

MINUTES OF THE WASHINGTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

February 09, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

EDWARD B. POPE CONFERENCE CENTER

48B Lexington Avenue, Washington, GA 30673

The Mayor and City Council of Washington, Georgia, held their regular monthly meeting on Monday, February 09, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at the Edward B. Pope Conference Center. The following members were present: Mayor Bruce Bailey, Councilman Newton Gunter, Councilman David Fisher, Councilman Larry Hill, Councilman Calvin J. Wiggs, III, Councilwoman Kimberly J. Rainey, and Councilwoman Susan Branan. Attorney Adam Nelson was also present.

a. Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting began with an invocation led by Councilman Larry Hill, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilwoman Kimberly J. Rainey.

b. Executive Session regarding personnel, litigation, or real estate matters if needed

Motion was made by Councilman Larry Hill, seconded by Councilwoman Susan Branan, to go into executive session to discuss 2 legal matters. Vote approved unanimously.

c. Return to the Regular session and any votes that may be needed from the

Executive Session. Motion was made by Councilman Newton Gunter, seconded by Councilman Larry Hill, to return to regular session. 2 litigations, no actions taken. Vote approved unanimously.

d. Consideration of Ethics Complaint - Ms. Wesley gave her statements regarding her ethics complaint against Mayor Bruce Bailey, and Mayor Bruce Bailey gave his statements in defense of the complaint made by Ms. Wesley. Mayor Pro Tem Larry Hill asked the council to consider all the evidence presented, gave the council a moment to reflect, and then stated that the vote would be taken. Call for a vote for the ethics complaint for or against Mayor Bruce Bailey by Ms. Wesley. Councilman David Fisher – Against, Councilman Newton Gunter-Against, Councilman Calvin J. Wiggs, III-Abstained, Councilwoman Susan C. Branan-Against, Councilwoman Kimberly J. Rainey-Abstained, Councilman Larry Hill– For. 1-For, 3-Against, 2-Abstained. Motion Failed.

e. Approval of Meeting Agenda

Minutes from January 12th and corrected minutes from September 8, 2025, were approved. A motion to move the public comments section to the end of the agenda died in a 3-3 tie, and the agenda was approved as presented. Vote called as follows: Councilman David Fisher-No, Councilman Larry Hill-Yes, Councilman Newton Gunter-No, Councilman Calvin J. Wiggs, III-Yes, Councilwoman Susan C. Branan-No, Councilwoman Kimberly J. Rainey-Yes. 3- Yes, 3-No. Motion dies.

f. Committee/Boards/Authority Reports Review:

- The council reviewed reports from various committees.
- **911 Committee and Dispatch System:** Councilman Hill requested inclusion in future 911 committee discussions. Mayor Bailey noted the committee hadn't met but agreed to work on reconfiguring its outdated structure and asked the sheriff to call a meeting. The mayor is also working with the 911 director to upgrade the outdated CAD system to provide better incident data by zone (city vs. county).

g. Public Comments

- Citizens voiced several concerns, including: opposition to abolishing the two federally-ordered city districts; a call for council unity; an announcement of a community yard sale and a boycott; a third request for an update on a four-way stop (the Mayor is following up with the DOT); and a note about outdated items in the city charter, like a prohibition on raised seam metal roofs.

h. Council Equipment and Retreat:

- Phones for council members are being set up, and laptops will be distributed at the upcoming retreat, which is an open working session but not a public forum.

i. City Administrator Topics

- **CDBG 2023 Grant for Water Infrastructure:** Motion was made by Councilman Larry Hill, seconded by Councilman Newton Gunter, to grant Will Long, City Administrator, authority to execute the 2023 CDBG contract. Vote approved unanimously.
- **Andrew Drive Project:** The Andrew Drive pipe replacement project was completed within its grant-funded timeframe. The project involved replacing a collapsed 15-foot pipe with two 7-foot pipes. An issue with the road surface is pending inspection, and the city is looking into safety measures for steep drop-offs on the road's sides. The City Administrator confirmed the site is safe and will be inspected by an independent company.
- **Funding for Black History Documentary Project:** The council approved a proposal to fund a videography project by the Black History Committee to preserve local oral histories. The initial cost is estimated at 1,300 –1,500. While Councilman Hill urged caution in spending priorities, others emphasized the project's urgency. Councilwoman Kimberly J. Rainey moved to approve a proposal to fund a videography project by the Black History Committee, seconded by Councilman Calvin J. Wiggs, III. Call for vote: Councilman David Fisher-Yes, Councilman Larry Hill-No, Councilman Newton Gunter-Yes, Councilman Calvin J. Wiggs, III-Yes, Councilwoman Susan C. Brannan-Yes, Councilwoman Kimberly J. Rainey-Yes. 5-Yes, 1-No. Motion Approved.

j. City Attorney

k. Mayor Action Topics

- **Board and Committee Appointments:** The council approved Mike Karamihalidis to the Housing Authority Board to replace Jon Waldorf. Motion made by Councilwoman Susan Branan, seconded by Councilman David Fisher. Call for vote: Councilman Newton Gunter - Yes, Councilman David Fisher - Yes, Councilman Larry Hill - Yes, Councilman Calvin J. Wiggs, III - Yes, Councilwoman Kimberly J. Rainey - Yes, and Councilwoman Susan Branan - Yes. Unanimous Vote. All Approve.

l. Council Members' Discussion Topics:

- **Small Business Development:** Councilwoman Branan reported that the UGA Small Business Development Center is working with local businesses. Councilman Hill emphasized the need for citywide small-business support, not just downtown.
- **Animal Control Issues:** Councilman Gunter raised concerns about a significant stray animal problem, noting neither the city nor the sheriff's department handles animal control directly. He proposed forming a committee to address the issue, and the mayor mentioned a plan to rotate city representation on the animal shelter board.
- **Request for a Forensic Audit:** Councilwoman Rainey requested a forensic audit, citing a lack of clarity on city spending, such as a \$25,000 Christmas tree expense that didn't require a council vote. The City Administrator explained that the budget allows him to administer funds within approved line items and that the tree was funded from electric department revenue, not property taxes. He noted that a

forensic audit is costly and requires a specific target of suspected wrongdoing. The mayor suggested getting quotes before making a motion. Tabled.

- **Citizen Initiative for Home Pipe Inspection:** A plan was proposed for residents call City Hall to add to a list for home pipe repair (e.g., for lead or galvanized pipes). The goal is to gather enough participants to potentially apply for a grant to help homeowners with replacements.
- **YMCA & Habitat for Humanity Progress:** The City Administrator confirmed that preliminary conversations with the YMCA are positive and meetings with Habitat for Humanity are scheduled. Councilwoman Rainey requested monthly updates. Councilman Hill asked that the Parks and Recreation director be included in future discussions to ensure alignment and avoid competition with existing programs.

m. Council Members' Action Items:

- **Failed Council Motions:** Two motions by Councilman Newton Gunter—one to prevent failed motions from being brought back for three months and another to begin eliminating city districts—died for lack of a second.
- **Town Hall Meeting:** Councilwoman Kimberly J. Rainey moved that the City of Washington hold a town hall meeting in March 2026 so that citizens can have the opportunity to ask questions and receive answers, seconded by Councilman Larry Hill. While a town hall meeting was approved for March, its specific format, duration, and agenda are pending discussion at the council retreat. Vote called as follows: Councilman David Fisher-Yes, Councilman Larry Hill-Yes, Councilman Newton Gunter-Yes, Councilman Calvin J. Wiggs, III-Yes, Councilwoman Susan C. Brannan-Yes, Councilwoman Kimberly J. Rainey-Yes

n. Adjournment

- Councilman Newton Gunter made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilwoman Kimberly J. Rainey. Call for vote: Councilman Newton Gunter - Yes, Councilman David Fisher - Yes, Councilman Larry Hill - Yes, Councilman Calvin J. Wiggs, III - Yes, Councilwoman Kimberly J. Rainey - Yes, and Councilwoman Susan Brannan - Yes. Unanimous vote.


Bruce A. Bailey, Mayor


Yoshe T. Jenkins, City Clerk



AFFIDAVIT

**STATE OF GEORGIA CITY
OF WASHINGTON**

EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

February 9, 2026

Washington, Georgia's Mayor and City Council went into executive session on February 9, 2026, at 6:07 p.m.

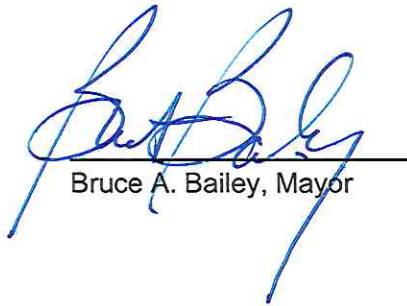
The following members were present: Mayor Bruce Bailey, Councilwoman Kimberly J. Rainey, Councilman Newton Gunter, Councilman David Fisher, Councilman Larry Hill, Councilwoman Susan Branan, and Councilman Calvin J. Wiggs, III, as well as Attorney Adam Nelson.

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

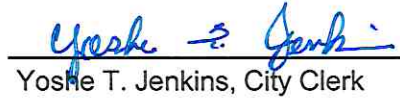
Executive Session Summary

During the executive session, the council discussed two litigation matters. No action was taken.

The open session was reconvened at 6:47 p.m.



Bruce A. Bailey, Mayor



Yoshe T. Jenkins, City Clerk

ATTEST