

City Council of Peachtree City
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 15, 2026
6:30 PM

Call to Order

The Mayor and Council of Peachtree City met in regular session on Thursday, January 15, 2026 at City Hall. Mayor Kim Learnard called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Council members attending: Laura Johnson, Suzanne Brown, Clinton Holland, and Michael Polacek.

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

State of the City Address

The Mayor presented the annual State of the City address, describing 2025 as a “fantastic year in Peachtree City.” She lauded all the City’s departments for their achievements and said they were focused on providing the service and professionalism that met the expectations of citizens.

Among the many achievements she listed were the outreach of the Executive Services Department that included enhanced communications, the colorful new bike racks, and new sponsorship opportunities for City events. She praised Financial Services for helping develop a strong budget and maintain healthy reserves. Engineering Services had quietly delivered major results, Learnard continued, including planning the remodel of Fire Station 83 and the upgrades now getting underway at City Hall.

Human Resources had transformed employee support, she stated, with employee turnover declining by 15% over the past three years. The Peachtree City Library now featured interior upgrades and new technology expanded services to patrons. The Fred remained self-sufficient, and several shows sold out in 2025. The Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) had re-branded itself and re-doubled its efforts to attract events, conventions, and tournaments. Online permitting applications and new inspection partners were two ways the Planning Department advanced in the past year, Learnard reported, and GIS technology powered many tools for the City.

Public Works continued its outstanding job of protecting paths and green spaces, and Peachtree City had once again earned the designation of Tree City USA. Keep Peachtree City Beautiful had revamped its facility and operations to better serve the Peachtree City citizens whose taxes supported it.

The Recreation and Special Events Department had never been more active, the Mayor remarked, praising the revitalized July 4th parade and new events including the Home Run Derby and Family Football Tailgating at Drake Field. She mentioned new LED lights at athletic fields, establishing free admission at the splashpad, and the ongoing construction of 18 public pickleball courts. Design work was underway for a new structure to cover the Kedron pool. One year ago, Council adopted a new Recreation Master Plan, the first in 15 years, which mapped out new programs and future facilities, and Learnard asked citizens to go online and take a look at it.

She noted that Peachtree City remained one of the safest cities in the state thanks to the efforts of the Police and Fire departments. Peachtree City was a place where people and businesses wanted to be, the Mayor continued, listing new businesses that had opened in 2025. New industrial developments and expansions were bringing jobs and a broadened tax base.

Looking ahead to 2026, Learnard said a focus would be on paths, micromobility, path connections with Senoia and possibly countywide partners. Infrastructure improvements would include modernizing stormwater systems. Areas to be explored included annexation options, garbage hauling services, and long-term regional traffic solutions.

She mused that these decisions would define life in Peachtree City for the future and called on City leaders to be driven by trust and civility. She said the voters spoke clearly in November and chose progress over division and leadership focused on a positive vision for Peachtree City. Her goal, Learnard remarked, was to build a City Council that was a cohesive, honorable team, always putting Peachtree City first with a focus on families, mobility, recreation, community gathering, and a strong sense of place, unity, and community pride for the generations to come.

Announcements, Awards, Special Recognition

A. Georgia Local Government Personnel Association Medium Agency Achievement Award

Human Resources Director Dr. Teaa Allston-Bing explained the role of her department and said the staff of five had been working to modernize HR services and improve the employee experience. In recognition of their accomplishments, the Georgia Local Government Personnel Association had awarded them a Medium Agency Achievement Award.

B. Marcom Awards

The Mayor introduced CVB Director Tyler Runyon and Communications Director Vivian Lett. Both their departments had been recognized by the Association of Marketing and Communications Specialists with MarCom Awards.

The CVB received a gold award for its visitors' guide and a platinum award for its "Keep 'em Flying" video, showcasing Air Base Georgia's vintage WWII aircraft available for public rides. Runyon screened the video for the group. Lett said the Communications Department earned gold MarCom recognition for its recruitment video for the Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT). That video was available on the City's YouTube channel.

C. Davey Awards

The CVB also was honored by the Davey Awards, an international accolade recognizing creative work from independent creators, small agencies and in-house teams. Runyon thanked the CVB's marketing manager and the Board of Directors.

The CVB's redesigned website earned a silver Davey Award, and its general tourism programs earned a gold award. The new bike racks earned a silver award for the Communications Department, and Lett remarked that those racks were a colorful symbol of the city.

D. 3CMA Savvy Award of Excellence

Lett also informed the group that, for the first time, Peachtree City submitted an entry in the City-County Communications and Marketing Association (3CMA) Savvy Awards and had received an award of excellence in graphic design for the new shared use path brochure.

Public Comment

Tony Fowler, a representative of Tuff Shed, said, after years of working with the City with no problems, his firm had recently encountered difficulties with the permitting process. He had talked with building department officials several times to no avail. The Mayor thanked him and said there were people in attendance who would reach out to him and follow up.

Agenda Changes

None

Minutes

Brown moved to approve the December 11, 2025, Special Called City Council meeting minutes and Executive Session minutes, and the January 5, 2026, Special Called City Council meeting minutes and Executive Session minutes. Brown moved to approve the minutes with the change she had submitted to the December 11 meeting minutes. Johnson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

A. December 11, 2025 Special Called City Council Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve with the recommended change.
APPROVED 5-0

B. December 11, 2025 Executive Session Minutes

APPROVED 5-0

C. January 5, 2026 Special Called City Council Meeting Minutes

APPROVED 5-0

D. January 5, 2026 Executive Session Minutes

APPROVED 5-0

Consent Agenda

Holland moved to approve Consent Agenda item A. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

A. Ordinance #1245 Alcohol at Massage Establishments

APPROVED 5-0

Old Agenda Items

None

New Agenda Items

A. 01-26-06 Crosstown Tunnels Design

City Engineer Dave Borkowski explained that a project on the 2023 SPLOST was to evaluate and replace some of the old corrugated metal tunnels in the path system. The tunnels commonly known as the Regions Bank and the Taco Bell tunnels in Braelinn Village were designated because of their high traffic, small size, and difficulty of approach. The feasibility study determined they could be replaced with concrete box tunnels that would not require the raising of Crosstown Road at an estimated cost of \$1.4 million each. The next step would be to contract with the consulting engineer to design the proposed replacement tunnels and create construction plans. This would include a survey, an analysis of the floodplains and drainage, and making the tunnels compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Borkowski said staff recommended POND & Company as the design engineer because of their history of quality design and engineering for transportation projects in the City. The cost would be \$300,000 with a timeline of 12 to 18 months. Since this was a SPLOST project, there was adequate money to begin this.

Holland asked if there would be some type of pumping system to handle drainage issues, and Borkowski said those were not often used for everyday storm water. They would be excavating a drainage channel downstream of one of the tunnels, and ditches and pipes would be part of the design. He said the tunnels would continue to flood sometimes because they were in the floodplain, but noted they did not flood as often as the tunnel at Luther Glass Park.

Holland moved to approve New Agenda item 01-26-06, awarding the design of the Crosstown Tunnels to POND and Company for the amount of \$300,000. Polacek seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

B. 01-26-07 Resolution #01152026-NA-B Public Facilities Authority Legislation

City Attorney Ted Meeker explained this was to correct a situation where Council members were appointed to the Public Facilities Authority (PFA) but were then no longer on Council. There was some thought about making the Council members ex-officio members, as they had done with the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) in 2017, but he said bond counsel and State Rep. Josh Bonner reported there had been some pushback from legislative counsel about doing that.

Meeker apologized that he had sent over an incorrect copy of the proposed legislation for inclusion in the meeting packet. He said the correct version stated that "all appointments shall be made for terms of three years and until successors are appointed and qualified; provided, however, that any member of the Authority who was a member of the City Council shall serve for a term of office concurrent with such person's term of office on the City Council."

He said there was time if Council could hold this until February or vote on it that night. It would need to be advertised under Bonner's signature that they were introducing local legislation. The ad had to run for one week, and the legislation could be introduced the next week, he explained, but they were far enough away from crossover day that timing was not a concern. Council agreed that they were comfortable with moving ahead.

Meeker formulated the motion to adopt the resolution with the change read during the meeting. So moved, said Brown, seconded by Holland. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeker again expressed his appreciation to Bonner for his assistance with this.

C. 01-26-08 Personnel Policy Revisions

Allston-Bing noted that the employee handbook was now available online to all employees and said she wanted to go over the proposed changes to the personnel policy with Council.

One change dealt with closings and delayed openings of City offices, saying that employees not designated as critical operations employees would be excused from work, while critical operation personnel would be required to report, and absences would be charged against accrued annual leave. Another change provided double pay for critical operations personnel in inclement weather or other emergency conditions. Employees on approved leave would not be charged for that leave.

Holland verified that critical operation personnel included all of Public Works, and Police and Fire Department personnel who were on shift at that time.

They were proposing that Juneteenth be added as a paid holiday, which would mirror the Federal calendar.

Bereavement leave would be converted from hours to calendar days under the proposal, which would ensure consistency among the varied schedules for Public Safety. Some language had been changed regarding the word "relative," and the update said leave must be used within 10 calendar days of death or notification. It also expanded paid funeral attendance for a City employee's funeral from three to four hours.

The only change to sick leave policy was to reorganize the bullet points for clarity, Allston-Bing said.

Another recommendation was that all newly hired employees be subject to a probationary period, even if they were promoted during that period. They would not be eligible for a merit increase during that period, but employees who were promoted and were not new hires would be eligible for merit consideration. Another

recommendation was that employees could be promoted during their initial probation period but remain on probation for the longer remaining portion of their original one-year hire period or six months from the date of the promotion.

The next proposed change updated retirement award amounts across several service tiers to reflect inflation. Another change eliminated a redundant step in the disciplinary policy regarding oral discipline.

A proposed change to the take-home vehicle policy updated authorized positions and codified current operations. Another change eliminated employee payroll deductions related to take-home vehicles and codified the current practice of requiring City Manager approval for employees living more than 45 miles outside the city limits.

Holland said it appeared that most employees who had take-home vehicles lived within 30 miles, and he thought it would be more practical to set that as the cutoff mark for City Manager approval.

Police Chief Janet Moon spoke up, saying that when they were looking at pay and compensation packages in other cities, they found that most set the limit at between 25 and 50 miles. Under an interim City Manager, some things had been done contrary to the recent pay study, and that is when the charge for take-home vehicles was discontinued, and the distance was increased to 45 miles. Moon said that took out a little of the sting of the pay and compensation package that was delivered but readjusted downward. It was a balancing act to maintain retention and recruitment during a time of personnel shortages, she explained.

Brown said Strickland had provided her with a July 2022 memo that indicated that a budget resolution for fiscal year 2023 eliminated the line item for the deduction for take-home vehicles. She did not understand why it took three and a half years to codify the change into the written policy. Brown said it took her quite a while to piece together what happened and who was involved. The delay was what bothered her, she remarked, not whether they were charging officers for the vehicles.

In that interim, Brown continued, there had been illnesses among staff and personnel changes, including the HR manager and several City Managers. There had been a City Council special election and two City Council regular elections, and four of the five members on the dais were not in office in July 2022 and had no knowledge of this change and whether it was in the personnel policy or not. Brown said she was glad this was discovered, and that Allston-Bing was reviewing the personnel policy. She said she hoped this situation would never happen again.

Moon gave kudos to the current HR Department, saying they did inherit quite a lot, and she hoped Council had a full understanding of what had happened.

Another recommended change was to lower the bi-weekly overtime threshold for the Police Department from 86 hours to 84 to align the written policy with existing practices.

Brown said there had been a reference in a very recent police communication about overtime after 80 hours. Moon explained that from 2008 to 2019, overtime was paid at the 80-hour mark to Public Safety employees. The Fair Labor Standards Act said it should start at 86 hours for most governmental employees in those positions, so Peachtree City had been exceeding the recommendation. However, the officers were on 12-hour shifts, leaving four hours over in every pay period. The supervisor had to send them home, which created operational problems.

In 2019, Council said they would pay them for the 84-hour period, with overtime up to 86. Moon said this helped with the scheduling of a 24/7 operation. Moon remarked that the number of employees stayed flat over this period, so increasing the number of hours allowed them to get more work out of their headcount. Moon said the officers and supervisors were satisfied with the 84 hours.

The final proposed change also involved the Police Department and called for one additional hour of pay per day when a field training officer was riding with and training a new officer.

Holland thanked Moon for her explanations and said he did not see how anyone could have a problem.

Brown said she would like for Allston-Bing to bring proposed changes to the personnel policy as they were formulated, rather than presenting them in one large batch. She said it required a daunting amount of research on Council's part.

Learnard then remarked that she could not imagine the tedium of having to go through this time and time again and had no problem getting the changes at one time. She added that she was not sure they needed to spend hours questioning what staff had recommended and hoped the process would be smoother in the future. She did not want to see two or three changes come to Council at each meeting and have to go through a lengthy process that used staff and the City Manager's time. She said Council needed to consider what was easier for staff.

Polacek reflected that there were no newly allocated expenditures involved in these changes, which had been his main question. As far as the vehicle mileage, he said the possibility of being charged for a car might discourage potential employees.

He also suggested they look into offering paid parental leave, possibly as a discussion topic at the retreat.

Johnson stated she was not overwhelmed by the number of changes they were

presented with, noting that some were as simple as adding a holiday. She was comfortable following staff's judgement about what would be a digestible amount.

Allston-Bing said she and her team were dedicating their time this year to going through all 147 pages of the personnel policy so they could bring Peachtree City into legal compliance. She would be working with department heads to instill best practices in order to set Peachtree City up with a policy that was in good working order. She said she would be coming back with more changes and would do that according to Council's wishes.

Strickland asked to formulate the motion to incorporate a needed change they had discovered that day. He said the motion should be to approve the recommended personnel policy revisions as presented with a change to section IJ-2 (a)(3) to change 30 miles to 45 miles. So moved, said Johnson, and Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearings

A. 01-26-09 Consider text amendment to the Sign Ordinance, Chapter 66, for revisions to roof sign regulations

Planning and Zoning Director Shayla Reed said this was the first of several text amendments Council would be seeing over the coming months. This amendment to the sign ordinance was to clear up conflicting language regarding roof signs. There was a definition of roof signs and a statement that they were prohibited, then another section said roof signs were allowed along a parapet wall, which would be above the roof line.

The Planning Commission had okayed a definition for parapet wall and recommended removing the language that allowed signage along a parapet wall at their September 8 meeting.

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

Brown said she reviewed the Planning Commission meeting minutes and had no objections. Holland agreed.

Holland moved to approve Public Hearing item 01-26-09, consider text amendment to the Sign Ordinance, Chapter 66, for revisions to roof sign regulations. Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Council/Staff Topics

1. Availability of 2025 Christmas ornaments

Learnard stated there were still a few Peachtree City Christmas ornaments available at the CVB office. Runyon added that the ornaments proved so popular they had put in another order that should be arriving in mid- to late February.

Executive Session

Brown moved to adjourn to executive session at 7:47 p.m. to discuss personnel and the sale, acquisition, or lease of real estate. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Brown moved to reconvene in regular session at 8:18 p.m. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

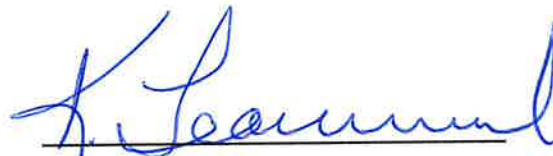
A brief discussion was held about public comment issue regarding permits. The issue was described as pertaining to survey requirements. Council wants to discuss where things stand with permitting at their retreat.

Adjourn

With no more business to discuss, Brown moved to adjourn the meeting. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting ended at 8:20 p.m.


Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary


Kim Learnard, Mayor