnard, and Polacek voting in favor, Brown and Holland against.

Public Hearings

A. 01-26-04 Variance request from rear setback, 103 Harris Halt

The home on this property was constructed in 1976, Reed related, and it seemed that the deck and porch were built at that time. Both the house and the deck encroached into the 30-foot setback that was required both in the 1970s and now. The homeowner was seeking a building permit to repair the porch and deck. The ordinance required that everything existing be brought into compliance, hence the request for the variance to reduce the rear setback to 17 feet. Reed showed photos of the aged and damaged deck and porch.

The applicant, Debbie Mercado, explained that a tree hit the deck in May, and they

discovered the setback issues when seeking a permit to rebuild it at the same location.

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

Brown noted there were five properties that abutted this property, and there were letters of support in the packet from two of those addresses. She would have liked letters from the other neighbors.

Learnard said she had no problem with this request, noting that Mercado was going to replace this on the existing footprint, and Council wanted to encourage residents to maintain their properties.

Addressing Brown's comment, Mercado said another letter had come in after the deadline, and the other two properties were not adjoining hers in a way that the deck was visible.

Because this had existed since the house was built in 1976, Johnson agreed that the variance should be granted.

Johnson moved to approve Public Hearing item 01-26-04, variance request from rear setback, 103 Harris Halt. Polacek seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. 01-26-05 Variance request for new curb cut, 479 Crabapple Lane

Assistant City Engineer John Schnick explained that the applicant was requesting a variance for a curb cut in order to add a new driveway. The ordinance required variances for curb cuts on collector roads.

The applicant had obtained a sight distance survey from an engineer that evaluated the sight distance from the new driveway as opposed to the old. Schnick said the engineer measured those and also measured a third location in between the two. That third location, called location two in the engineer's report, was the one that met current requirements for sight distance and was the location staff recommended if Council decided to grant the variance.

Applicant John Gillanders said this driveway was put in in 1978 when there was little development in this area. Now, there was a cart path, a school, power poles, and several subdivisions. His driveway entered the road at an unsafe location and angle, and Gillanders noted that in order to exit the driveway, the nose of the vehicle had to be across the path in order for the driver to see oncoming traffic. During school drop-off and pickup hours, the path traffic often prevented them from being able to exit and enter the driveway.

He said he had merged two lots so the driveway could be moved, which was when he found out a variance would be required. He wanted to move the driveway 95

feet, and the neighbors supported his request. City staff recommended moving it 47 feet, a location that would provide 330 feet of sight distance in both directions. The other location would provide about 270 sight distance. Gillanders said street traffic was not the issue; the issue was crossing the cart path at peak times.

Learnard asked him if he would be agreeable to using location two, and Gillanders told her he would be, but preferred the other location.

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

Brown said she drove by the property and agreed they had a problem because the driveway was directly across from the school. Would it be best to move the full 95 feet away, even if that would not give them the recommended sight line? That would be best, Gillanders said, because at 47 feet, cars were lined up on Crabapple, and he would not be able to turn east during the school traffic times. Learnard mentioned that Crabapple was a two-lane road, and Gillanders agreed that cars stacked up in both directions. Brown said they needed to take that into consideration.

Learnard asked for a staff comment because they had recommended location two. Borkowski said that location met the sight distance requirements for cars on the road. Learnard asked if they could approve the 95-foot and what were the implications? Borkowski said Council would be approving something that did not meet engineering standards. Brown said what he had now did not meet standards, and Learnard noted they had the opportunity to correct that.

Holland said the drawings and his drive-by of the property seemed to show that the 95-foot relocation would give a longer sight line than the 47-foot. He questioned if the engineer doing the traffic study had looked at that. Borkowski said it was in the report presented to Council. The 47-foot relocation did not meet the sight line requirements.

There was a two foot "push back" between the 47 feet and the 95 feet that prevented a clear sight line at the 95-foot mark, Gillanders stated. He again said the issue was not with the cars on the road, but with the carts on the path.

Holland said it looked like there was a big drop in grade between the two points, and Schnick mentioned a curve that impacted the sight distance. Location two had better sight distance to the east; both spots had good sight distance to the west. Schnick said staff also recommended grading out of the hump that Holland had mentioned.

Learnard then said she could not imagine a condition where they would vote against the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AAHSTO) standards.

Meeker asked Gillanders if he was abandoning the other curb cut? Learnard said that was one of the recommendations. Was there a problem with adding a requirement that the old curb cut be removed within 180 days of the completion of the new driveway? Brown asked.

Page 124 of the packet listed four conditions staff had recommended, and one was that location two be used because it met AASHTO standards, Learnard stated. Johnson said she would not want to go against those standards.

Brown moved to approve Public Hearing item 01-26-05, variance request for new curb cut, 479 Crabapple Lane, provided that all four of the conditions the Planning Department recommended were adopted as outlined in the covering memo of the agenda packet, plus a condition that the section of the old driveway labeled as "existing concrete driveway to be removed" be removed within 180 days of the completion of the new driveway. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Council/Staff Topics

A. Massage Ordinance

Learnard said she wanted to revisit the massage ordinance. Julio said Council approved an ordinance revision that established a regulatory fee in 2022 at the request of the Police Department. That ordinance did not allow spas or massage businesses to sell or serve alcohol. A well-known spa company approached them about a year ago, asking to serve wine and champagne. Julio said the Police Department did not feel it would be a problem to allow that. Julio said it might require an addition to the alcohol ordinance.

Learnard said the company that approached them said Peachtree City was the only location in their chain that prohibited alcohol. Holland wondered if nail salons should be included, but Julio said they were allowed to serve—only businesses offering massages were excluded. None of the other members had comments, and Julio said they would draft the ordinance and bring it to a future meeting.

B. February Council Meetings

The Mayor said the February 19 meeting would conflict with the school break. Also, Julio pointed out, the Council retreat was scheduled for January 28-30, with a Council work session scheduled for February 5. She suggested merging the two into one meeting on February 12 at 6:30 p.m.

Brown wondered if only one meeting would be sufficient to conduct business. Reed said she would have only the two text amendments for the agenda. Strickland said he did not believe there would be a lot of items to discuss. Julio said they could discuss work session items at the retreat if needed. Council agreed on a February 12, 6:30 p.m. meeting.

C. Annexation Study

They decided in 2025 not to pursue an annexation study, but Learnard said she felt it was necessary and timely and would like them to take it up this year. Reed stated that they had released a request for proposal (RFP) for a consultant to give them a review of their boundaries and see where there might be opportunities to expand them. She noted there was little land left for development of open space or industrial use. A boundary study would give them an idea of how annexations could impact public safety or schools, for instance. If an annexation request was made now, staff had to analyze those things. She said an annexation study would be of great help with the Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2027.

Learnard noted they had a quote at one time, could they use that? Reed said that money was still available.

Holland said in the past he had wanted an annexation study but then decided it was not needed because they knew where they wanted to expand. Now, he had realized there were other issues, such as public safety, to consider, as well as deciding what methods they wanted to use to annex and he would support a study now.

Polacek said it seemed like a no-brainer from a policy-making standpoint, remarking that the last study was in 2014.

Brown's concern was that developers would learn what land they were eyeing to annex and buy it for a different use than what they were trying to annex it for. They were not looking to annex for housing, but mostly for industrial use. Reed pointed out that rezoning was required as a part of annexation. Brown said a developer could buy property just outside the current boundaries and start building. Learnard said that access to Peachtree City's sewer system was a prime motivator for annexation requests.

Johnson said she would be in favor of a study, and Learnard said they would move forward.

D. Update on residential moratorium

Brown recalled they put a moratorium on multi-family rezonings in October with a 180-day expiration date. She asked Reed where they stood in the process for changing the zoning ordinance to remove this zoning category. Reed said it was still underway, and Brown said she wanted to make sure it did not expire before they could extend it. Meeker said staff was working on it and would get something before Council or ask to extend the moratorium before it expired in April.

E. Invocation at the beginning of meetings

At a future meeting, Brown said she would put an item on the agenda regarding having an invocation at the beginning of each meeting.

Strickland confirmed with Brown that she wanted the invocation discussion on the

agenda for the next meeting. Brown said she did, and Julio said Brown would have to submit the information prior to the deadline.

F. Timing of appointments

Brown also wanted them to discuss synchronizing appointments to boards and commissions with Council terms. Learnard said they should talk about this at the retreat.

G. City of Civility/City of Ethics

Johnson mentioned the City of Civility resolution that they tabled until they had a full Council. Strickland said it was brought forth by staff because it had been approved two years prior and was expiring.

Holland asked about the City of Ethics resolution, and Strickland said the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) would notify them when it was expiring.

H. Bird City

Brown also said there had been a mention of becoming a bird city, and Learnard said they could discuss that at the retreat.

Executive Session

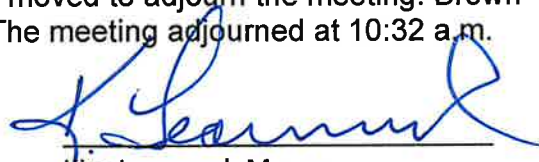
Holland moved to adjourn to executive session at 10:11 a.m. to discuss personnel and the sale, lease, or acquisition of real estate. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Holland moved to reconvene in regular session at 10:32 a.m. Brown 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 10:32 a.m.


Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary


Kim Learnard, Mayor