

MINUTES OF THE WASHINGTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

June 8, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

EDWARD B. POPE CONFERENCE CENTER

48B Lexington Avenue, Washington, GA 30673

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. Mayor Bailey presided.

2. ROLL CALL

- Council Member Fisher — Present
- Council Member Hill — Present
- Council Member Gunter — Present
- Council Member Wiggs — Present
- Council Member Branan — Present
- Council Member Rainey — Present

Also present: Mayor Bailey, City Manager Long, City Attorney Nelson, City Clerk Jenkins, and Assistant City Clerk Ivey.

• INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The invocation was delivered by Council Member Larry Hill. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

• APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: To approve the agenda as presented.

Made by: Council Member Susan Branan

Seconded by: Council Member David Fisher

Discussion: None.

Vote (Roll Call):

- Council Member Fisher — Yea
- Council Member Hill — Yea
- Council Member Gunter — Yea
- Council Member Wiggs — Yea
- Council Member Branan — Yea
- Council Member Rainey — Yea

Result: Motion carried by a vote of 6-Yea / 0-Nay, with 0 absent.

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

MOTION: To approve the minutes of May 11, 2026, Regular Council Meeting.

Made by: Council Member Susan Branan

Second by: Council Member Larry Hill

Discussion: None.

Vote (Roll Call):

- Council Member Fisher — Yea
- Council Member Hill — Yea
- Council Member Gunter — Yea
- Council Member Wiggs — Yea
- Council Member Branan — Yea
- Council Member Rainey — Yea

Result: Motion carried by a vote of 6-Yea / 0-Nay, with 0 absent.

- **PUBLIC COMMENT / PUBLIC HEARING**

- Lorraine B. Thomas, address not stated — Introduced candidacy for Georgia State Senate District 24 and discussed rural healthcare, broadband, veterans' services, and local infrastructure.

- **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

- **NEW BUSINESS**

Agenda Item: Funding for Wilkes County Community Partnership (WCCP) and 4E Organization

Council Member Hill proposed reinstating previously allocated funds to WCCP and 4E to support teen services, citing recent community violence. The City Attorney advised that payments to nonprofits must be pursuant to contracts for specific services to the City. Council members discussed prior budget decisions eliminating general funding to 501(c)(3) organizations, the need for defined deliverables, and questions about program reporting, finances, and the source of funds within the adopted budget.

MOTION: To reinstate the funding for the Wilkes County Community Partnership (WCCP) and the 4E Organization that was allocated in the 2026 budget.

Made by: Council Member Larry Hill

Seconded by: Council Member Calvin Wiggs

Discussion: Council discussed contractual requirements for services, prior reporting by WCCP, and budget impacts; questions were raised regarding the organization's services, financial reporting, and available funding sources within the current budget.

Vote (Roll Call):

- Council Member Fisher — Nay
- Council Member Hill — Yea
- Council Member Gunter — Nay
- Council Member Wiggs — Yea
- Council Member Branan — Nay
- Council Member Rainey — Yea

Result: Motion failed by a vote of 3–3, with 0 abstaining and 0 absent.

Agenda Item: Pecan Street Water Line and Related Site Work — Bid Authorization and Mayor's Signature

City Manager Long reported six bids were received; the recommended contractor's bid was \$255,690.90 excluding engineering fees and materials, with a total project estimated in the mid \$300,000s. The project, budgeted for December 2026, is time-sensitive due to the upcoming football season and concurrent National Guard site changes that require utility upgrades and road adjustments. The work includes upsizing lines to improve fire suppression and address obsolete fittings.

MOTION: To authorize the mayor to sign the necessary documents to proceed with the Pecan Street project as recommended.

Made by: Council Member Hill

Seconded by: Council Member Gunter

Discussion: Council members asked about bidder location, prior performance on low bids, and completion timelines; City Manager Long stated the engineering firm vetted the recommended contractor and projected completion prior to the football season, weather permitting.

Vote (Roll Call):

- Council Member Fisher — Yea
- Council Member Hill — Yea
- Council Member Gunter — Yea
- Council Member Wiggs — Yea
- Council Member Branan — Yea
- Council Member Rainey — Yea

Result: Motion carried by a vote of 6-Yea / 0-Nay, with 0 absent.

Agenda Item: Contract with Rye Engineering for Leak Detection in County Transmission Mains

City Manager Long requested approval of a contract with Rye Engineering for approximately \$54,000 to locate significant unaccounted-for water losses, estimated at 500,000–600,000 gallons per day, within county transmission lines. This effort aligns with the preparation of a capital improvement plan (CIP) and with meeting state procurement requirements for funding from the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA). City Manager Long also noted prior successful work by a leak detection company that located 121 leaks and stated the current water loss was estimated at 23,000 –25,000 per month.

MOTION: To approve the contract with Rye Engineering to perform leak detection work on county transmission mains at an estimated cost of approximately \$54,000.

Made by: Council Member Rainey

Seconded by: Council Member Fisher

Discussion: Council members discussed prior experience, documentation, and mapping of leaks and requested the provision of records and maps. City Manager Long provided information on past results, anticipated savings, and the impact on CIP planning.

Vote (Roll Call):

- Council Member Fisher — Yea
- Council Member Hill — Yea
- Council Member Gunter — Yea
- Council Member Wiggs — Yea
- Council Member Branan — Yea
- Council Member Rainey — Yea

Result: Motion carried by a vote of 6-Yea / 0-Nay, with 0 absent.

Agenda Item: Fire Hydrant Decoration Oversight and Approval Process

Mayor Bailey and the Council considered a proposal to establish an oversight process for citizen proposals to decorate city-owned fire hydrants. Discussion addressed routing proposals through City Hall and involving the Fire Committee and Fire Chief in review, with an emphasis on ensuring hydrant visibility, operability, and safety.

MOTION: To allow citizens to submit proposals to decorate the fire hydrants to City Hall, subject to approval by the Fire Chief prior to any decoration.

Made by: Council Member Rainey

Seconded by: Council Member Branan

Discussion: Council Member Fisher suggested specifying that approval by the Fire Chief is required; Mayor Bailey noted committee review would apply.

Vote (Roll Call):

- Council Member Fisher — Yea
- Council Member Hill — Yea
- Council Member Gunter — Yea
- Council Member Wiggs — Yea
- Council Member Branan — Yea
- Council Member Rainey — Yea
- Result: Motion carried by a vote of 6-Yea / 0-Nay, with 0 absent.

- **REPORTS**

City Manager Long's Report

- Reported a software issue causing a splash pad opening delay was resolved by Public Works, and a temporary closure on Memorial Day was due to a maintenance scheduling miscommunication.
- Reported that discussions with prospective youth-serving organizations are ongoing, with no agreement yet reached.
- Reported preliminary meetings with Cobblestone Hotels Group regarding a potential 54-room hotel, with community meetings to be held over the next 6-12 weeks.
- Advised that the retention pond at the National Guard property will be fenced and maintained by the National Guard.

Department Reports

- Included in the packet for review

Mayor Bailey's Comments

- Noted the meaningfulness of the Memorial Day ceremony, where every U.S. military branch except the Space Force was represented, and thanked the organizers.
- Requested Council Members review committee, board, and authority assignments and provide updates at future meetings.
- Stated that both splash pads were directed to open by the Friday before Memorial Day and that he instructed that maintenance be rotated so one facility remains open at all times.

Council Comments

- Council Member Branan reported on the Memorial Day ceremony on May 25, 2026, and noted that work on derelict properties is ongoing.
- Council Member Rainey raised concerns regarding child safety near the National Guard retention pond and requested signage at Reese Booker Park to state it closes at dusk.
- Council Member Hill noted interest in collaborative county-city processes for animal control and emphasized the need for advance documentation before funding requests.
- Council Member Wiggs announced a Juneteenth celebration for June 21, 2026, at 3:00 p.m., at Reese Booker Park and reported that damaged lighting at the Willie E. Burns Municipal Complex is being addressed.
- Council Member Gunter relayed constituent requests to consider opening the splash pads earlier than 11:00 a.m.

● **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

MOTION: To enter Executive Session pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(2) to discuss personnel.

Made by: Council Member Rainey

Seconded by: Council Member Wiggs

Discussion: None.

Vote (Roll Call):

- Council Member Fisher — Yea
- Council Member Hill — Yea
- Council Member Gunter — Yea
- Council Member Wiggs — Yea
- Council Member Branan — Yea
- Council Member Rainey — Yea

Result: Motion carried by a vote of 6-Yea / 0-Nay, with 0 absent.

The Council entered Executive Session at 7:21 p.m. and returned to open session at 8:12 p.m. An executive session affidavit was signed by Mayor Bailey. Action taken in open session: One Personnel Matter. No Action Taken.

● **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: To adjourn.

Made by: Council Member Rainey

Seconded by: Council Member Branan

Discussion: None.

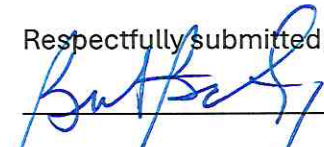
Vote (Roll Call):

- Council Member Fisher — Yea
- Council Member Hill — Yea
- Council Member Gunter — Yea
- Council Member Wiggs — Yea
- Council Member Branan — Yea
- Council Member Rainey — Yea

Vote: Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mayor Bruce A. Bailey



Yoshe T. Jenkins, City Clerk

Attest:



AFFIDAVIT

**STATE OF GEORGIA
CITY OF WASHINGTON**

EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

June 8, 2026

Washington, Georgia's Mayor and City Council went into executive session on June 8, 2026, at 7:21 p.m.

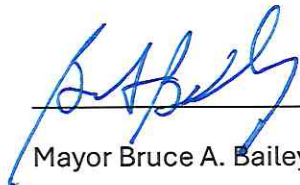
The following members were present: Mayor Bruce Bailey, Councilwoman Kimberly J. Rainey, Councilman Newton Gunter, Councilman David Fisher, Councilman Larry Hill, Councilwoman Susan Branan, Councilman Calvin J. Wiggs III, and Attorney Adam Nelson.

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

Executive Session Summary

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

The open session was reconvened at 8:12 p.m.



Mayor Bruce A. Bailey



Yoshe T. Jenkins, City Clerk

ATTEST

