



MINUTES
City of McDonough
City Council Meeting
McKibben Chambers City Hall
136 Keys Ferry Street
May 18, 2026
6:00 PM

The Regular Scheduled Meeting of the City of McDonough City Council was held on Monday, May 18, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Kamali Varner called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The City Clerk called roll for the meeting, as follows:

Mayor Kamali Varner	Present
Mayor Pro Tem Jamal Burt	Present
Councilmember Larry Blue	Absent
Councilmember Xavier Johnson	Present
Councilmember Darryl Payton	Present
Councilmember Scott Reeves	Present
Councilmember Vanessa Thomas	Present

Others in attendance: City Administrator, Keith Dickerson; City Attorney, Emilia Walker; City Clerk, Christy Taylor; Police Chief Ken Noble; Fire Chief David Williams; Fire Battalion Chief Greg Moore; Deputy City Administrator, Sylvia Smith; Communication Director, Andrew Cauthen; Technology Services Director, Brian Linton; and Help Desk Technician, Rob Monnelus.

Mayor Pro Tem Burt gave the Invocation; and Councilmember Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Varner called for a motion to approve the Agenda. Councilmember Johnson made a motion to approve the Agenda, and Mayor Pro Tem Burt seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those voting in favor were Mayor Varner, Mayor Pro Tem Burt, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Payton, Councilmember Reeves, and Councilmember Thomas. Councilmember Blue was not present for the meeting.

The City Clerk sounded the items on the Consent Agenda, as follows:

6A. Technology Services

Brian Linton, Director

Request for approval to pay the NetPlanner invoice for Genetec Access Control and Surveillance Services in the amount of \$15,476.12. Funding Source: 100-5.1535.52.1301

6B. Technology Services

Brian Linton, Director

Request for approval to pay the annual renewal Versaterm invoice for the Police Department's body and dash camera in the amount of \$87,774.74. Funding Source: 100-5.1535.52.1301

6C. Administration

Christy Taylor, City Clerk

Request for approval to pay the GIRMA Pollution Liability renewal invoice in the amount of \$49,205.00. Funding Source: 100-5.1330.52.3100.

6D. Administration

Christy Taylor, City Clerk

Approval of the May 7, 2026, City Council Workshop Minutes

Mayor Varner called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Johnson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, and Councilmember Reeves seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those voting in favor were Mayor Varner, Mayor Pro Tem Burt, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Payton, Councilmember Reeves, and Councilmember Thomas. Councilmember Blue was not present for the meeting.

Public Comments:

- Scott Nyman – discussed traffic concerns related to proposed development
- Jason Elkay – shared concerns over people getting in the fountain on the square, and damage to plantings
- Pam – shared concerns over continued growth and traffic

The Mayor and Council issued Proclamations Honoring Briana Cole for Contributions to Film, Literature, and the Arts; and Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of ZMahogany Studios, in the City of McDonough.

Attorney Emilia Walker requested that the discussion related to the Urban Redevelopment Agency be postponed to the next agenda.

City Administrator, Keith Dickerson presented the FY 26-27 Budget Update:

- Current Millage Rate is 3.033.
- Possible Millage rollback rate of 3.184, but actual number will be determined in the fall.
- Revenues consist of LOST funds; property taxes; insurance premium taxes; franchise taxes; and ad valorem taxes.
- Public Safety and Public Works Departments produce the highest expenditures.
- Expenses reviewed in the budget include building repairs; system upgrades; vehicles; computers; new equipment; and a building code update
- Currently there are 241 positions, and seven new positions have been requested.
- A 2% Cost of Living Adjustment is included in the proposed budget.

Discussion ensued. Councilmember Thomas requested that the Local Maintenance & Improvement Grant (LMIG) and any other grants be included in the budget book.

Mr. Dickerson presented a request for authorization to publish a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Code Revision Services – Chapters 15, 16, and Related Updates to Chapter 17. Councilmember Thomas questioned why staff would not be utilized to make the necessary revisions to the Code. Discussion ensued.

Councilmember Johnson made a motion to approve the request to publish an RFP for Code Revision Services – Chapters 15, 16, and Related Updates to Chapter 17; and Councilmember Reeves seconded. The vote was five in favor and one in opposition. Those voting in favor were Mayor Varner, Mayor Pro Tem Burt, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Payton and Councilmember Reeves. Councilmember Thomas voted in opposition. Councilmember Blue was not present.

Mr. Dickerson presented the agreement with Turnipseed Engineering for Additions to Water Pollution Control Plant and requested authorization for the Mayor to execute the agreement. Councilmember Johnson made a motion to approve the agreement as presented, and Mayor Pro Tem Burt seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those voting in favor were Mayor Varner, Mayor Pro Tem Burt, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Payton, Councilmember Reeves, and Councilmember Thomas. Councilmember Blue was not present for the meeting.

Mr. Dickerson made a presentation on proposed Wayfinding opportunities within the City, and he requested authorization to approve the estimate from RITELITE to begin work, as follows:

Phase 1 –

- SPLOST VI Project 327-5-4210-54-1431
- 20 Signs
- \$240,000
- City Staff will install the Signs

Phase 2 –

- SPLOST VI Project 327-5-4210-54-1431
- 7 Signs plus new entrance signs
- \$150,000
- Staff will do installations

Phase 3-

- SPLOST VI Project 327-5-4210-54-1431
- New Gateway signs
- Costs to be determined
- Signs will be installed by contractors

After the presentation and discussion, Mayor Pro Tem Burt made a motion to approve the Wayfinding project as presented, and Councilmember Thomas seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those voting in favor were Mayor Varner, Mayor Pro Tem Burt, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Payton, Councilmember Reeves, and Councilmember Thomas. Councilmember Blue was not present for the meeting.

Deputy City Administrator, Sylvia Smith noted for the record that the Applicant in Community & Economic Development Case #260204 requested postponement to the June 15, 2026, City Council Meeting.

Councilmember Johnson made a motion to postpone case number 260204, to the June 15, 2026, City Council Meeting as requested; and Councilmember Reeves seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those voting in favor were Mayor Varner, Mayor Pro Tem Burt, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Payton, Councilmember Reeves, and Councilmember Thomas. Councilmember Blue was not present for the meeting.

Deputy Smith also explained that case 260203 should also be postponed to the June 15, 2026, City Council Meeting. Councilmember Johnson made a motion to postpone case number 260203, to the June 15 Meeting as requested; and Mayor Pro Tem Burt seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those voting in favor were Mayor Varner, Mayor Pro Tem Burt, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Payton, Councilmember Reeves, and Councilmember Thomas. Councilmember Blue was not present for the meeting.

Deputy Smith further explained that case number 260209 should also be postponed to June 15. Councilmember Reeves made a motion to postpone case number 260209, and Councilmember Johnson seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those voting in favor were Mayor Varner, Mayor Pro Tem Burt, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Payton, Councilmember Reeves, and Councilmember Thomas. Councilmember Blue was not present for the meeting.

Lastly, Deputy Smith stated that case number 260307 has been postponed to a date to be determined.

Mayor Varner called for a motion to go into Executive Session for Litigation O.C.G.A. 50-14-2; Real Estate O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (b)(1); and Personnel O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (b)(2). Councilmember Johnson made a motion to go into Executive Session for the purposes stated, and Councilmember Payton seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those voting in favor were Mayor Varner, Mayor Pro Tem Burt, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Payton, Councilmember Reeves, and Councilmember Thomas. Councilmember Blue was not present for the meeting.

Mayor Varner called for a motion to reconvene Regular Session. Mayor Pro Tem Burt made a motion to reconvene, and Councilmember Reeves seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those voting in favor were Mayor Varner, Mayor Pro Tem Burt, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Payton, Councilmember Reeves, and Councilmember Thomas. Councilmember Blue was not present for the meeting.

Councilmember Johnson made a motion to hire Tarika Peeks to serve as the City's Community & Economic Director, and Councilmember Reeves seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those voting in favor were Mayor Varner, Mayor Pro Tem Burt, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Payton, Councilmember Reeves, and Councilmember Thomas. Councilmember Blue was not present for the meeting.

Councilmember Johnson made a motion to authorize the City Administrator to sell parcel M21-0500300, to the highest bidder through a sealed bid, with the minimum bid of \$10,000.00, in accordance with State law; and Councilmember Reeves seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those voting in favor were Mayor Varner, Mayor Pro Tem Burt, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Payton, Councilmember Reeves, and Councilmember Thomas. Councilmember Blue was not present for the meeting.

Councilmember Thomas made a motion to adopt Ordinance 26-05-18, amending Title 2, Chapter 2.20, Code of Ethics, of the City Code of Ordinances and for other lawful purposes, and Councilmember Johnson seconded. The vote was six in favor. Those voting in favor were Mayor Varner, Mayor Pro Tem Burt, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Payton, Councilmember Reeves, and Councilmember Thomas. Councilmember Blue was not present for the meeting.

After closing comments, Mayor Varner adjourned the meeting at 9:36 p.m.

Christy L. Taylor, CMC
City Clerk

OPEN MEETINGS COMPLIANCE NOTICE: This is a regularly scheduled meeting of Mayor and Council of the City of McDonough duly noticed pursuant to the requirements of the Georgia Open Meetings Law (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1, et seq). Notice of the meeting schedule was published in the *Henry Herald* on November 22, 2025; and a copy the meeting schedule was posted at City Hall and on the City's website, as required by law.