

MINUTES OF THE WASHINGTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

June 9, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

EDWARD B. POPE CONFERENCE CENTER

48B Lexington Avenue, Washington, GA 30673

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Washington, Georgia, held their regular monthly meeting on Monday, June 9, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the Edward B. Pope Conference Center. Councilmembers present were Fisher, Gunter, Hill, and Cullars.

- **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

The meeting began with an invocation led by Pastor Wynn, followed by a recital of the Pledge of Allegiance.

- **Approval of May 12th Council Meeting Minutes**

Councilman Cullars moved to approve the minutes, and Councilman Gunter seconded this motion. The motion was approved by a vote of the following: Cullars-Y, Hill-Y, Fisher-Y, and Gunter-Y, and passed unanimously.

- **Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Councilman Cullars made the motion to approve the agenda with additions, seconded by Councilman Hill. Additions to the agenda are as follows: 1. Formation of the Washington Wilkes Black History Advisory Committee (WWBHAC). Members to include – Rev. Ed Anderson, Charles Jackson, Olivia Jackson, Loretta Fanning, Valente Fanning, Joanne Clark, Michael Hartman, Janelle Ashmore, Mattie Carson, and Nathaniel Fanning. 2. Historic Preservation Commission – Replacing Alicia Finell with Sean Clippinger. A vote was called: Cullars-Y, Hill-Y, Fisher-N, Gunter-Y. 4-Y. Motion passed.

- **Citizens' Comments: Limit to 3 minutes**

Dennis Quinn: Advocated renaming City Hall to promote inclusivity for the Black community, referencing the Pope Center as precedent. Noted Washington as a "divided people" and suggested renaming could foster unity.

Ms. Fisher: Addressed not-for-profit tax-exempt organizations, noting 60 such organizations in Washington. Expressed concern about public funds supporting private foundations like 4E Youth Organization, warning against setting a precedent.

Reverend Anderson: as a member of the Washington Black History Advisory Committee, thanked officials for attending the Cherry Grove Schoolhouse anniversary. Outlined the committee's role in preparing for the 2026 250th anniversary by identifying and memorializing Black historical sites: requested city funding and support for additional markers.

Ms. Fanning (District 2): Voiced a lack of representation by District 2 council members and exclusion from decision-making. Requested acknowledgment of her and others' concerns.

- **City Attorney Discussion Items:**

Require the Mayor's Signature – A resolution Authorizing the Housing Authority of Macon-Bibb County to issue bonds to Finance Facilities located in the City of Washington. City Attorney Adam Nelson introduced Mr. Jamie Garner, requesting council approval for a financing procedure for multiple housing authorities, as required by Georgia law.

- a. **Mr. Jamie Garner:** Outlined financing for renovations at Autumn Lane and Brightwood Lane Apartments (and 11 others), totaling \$50,000 per unit, funded by a \$30 million bond from the Macon-Bibb County Housing Authority. Local approval is needed for tax-exempt bond status and for Macon-Bibb's operation in Washington. No financial liability for the city. Public hearing required; notice published. Renovations won't increase regulated rents; temporary resident relocation may occur.
- b. **Council Action:** Public hearing closed. Councilman Cullars moved, seconded by Councilman Hill, to approve the resolution. Call for vote: Cullars – Y, Gunter – Y, Hill – Y, Fisher – Y. Motion passed.

- **City Administrator Discussion/Action Items**

- **Mayor's Discussion Items:**

Callie Chavez, National Imperial Miss Georgia Teen: Presented her "Balanced and Beautiful" mental health platform, promoting awareness, journaling, and workshops.

Youth Achievements: AAU basketball team won titles; Daylon Cobb and Justin Myers held a youth camp; boxing club members advanced to Junior Olympics.

Parks and Recreation: Summer camp ongoing; splash pads operational; pool functioning well; Simpson Liberty Street Pool's splash pad issues resolved.

Cherry Grove Historic Marker Reunion: Mayor attended the 5th reunion, found it educational, and expressed interest in forming a Junior American organization.

Community Unity & Black History Advisory Committee Formation:

- The mayor emphasized unity; noted withdrawal of a \$10,000 donation for historical markers.
- Stated the Black History Advisory Committee needs formal establishment for resource access.
- Addressed divisive online comments, played an audio clip of a councilman's racially insensitive remark, apologized, and announced plans for a city-wide Facebook policy.
- **Motion:** To formally establish the Washington Wilkes Black History Advisory Committee with named members (Reverend Ed

Anderson, Charles Jackson, Olivia Jackson, Loretta Fanning, Valente Fanning, Joanne Clark, Michael Hartman, Janelle Ashmore, Ms. Maddie Carson, Mr. Nathaniel Fanning).

- **Motion** by Councilman Fisher, seconded by Councilman Gunter.
 - **Discussion:** Councilmen Cullars and Hill raised procedural concerns; City Attorney clarified Mayor's authority.
 - **Vote:** Cullars – N, Hill – N, Fisher – Y, Gunter -Y, tie broken by Mayor's Yes.
 - **Outcome:** Committee formally established.
- **Funding for Three Historical Markers:** Councilman Hill moved to amend the budget and direct the City Administrator to find ~\$10,000 for three markers.
 - City Administrator asked about authority; Councilman Cullars Seconded.
 - **Vote:** Hill-Y, Gunter-Y, Cullars-Y, Fisher-Y.
 - **Outcome:** Motion passed.

Historic Preservation Commission Replacement: Request to replace Alicia Finnell with Sean Clippinger. Councilman Cullars asked about minority representation; the item was tabled for clarification.

- **Council Members' Discussion/Action Items:**

- 1. **Councilman Hill:**

- a. **Rusher Street Fence:** Requested update. The City Administrator reported six resident responses (5 for repair, 1 for removal), unclear ownership, and an estimated \$250,000 for replacement. Cullars suggested contacting Ms. Barbara Bacon for history. Outcome: Further investigation needed.
 - b. **Job Readiness Initiative (4E Organization):** Hill moved to proceed with funding (up to \$60,000). The mayor expressed concerns about 4E's private foundation status and requested more financial details.
 - **Vote:** Hill Yes, Gunter No, Cullars Yes, Fisher No, Mayor abstained.
 - **Outcome:** Motion failed; Mayor requested 4E provide more financial information for reconsideration next month.

- 2. **Councilman Cullars:**

- a. **MEAG Update:** City Administrator reported a statewide shortage of generative transformers, with a two-year lead time; the city is managing resources.
 - b. **Park Conditions:** Cullars noted trash issues; City Administrator stressed citizen responsibility. Cullars requested more benches in parks.
 - c. **Renaming City Hall:** Cullars reintroduced renaming City Hall to Willie Edward Burns Municipal Building. The mayor recounted a

conversation with Mr. Burns, who would accept the naming of the annex building.

- **Motion:** Cullars moved, Hill seconded, to rename City Hall.
- **Vote:** Hill Yes, Gunter No, Cullars Yes, Fisher No, Mayor abstained.
- **Outcome:** Motion failed due to lack of majority.

- **Executive Session**


Councilman Cullars made a motion, seconded by Councilman Fisher, to go into executive session to discuss 1 personnel matter. The motion passed. Cullars-Y, Hill-Y, Fisher-Y, Gunter-Y.

- **Return to the Regular Session and proceed to cast any necessary votes.**

Attorney Nelson: 1 Personnel Matter. No action was taken.

- **Adjournment**

Councilman Cullars moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Gunter. The motion passed. Cullars-Y, Hill-Y, Fisher-Y, Gunter-Y.



Bruce A. Bailey, Mayor



Yoshe T. Jenkins, City Clerk



AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF GEORGIA
CITY OF WASHINGTON

EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

June 9, 2025

Washington, Georgia's mayor and City Council went into executive session on June 9, 2025.

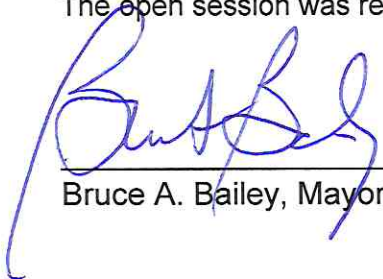
The following members were present: Mayor Bruce Bailey, Newton Gunter, David Fisher, Jr., Larry Hill, and Nathaniel Cullars, Sr. Attorney Adam Nelson was also present.

A quorum was present; Mayor Bruce Bailey called the meeting to order and presided over it.

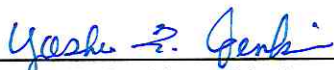
Executive Session Summary

During the executive session, the council discussed one personnel matter. No action was taken.

The open session was reconvened at 7:45.



Bruce A. Bailey, Mayor



Yoshe T. Jenkins, Clerk

ATTEST

