

## MINUTES OF THE WASHINGTON CITY COUNCIL CALLED MEETING

FEBRUARY 19, 2025, AT 10:00 A.M.

City Council Chamber, City Hall

102 East Liberty Street, Washington, GA 30673

The mayor and City Council of the City of Washington, Georgia, held a called meeting on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 10:00 A.M. in the City Council Chamber, City Hall. Councilmembers present were Cullars, Fisher, Gunter, Hill, Mahoney, and Anderson by phone.

### 1. City Council Meeting Procedures and Decorum

- **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**  
The meeting began with an invocation led by Councilman Hill, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Bailey.
- **Approval of Meeting Minutes**  
Councilman Cullars moved to approve the meeting agenda with the addition of the Sheriff's Department of Safety, seconded by Councilman Hill. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Council Discussion/Action Items - WCCP**
  - WCCP - Julie Miller presented WCCP Report: Julie Miller, the regional manager for Georgia Family Connection Partnership, provided an overview of the Wilkes County Community Partnership (WCCP) and its purpose. She highlighted the financial support received from the state legislature and the collaborative efforts to improve conditions for children and families in Wilkes County.
  - LaShondra Elam-Lee presented the WCCP Programs Report. The Executive of WCCP detailed various programs, including Jump Start, after-school programs, and the Resilient Team program. She provided statistics on demographics and funding sources and outlined the budget needs for the upcoming year.
  - **Motion:** Councilman Hill called for a motion for approval of the full \$90,000 designated for WCCP, seconded by Councilman Cullars.
  - **Discussion**
    - There was a discussion about the allocation of funds, with a focus on whether the full \$90,000 should be approved. The discussion included considerations about the rent being paid and whether it should be covered by the city.
    - Council members discussed the importance of partnerships with the housing authority and other stakeholders.

- There was a debate about whether the rent for the summer camp should be charged, with some members agreeing that it should not have happened.
- **Called for Vote**
  - Anderson-No, Cullars-Yes, Hill-Yes, Mahoney-Yes, Fisher-Yes, Gunter-Yes. Motion passed 5 Yes, 1 No.
- **Council Discussion/Action Items - URA**
  - **Motion:** Councilman Cullars made a motion to give the URA \$75,000 annually for the next three years with the condition of seeing progress in three years and reporting at least every six months.
  - **Discussion**
    - There was a discussion about the capacity of the URA to handle the redevelopment project and the need for collaboration between the city and the URA.
    - Councilman Mahoney expressed concerns about the URA's ability to manage the project and suggested that the city take the lead due to its greater financial capacity.
    - Councilman Hill supported the motion, emphasizing the importance of giving the URA a chance to show progress.
    - The discussion also touched on the need for long-term commitment from developers and the potential for using SPLOST funds.
- **Called for Vote**
  - Hill-Yes, Cullars-Yes, Fisher-NO, Gunter-NO, Anderson-NO, Mahoney-Yes. Motion Failed 2-Yes, 4-No.
- **Council Discussion/Action Items – Animal Shelter**
  - **Motion:** A motion was made by Hill to allocate \$90,000 for the animal shelter's 2025 budget until further discussions with the sheriff's department and the animal shelter can be held to determine if additional funding is necessary and seconded by Fisher.
  - **Discussion**
    - The discussion centered around the financial needs of the animal shelter, including payroll and operational costs. The shelter requires \$110,000, primarily for payroll, but the current budget allocation is \$90,000.
    - There was a debate on whether the additional \$20,000 could be funded, with considerations about the shelter's partnership with the sheriff's department and potential changes in responsibilities.
    - The council discussed the possibility of the sheriff's department taking over some responsibilities, which could affect the budget allocation.
    - It was suggested to approve the \$90,000 allocation for now and revisit the budget after discussions with the sheriff's department in March.
- **Called for Vote**
  - Fisher-Yes, Gunter-Yes, Anderson-Yes, Hill-Yes, Mahoney-No, Cullars-Abstention. Motion Passed 4-Yes, 1-No, 1-Abstention

- **Council Discussion/Action Item – 4E**
  - 4E Youth Organization Report was presented by Roxanne Cobb: Roxanne Cobb, founder and CEO of 4E Youth Organization, presented the organization’s mission statement and activities. 4E focuses on eliminating intergenerational poverty and gang violence through education, empowerment, exposure, and encouragement. The organization serves 25 youth, primarily from underserved communities, and is seeking partnerships and support from the city.
  - **Motion:** Councilman Hill made a motion to fund 4E immediately with \$60,000 in monthly payments which was seconded by Councilman Cullars.
  - **Motion:** Councilman Mahoney made a motion to charge 4E to come up with a workforce initiative plan proposal to relate to the Mayor and Council at the next City Council meeting so they can have an opportunity to look at it, vet it, and get back with her, seconded by Councilman Gunter.
  - **Discussion**
    - There was a discussion about the importance of creating a workforce initiative for the youth, with a focus on providing work experience and opportunities for teenagers in the community.
    - Councilman Hill initially made a motion to fund 4E immediately with \$60,000 in monthly payments, but it was voted down with 2 yeses and 3 noes.
    - Councilman Mahoney then proposed a motion to have 4E develop a workforce initiative plan and present it at the next council meeting.
    - The council discussed the need for a structured plan before funding and agreed to review the proposal at the next meeting.
- **Call for vote-Councilman Hill Motion**
  - Hill – Yes, Cullars – Yes, Mahoney – No, Anderson – No, Fisher – No, Gunter – No. Motion failed 2-Yes, 4 – No.
- **Call for vote-Councilman Mahoney Motion**
  - Hill - No, Cullars – No, Mahoney – Yes, Anderson – Yes, Fisher – Yes, Gunter – Yes.
- **Council Discussion/Sherriff Department**
  - The sheriff will present a proposal regarding the animal shelter and his budget at next month's meeting.
- **Adjournment**
  - Councilman Fisher moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Hill. The motion passed unanimously.

  
 Bruce A. Bailey, Mayor



  
 Yoshe T. Jenkins, City Clerk