City Council of Peachtree City

Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 22, 2026
5:00 PM

Call to Order

The Mayor and Council of Peachtree City met in a Special Called Work Session on Monday, June 22, 2026. Mayor Kim Learnard called the session to order at 5 p.m. Council members attending: Laura Johnson, Suzanne Brown, Clinton Holland, and Michael Polacek.

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

Discussion

A. Presentation of the FY2027 City Manager's Proposed Budget

City Manager Justin Strickland explained this was a review of the proposed budget for fiscal year (FY) 2027, running from Oct. 1, 2026 to Sept. 30, 2027. He said the budget reflected the City's vision of Uncompromised Excellence and the values of PATHSS: Professionalism, Accountability, Teamwork, Honesty, Sustainability, and Safety. The budget also manifested the City's Five Pillars: A Safe, Family-Friendly Community, An Active, Healthy Community, An Attractive Community, A Thriving, Resilient Business Community, and A City Organization that was Innovative, High-Performing, and Sustainable.

The top priority for the budget was to maintain existing service levels in all divisions and departments, Strickland commented. The first thing they did when beginning the budget process, he remarked, was to look at the costs for current services, which included staffing, health care, equipment, events, and maintenance. New projects and services must have a source of revenue.

Market Trends

A look at market trends showed that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) had jumped 27% since COVID and what would have cost $76 in 2020 would cost $100 today. This, of course, meant that everything the City purchased had gone up in price. Strickland had another chart that showed that the average earnings of a worker in the United States rose by about 25% in the period from 2009 to 2020. Since 2020, earnings had jumped an additional 25%. Because of this, the City had to raise compensation to employees in order to recruit and retain them, Strickland noted, and this strategy was working.

He also included a graph that showed a citizen to employee ratio of 8.82. The population was estimated at about 42,000, and this ratio was within the recommended range. The population of Peachtree City had grown about 25%

since 2000, he stated, so they were not adding employees without need.

State Legislative Impacts

House Bill 581, passed two years ago, provided a statewide floating homestead exemption. Municipalities, counties, and schools had the option to opt in or out when this bill was passed, but the Legislature voted in the last session to make compliance mandatory. This bill controlled how much the assessed value of a home could increase over its value in 2024. The increase was tied to the rate of inflation, so for 2026, it was capped at 2.7%. Non-homesteaded properties would continue to be valued at fair market.

Senate Bill 33, passed as the final bill of this year's legislative session, allowed counties to adopt a 1% Local Homestead Option Sales Tax (LHOST) to provide property tax relief for homesteaded properties. It would not expand revenue but would substitute the sales tax for the money lost due to homestead property tax relief.

Adopting this would require a local act of the General Assembly followed by a voter referendum. If approved, the LHOST would be in effect for 10 years. Distribution would be automatically calculated each year based on the homestead digest, with the previous year's sales tax collection determining the current year's homestead exemption. Any excess sales tax collections beyond 100% of the homestead exemption would be used to lower taxes on all properties.

Strickland recalled that the Floating Local Option Sales Tax (FLOST) was part of HB 581. FLOST reduced property taxes for all properties, while LHOST reduced taxes only for homestead properties. Based on what they had estimated their homestead digest and what they could possibly collect on an LHOST, Peachtree City would be very close to 100% homestead exemption, probably 80% or higher, Strickland stated. There was little risk, he said, unlike with a FLOST, because the exemption was based on how much was collected. He added that it was very rare for sales tax to drop from year to year.

Johnson asked if the exemption changed, would they have to advertise it as an increase, Strickland said they would because they were still taxing businesses the same. He said it was complicated, but he supported this LHOST bill because it was good for homesteaders without risk to revenue sources for the City.

General Fund Overview

They were proposing $60,779,253 in General Fund revenues for FY 27, Finance Director Kelly Bush stated, which was a 4.8% increase over the original FY 26 budget. However, the current projected FY 26 budget had a 2.3% increase in revenues and 2.4% decrease over projected expenditures. The FY 26 budget showed $3 million in reserve expenditures for the MEJA property.

Next, Bush presented a breakdown of revenue sources, with taxes bringing in 82.55% of the total. These included property taxes, along with others such as alcoholic beverage taxes, Local Option Sales Taxes (LOST), and insurance premium tax. There was a category called Other Financing Sources, which made up 1.49% of the revenues, and Bush said that was the transfer of the General Funds portion of the hotel/motel tax.

There was a $684,000 decrease over projected in the Intergovernmental classification, and that was due to the school resource officers. This year, the City received 100% reimbursement for the six new officers, but that would change in FY 2027. Bush said she was budgeting using the same formula they had previously used of 50% for 10 months, but that could change. The $183,000 decrease in miscellaneous revenue came about because they did not budget for insurance reimbursements, which could not be predicted.

Major Revenue Impacts (Estimated)

They had budgeted for a 3.36% increase in property taxes, Bush noted, with commercial taxes growing by 4% and homestead properties capped by law at 2.7%. This would put the estimated property tax collection at about $24.6 million, an increase of $969,000 over the previous year.

LOST collection had been flat, but Bush said it was beginning to revive, and staff had budgeted for a 3% gain over the previous year at $13.314 million, a $401 increase over the project amount for FY 26.

Interest income was budgeted at about $500,000 less than FY 26 due to declining interest rates and also because American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) projects were complete and those funds expended. The City Hall renovation was the final ARPA project, Bush stated.

Bush showed a pie chart that broke down the FY 27 General Fund revenue sources. It showed that 44% came from ad valorem taxes, about 22% from LOST, with the remainder coming from other sources, such as franchise taxes, charges for services, licenses, and fines and forfeitures.

Another chart showed that the millage rate had been reduced by 1.34 mills over the past 13 years, going from 7.178 mills in 2012 to 5.840 mills in 2025. In one year, that 1.34 mills amounted to $5,650,795, Bush pointed out. This reduction saved the average Peachtree City household $273. Compounded, this meant there were $23 million that Peachtree City had not collected in property taxes.

Expenses

The highlights on the expense side showed a 3% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and a 2% increase in technology costs. Personnel costs included hiring the final three firefighters needed to staff the new Station 85. Fuel costs, utilities, and healthcare costs were all budgeted to increase.

She presented a slide that showed Peachtree City COLAs were not keeping up with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) since COVID. The 3% proposed in this budget would keep them about 7% under CPI, but Bush said staff would be coming back, probably in December, to ask for another 1%, as they did the previous year. She said it was important to stay competitive in the market and for City employees to have the same buying power as they did the year before. They planned on another salary survey this year and did not want to have to make a big increase in compensation all at once.

Proposed personnel additions were the three firefighter EMT/ paramedic positions to round out the nine needed for the new fire station. A new EMS training officer position was proposed. A fire training coordinator was being reclassified to a fire training officer, and a fire logistics coordinator was being reclassified to a fire logistics officer. The three firefighters would start in mid-year for a savings of $173,828. A Police staff assistant was proposed, as was a new planner position. A reference librarian position was being reclassified to an assistant director for technology and access services, and a reclassification for Code Enforcement would take a senior code enforcement officer to a code enforcement manager. These positions totaled a new cost to the General Fund of $508,164.

Brown verified with Bush that the Planner position was for the Planning Department, and Strickland added that when he first came to the City, there were two Planner positions, along with the Planning Director, but one position was eliminated during COVID cutbacks. He thought the current workload justified adding it back, but, in addition to that, the General Assembly had passed a bill that put deadlines on plan and permit reviews. This extra position would enable them to meet the deadlines.

He also mentioned they were reorganizing the Engineering Department, and one of the ideas was to move one of the engineers to Planning. Engineering was always involved in plan reviews, and it would be easier to have an engineer in that department.

Polacek asked if the firefighter savings was a one-time event, and Strickland said it was, noting that they had hired all these new firefighters halfway through the year.

Strickland also wanted to explain the reclass for the Code Enforcement officer, saying that person had been performing in a managerial role but was not being paid for those duties.

Bush moved on to show what percentage of the tax bill went to each City division and how much that equated to on the $1,200 tax bill for a $508,000 property. Public Safety costs were $28,446,453, or 46% of the budget. That did not include capital purchases funded through Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) or debt service. Ad valorem tax revenue was projected to be

$24,627,247, which was about $4 million shy of the cost for those departments. The average home paid about $46 a month for Public Safety, which was approximately $1.51 a day, for a Fire Department with a 1 rating from the Insurance Services Office (ISO), an outstanding Emergency Medical Services (EMS) operation, and a top-ranked Police Department.

Holland noted that Public Works also could be considered first responders, and when that was added to Public Safety, it meant those departments took up about two-thirds of the budget. Bush had created a pie chart showing the expenditures by department and said Recreation, Public Works, Fire, and Police made up 74% of the expenses. Engineering and Storm Water were being folded into Public Works and Building Maintenance for FY 27, making the "Big Four" departments more costly. Of the remaining departments, Finance was the largest, making up 9% of costs, and Bush explained that was because it also included GIS, Court, and Customer Service.

Another pie chart showed they were service-driven, Bush stated, with 65% of the budget going to salaries and other personnel costs and another 20% going to contracted services, which included pool maintenance service, tree management contract, and information technology.

A summary of the proposed General Fund FY 27 budget stated that expenses and revenues were balanced at S60,779,253 with no plan to use any fund balance.

Five-Year Financial Model

Bush presented the five-year financial model without a bond. The percentages of fund balance were listed at the bottom of the table, and they were all healthy, Bush remarked.

She read a statement that detailed what a strong fund balance provided: "A strong fund balance provides financial stability and credit strength that helps protect our bond rating. It provides emergency and economic risk protection. It shields us from revenue shortfalls, funding delays, major unexpected costs like storms or litigation, or facility failures. It provides operational flexibility. It helps us avoid the need for cuts or tax increases during economic disruptions. It provides for capital planning and strategic investments. It allows cash-funded projects when advantageous and flexibility to grant, match or buy property. It provides a lower borrowing cost. Credit rating agencies view a strong reserve favorably. And the bottom line is that maintaining the strong fund balance is not just conservative, it is strategic. It allows us to plan confidently, adapt to uncertainty and preserve our financial strength for the long term."

Another five-year model gave a financial overview that included a bond and the use of $6 million from reserves for the renovations for the Police headquarters. The facilities authority bond would be for construction of a permanent structure over the Kedron pools, a multi-purpose field at Braelinn, which would reduce the reserves down to 46%, which would remain steady over the next five years.

The Mayor asked if that would impact the triple A bond rating, and Bush replied that it would not. She asked about the $6 million, with Bush saying that it would be taken directly from reserves for the gun range and the Police Department renovations.

She had calculated that annual debt service on a 15-year, $12 million Facilities Authority loan would be $1.064 million per year. This would be for the Kedron structure, the Braelinn multi-purpose field, and one other project with the $1 to $2 million remaining, Strickland noted.

This was not included in the proposed budget, Bush told Council. They would return around the start of the fiscal year to ask for the $6 million for the Police projects, then with the Facilities Authority bond. Strickland explained that they were not putting this in the budget, even though they knew it was coming, in order to maintain comparable budgets from year to year. Otherwise, the FY 27 budget would show a huge jump, then would drop again. They wanted budgets that would let them compare the actual operating costs from year to year.

Brown, who had requested earlier to comment on the use of the fund balance, asked where they needed to be to maintain a Triple A bond rating. Their policy required 31% or better, Bush stated. Strickland noted that bond ratings were not just about fund balance; there were other factors that were considered.

Brown said 30% was considered the minimum, but other factors included how much the City had increased or decreased certain items. She said 37% was the recommended maximum. With a balance above that, the City should consider giving the money back to the people, she remarked. It meant citizens had been taxed too much.

These projects were giving the money back to the people in a sense, Strickland commented. They had to do the renovations for PD, and it was good they had the $6 million. Providing the gun range for training and adding the Emergency Operations Center were tangible assets to the City. Renovations at the 35-year old PD headquarters would provide needed storage space. Also, the Braelinn field and the Kedron pool were facilities the citizens would use. This money was being invested into things citizens would benefit from for decades, said Strickland.

He said this was a good time to do this, and they had agreed they wanted to see the fund balance decrease. He cautioned that the projections were just educated guesses, but using the fund balance now would keep the percentage in the 40s instead of continuing to climb.

Brown asked why the model without the bond showed 62% in the fund balance by 2032. With the bond, it would be 46%. Bush said spending the $6 million on the PD renovations accounted for that. They also would be taking on the debt service for the bond. She also noted that if they were at 37% right now, they would not be able to pay cash for the renovation without dipping down so much that it would impact the bond rating.

It was an easy decision for Council to purchase the MEJA building for what they did, because they had the fund balance, Brown observed. With or without the bond, she still wanted to get the number closer to 37%, which she thought was fairer to the citizens. Brown said she wanted to operate in the best interests of the City and of the citizens. Strickland said he believed that is what they all wanted to do.

Brown agreed but added she was looking to see what they could shave off. She believed the LHOST would benefit the citizens. She hoped the could do a better job on citizen education. If they could reduce property taxes by even 50% for homestead properties, it would be significant, she noted.

Strickland said the soonest they could collect the LHOST would be January 2028. Even if it had passed in the special session, it would have been a year and a half before they were able to collect. It would come up again in the 2027 session, and Strickland said they were not losing out on anything because they could not collect until 2028. Brown noted that if it could have been on the November ballot, they could have prepared the FY 28 budget with that information.

Other Funds: The Fred

Assistant Finance Director Dustin Farron explained that the Amphitheater was an enterprise fund, with profits invested back into the facility. It was not supported by taxes. Recent projects had included new spotlights, concourse lighting, perimeter fencing, and a stage roof and ceiling.

They were proposing a $1.95 million budget for the Amphitheater for FY 27. Charges for services, mostly from ticket sales, made up $1.6 million of the revenues, with sponsorships bringing in $255,000. A transfer from the Hotel/Motel Tax was projected at $75,000.

The largest expenditure, $1.24 million, was for program expenses for the artists. Purchased and contracted services were $480,000, and capital outlay, which was the reinvestment back into the facility, was $100,500. This year they were planning on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) upgrades to the restrooms and the replacement of 100 seats, which they did annually, plus some electrical panel upgrades.

Holland asked if program expenses for the artists had increased, and Farron said it had definitely gone up. It was harder to get the bigger names with the money they had. He also mentioned that The Fred competed with Trilith Live and other nearby venues. However, there were six sold-out shows at The Fred this season.

The Mayor asked who they were contracted with to acquire acts, and Farron explained there were three affiliated companies—PTR, which was part of RCS, FreshTix, and Premier Productions.

Other Funds: Hotel/Motel Tax

Farron detailed the FY 27 budget for the Hotel/Motel Fund, which got its money from the 8% Hotel/Motel Tax levied on hotel rooms and short-term rentals. That tax was projected to bring in about $2.3 million for FY 26, a 3% increase, and was budgeted for about the same amount in FY 27.

Farron explained that the revenues were collected in this fund but were transferred out according to State law. The General Fund got 3%, which would be $887,000, and 1.5% went to Tourism Product Development (TPD) in the amount of $368,000, with $75,000 of that going to the Amphitheater. The Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) was budgeted to receive approximately $1.035 million. Farron said that was the CVB's largest source of revenue, but it was not their budget. The budget would come to Council in August.

Holland asked if they had a breakdown of revenue received from short-term rentals, and Farron said he did not know that because all Hotel/Motel Tax revenue was lumped in together.

Other Funds: Storm Water Utility Fund

Due to a rate study and the adoption of new rates, there were significant changes to the Storm Water Utility this year, Interim Assistant City Manager Jonathan Miller remarked. These included three new positions, the inclusion of the stormwater bill on the 2026 property tax bill, and an almost 50% increase in spending on pipelining and replacement.

The projected budget was about $4 million. With the rate increase, revenues were projected to go up by about $1.3 million compared to FY 26. On the expenditure side, Miller said there were significant increases in personnel costs, the purchase of new equipment and vehicles, and the substantial increase in infrastructure projects. Miller said they were projecting that the budget would be completely balanced and that they would not need to pull money from the reserves.

Learnard said she had devoted a Mondays with the Mayor video to stormwater when Council voted on the rate increase, but she wondered if they needed to do more to prepare citizens. Strickland said businesses would see the new rates on October 1, and residential bills would be included with the tax bills, probably in January. He thought additional public information campaign would be a good idea.

Holland asked if there had been much concern from the community about the rate changes, and Strickland said he personally had not heard anything. Farron said Finance had not received many calls. Brown agreed that a Mondays with the Mayor would be a good idea, maybe every month. City Clerks Yasmin Julio explained the plans the Communications Office had for publicizing the rate change.

Strickland said there would be a discussion of a stormwater bond in the future to augment the new rates and speed up the progress of some of the projects that were most needed.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Funds

Miller listed four CIP projects that were budgeted for: 2027 Comprehensive Plan, Recreation/ Grounds pole barn, Battery Way improvements, and citywide facilities improvements, which included upgrades to the Public Works admin building, Glenloch burglar alarms, roof replacements at Glenloch and Riley Field, and electrical work at Station 81.

Financed projects included Public Works and Grounds equipment, 10 Police patrol vehicle replacements, technology replacements and software, Fire and EMS vehicle and equipment, recreation equipment, along with other financed vehicles and equipment. These were financed over five years at about $611,000 per year and remained as a revolving financing plan. The total CIP FY 26 budget was $1,416,491.

Holland asked where the budget showed the capture of revenues from the sale of the vehicles that were being replaced. Bush said it was under other revenue sources in the General Fund. She budgeted $10,000 each year as a placeholder because she did not know what the sales would net. Miller remarked that some of these vehicles were reallocated for use in other departments and did not go to auction.

Strickland said the Battery Way improvements listed would be for the restrooms. There were SPLOST funds for the other Battery Way projects, but the restrooms were not included. The Battery Way work would be done in FY 27. Holland asked how the restrooms would look, and Strickland said they would be modular, with one male and one female stall. He thought it might be less than $300,000, and if so, the excess money could be spent on the playground.

Impact Fees

These were collected on new development throughout the city, Miller explained, and were subject to certain legal restrictions, including spending deadlines. The money could be spent only for new paths, and Police and Fire upgrades. The total impact fees available for this fiscal year were almost $3.2 million, down $1 million for the previous fiscal year. Spending was required on a revolving five-year plan.

Holland asked if the spending restrictions were a State or local law, and Miller said it was from the State. Strickland explained that the money had to be spent on things that would be impacted by development, such as the paths or Public Safety services. The amount in the Police Department's allocation was low because impact fees had been used to purchase the gun range.

What Does it Cost to Live in Peachtree City?

Strickland compared the 2026 Maintenance and Operations (M&O) millage rates for Fayette's cities: Peachtree City was 5.840; Fayetteville, 5.646; Tyrone, 2.889, and Brooks, 1.126. He showed another graph that combined the municipal and County millage rates, but not the Board of Education. This showed that Tyrone had the highest total millage rate, 10.682, because they relied on the County for Fire and EMS. Fayetteville used the County for EMS, and its total millage rate was 10.619. Peachtree City provided its own Fire and EMS and had a total millage rate of 9.813. Strickland said Peachtree City was providing those services at a lower cost and with better quality than Fayette County.

Strickland said he did not include school taxes on his chart because they overwhelmed the other numbers. School taxes made up about 60% of the tax bill. Even if they did get the LHOST and eliminate municipal homestead property taxes, there would still be school taxes to pay.

For an average house in Peachtree City valued at $508,000, the total tax bill would be lower than it would be in Fayetteville or Tyrone. The difference between Tyrone and Peachtree City was about $177 a year. Taxes amounted to $16.40 per day in Peachtree City; in Tyrone, it was $16.88, while in Fayetteville, the taxes were $16.85 a day. In Brooks, the cost was $15.90, while in the County and Woolsey, taxes were $15.27. This meant it cost $1.13 more a day to live in Peachtree City than in the County.

A pie chart showed that two-thirds of the tax payment went to the Board of Education, while 20% went to the City, and 13% to the County M&O budget, with the remainder going to E-911. Strickland presented photos of some of the things that $1.13 a day provided, such as an ISO 1 rated fire department, parks and recreation facilities and events, 100-plus miles of paths, a CALEA advanced certification Police Department, city-maintained neighborhood entrances and medians, and a premier public library.

Polacek thought it would be good to explain why the ISO 1 rating was so important. Fire Chief Clint Murphy said ISO was part of the firm that produced rates for insurance companies based on risk. Inspectors visited the city and looked at equipment, training, and organization and awarded the rating. The ISO 1 ranking was the highest and meant citizens paid less in premiums.

Sustainability

Strickland reminded Council that the basis of their budget policy was to take care of what they had. He listed some of the assets, starting with more than 40,000 residents and 380 employees. They had to maintain 88 City buildings and more than 1,000 vehicles and pieces of equipment. There were more than 4,800 traffic signs on the 100-plus miles of paths and 200-plus miles of streets. Learnard asked him how much they spent on path maintenance, and he said it was at least $3.2 million each year. Holland asked how many miles of paths there were, and Strickland said there were close to 102 miles of public paths that the City maintained, and around 110 if private paths were added, plus the paths that were on the golf courses.

The City maintained about 95 miles of stormwater pipe, along with 8,000 drainage structures and 100 detention ponds. Maintenance on the 29 tunnels and 48 bridges had to be budgeted, as did care for the more than 40 parks, fields, and recreation areas.

Strickland pointed out that the City owned 2,650 acres that were not in a right-of-way and 398 acres in rights-of-way. This equaled 18% of the land in the city limits, and Strickland said it was unusual for a city to own that much land. They maintained more than 80 landscape islands and 280 neighborhood entrances.

The Path to Continued Uncompromised Excellence

Strickland concluded his presentation with his own list of what they needed to do to maintain Uncompromised Excellence.

- Keep employee pay at the 85th percentile
- Encourage smart economic development
- Invest in safety, which included personnel and infrastructure
- No sacrifices in services
- Utilization of citizen advisory groups
- Continue programs such as PTC101 and summer internships
- SPLOST 2023 projects
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding grant applications
- Ordinance/policy updates
- Boundary study
- 911 feasibility study
- Highway 54 Corridor study
- LHOST-homestead property tax relief

Strickland said the plan was to hold the public hearing on the proposed budget and CIP at the July 9 City Council meeting and ask Council to adopt them at the August 20 meeting, along with the CVB and the Keep Peachtree City Beautiful budgets.

Council Questions and Discussion

Brown asked if it was typical to do just one public hearing, saying she felt a lot of people would be out of town the week of July 9. Strickland said it was up to

Council, but they usually held it on the second Thursday in July. Learnard said she felt July 9 was far enough removed from the Fourth to be okay, and then Bush said she had already advertised the hearing for July 9. Brown remarked that she understood but thought some citizens would not like it.

Was there a list of projects for the stormwater bond, Johnson asked. Strickland said Integrated Science & Engineering (ISE) had submitted a list of projects, but it could be tweaked. Several Council members mentioned problems with ponds and lagoons, and Strickland acknowledged there was a lot of silt in the East Lagoon. Learnard said they also needed to look at the North Lagoon. Strickland said it would make sense cost-wise to wait to dredge the lagoons when Lake Peachtree was dredged in 2030.

A lot of money had been spent on maintenance, Holland stated, and he did not want them to forget about the hockey rink. It did not show up in this budget because Council had approved a $500,000 budget amendment for this year, Strickland commented. Any further money would be to enclose it, which they would be considering. Holland said he wanted to make sure the hockey rink would last another 35 years, and Strickland replied that part of the $500,000 would be to make the repairs suggested by the engineers. Holland said those were for the inside, and he wanted to look at the exterior, too.

Polacek confirmed that these personnel additions would be the only ones. Bush said they were adding a technology person through CPAC to be split between Fire and Police. PD and Fire professional services costs were increasing a bit to pay for this outsourced position, Strickland remarked.

Other than waiting until mid-year to hire the three new firefighters, Polacek asked if any other savings had been captured. Bush explained how they built-in some savings by always budgeting a negative amount equal to 2.25% of each department's budget. Strickland said they could do this because every position they budgeted for would not be filled the entire year. Also, the departments were very careful with their spending and came in under budget most years.

However, he remarked, there had been $5 million difference in projected revenues and in the initial budget proposals from the departments, so that required some cutbacks. He said they made some projections, such as counting on fuel prices not rising further. Also, he had noticed that electricity costs were lower than projections last year and lowered them accordingly in this year's budget.

All the department heads did a good job in keeping their budgets flat and justifying the increases when they could not, he stated, but some things, like health care costs, were out of their control. Strickland estimated that 75% of the budget increase came from increases in salaries and health care costs.

Budgets reflected what a government valued, Polacek remarked, and this budget showed that they valued public safety, public works and parks, which was where he thought most residents wanted their tax dollars to go.

He mentioned that they were looking at the use of reserves and a bond to finance the Kedron pool structure, but had not figured out maintenance costs, which they had been told could double for the new facility. Strickland said that it would come up in FY 28. They had accounted for Kedron being closed in this year's budget.

Brown asked about the cost of heating Glenloch and keeping it open in the winter. Recreation Director Harold Layton pointed out that Kedron would be closed, so those operating costs could be applied at Glenloch.

She stated that four of the personnel additions were reclassifications. New positions were the three firefighter EMTs/ paramedics, an EMS training officer, a planner, and a Police staff assistant. Brown said she did not want citizens to be alarmed when they saw the list because so many were reclassifications, and five of the six new positions were for Public Safety.

Most of the reclassifications were minor, Strickland said. He noted that the Police assistant position was added mostly to handle the increase in Open Records requests.

He then returned to the five-year model, saying neither he nor Bush would recommend taking $6 million from reserves and issuing a bond unless they were certain it would leave them in a sound financial position.

Brown said she was glad they had separated those costs out and did not have them in the proposed budget. Bush said it was easier to explain as a separate item.

Strickland closed by saying this was a massive undertaking, and Peachtree City compiled its budget much earlier in the fiscal year than a lot of governments because they wanted to get things in front of Council and citizens as soon as possible. He thanked the department heads for being mindful of costs and realistic in their requests. Strickland expressed his pride in Bush and Farron for putting all of this information together, creating the massive budget books, and ensuring everything balanced. He said the budget was accessible to the public on the City website.

Adjourn

Brown moved to adjourn at 7:04 p.m. Holland seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary

Kim Learnard, Mayor