

Committee of the Whole Minutes - Final MAYOR AND COUNCIL



Derek Norton, Mayor
 Tim Gould, Mayor Pro Tem (Ward 6)
 Glenn Pickens (Ward 1)
 Latonia P. Hines (Ward 2)
 Travis Lindley (Ward 3)
 Charles "Corkey" Welch (Ward 4)
 Susan Wilkinson (Ward 5)
 Rickey N. Oglesby, Jr. (Ward 7)

A. Max Bacon City Hall
 Human Resources Training Room
 2800 King Street SE
 Smyrna, GA 30080

City Attorney Scott Cochran
 Deputy City Administrator Kristin Robinson
 City Clerk Heather K. Peacon-Corn

May 01, 2025 6:00 PM

1. Roll Call

Present: 8 – Mayor Derek Norton, Councilmember Glenn Pickens, Councilmember Latonia P. Hines, Councilmember Travis Lindley (virtual), Councilmember Charles Welch, Mayor Pro Tem / Councilmember Tim Gould, Councilmember Rickey N. Oglesby, Jr.

Also Present: 1 – Scott Cochran

Staff: 11 – Jon Carter, Richard Garland, Jill Head, Dat Luu, Russell Martin, Landon O’Neal, Paul Osburn, Heather Peacon-Corn, Eric Randall, Kristin Robinson, Enoch Serna

Call to Order

Mayor Derek Norton called to order the May 1, 2025 Committee of the Whole meeting held at A. Max Bacon City Hall in the HR Training Room at 6:03 PM.

2. Staff M&C Agenda Items to Review

3. Formal Business and Presentations

A. COW2025-052 Budget Presentation – Budget Officer Landon O’Neal

Landon O’Neal, Budget Officer, presented the following:

FY2026 Budget Presentation

Comparison to Prior Year

	FY25	FY26	Increase/	
Fund	Revised	Proposed	(Decrease)	% Change
General Fund	67,438,849	69,900,600	2,461,751	3.7%
Special Revenue Funds	9,191,658	9,027,831	(163,827)	(1.8%)
Capital Project Funds	16,327,156	2,046,000	(14,281,156)	(87.5%)

Internal Service Funds	1,411,641	3,578,000	2,166,359	153.5%
Enterprise Funds	28,966,979	28,464,088	(502,891)	(1.7%)
Total Budget	123,336,283	113,016,519	(10,319,764)	(8.4%)

Revenues vs. Expenditures

			Transfer
			To/(From)
Fund	Revenues	Expenditures	Cash Reserves
General Fund	69,900,600	69,900,600	-
Special Revenue Funds	9,027,831	9,027,831	-
Capital Project Funds	2,046,000	2,046,000	-
Internal Service Funds	1,846,000	3,578,000	(1,732,000)
Enterprise Funds	28,642,000	28,464,088	177,912
Total Budget	111,462,431	113,016,519	(1,554,088)

Key Revenues

Fund	Account	FY 2025	FY 2026	Difference	% Change
GF	Real Property Tax	34,787,000	34,455,000	(332,000)	-1.0%
GF	Sanitation Charges	5,120,000	5,300,000	180,000	3.5%
GF	Insurance Premium Tax	5,250,000	5,630,000	380,000	7.2%
GF	Franchise Tax	4,160,000	4,400,000	240,000	5.8%
GF	Intergov't HB489	1,998,530	2,100,000	101,470	5.1%
GF	TFR from W/S Fund	2,144,100	2,196,400	52,300	2.4%
GF	General Business License	1,750,000	1,750,000	-	0.0%
GF	Municipal Court Fines	1,200,000	1,200,000	-	0.0%
GF	Title Ad Valorem Tax	2,460,000	2,460,000	-	0.0%

Fund	Account	FY 2025	FY 2026	Difference	% Change
W/S	Water Charge	7,873,000	8,019,000	146,000	1.9%
W/S	Sewer Charge	10,704,000	10,943,000	239,000	2.2%
W/S	Base Rate	3,450,000	3,468,000	18,000	0.5%

Fund	Account	FY 2025	FY 2026	Difference	% Change
SW	Storm Water Fee	1,598,000	1,615,000	17,000	1.1%

Fund	Account	FY 2025	FY 2026	Difference	% Change
E-911	E-911 Fees	1,450,000	1,450,000	-	0.0%
E-911	TFR from General Fund	796,890	755,770	(41,120)	-5.2%

Fund	Account	FY 2025	FY 2026	Difference	% Change
H/M	Hotel/Motel Tax	1,711,000	1,762,000	51,000	3.0%
H/M	Auto Rental Tax	205,000	250,000	45,000	22.0%

Proposed Fee Changes

Departments proposing fee changes:

- Community Development
- Fire
- Parks & Recreation
- Water/Sewer Utility
- Storm Water Utility
- Water Distribution

Noteworthy

- 824K General Fund contingency
- \$6M for health insurance (\$5.4M from GF)
- \$3.78M for retirement (\$3.4M from GF)
- \$200K for comprehensive plan update
- \$200K for stormwater master plan
- Birthday celebration budgeting

Debt Obligations

- \$79,636,889 total outstanding bond debt

- \$9,487,853 scheduled for FY26
- 322,468 from TAD Fund
- 6,490,970 from the General Fund
- 300,000 from previously committed funds
- 2,374,417 from SPLOST

Capital Projects Schedule

	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030
General Fund	2,046,000	8,298,000	4,056,000	3,362,000	2,182,000
E-911	-	-	-	-	-
Water Sewer	4,017,000	3,987,000	4,252,000	4,337,000	4,629,000
Storm Water	1,539,000	1,570,000	1,600,000	1,632,000	1,650,000

General Fund CIP Projects Parks & Recreation

- Kitchen Renovations: Brawner \$80,000
- Playgrounds: R&M \$200,000
- Sports Field Improvements \$30,000
- Parks Maintenance Equipment \$26,000

Fire

- Fire Training Ground Improvements \$30,000
- Functional Fitness Equipment \$30,000

Police

- Property and Evidence Remodel \$55,000

Public Works

- Traffic Sign & Striping Improvements \$50,000
- Traffic Signal Improvements \$70,000
- Backflow Testing & Replacement \$25,000
- PW Restroom Addition \$25,000

•Green Energy Projects	\$1,000,000
•Water Heater Replacement	\$75,000
•Leak Detection	\$75,000
•Bridge Repairs & Maintenance	\$175,000
•Sanitation Carts	\$100,000
•Replace Underground Sanitation Carts	\$25,000

Vehicle Replacement Fund

	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030
Scheduled Replacements	3,552,000	1,038,000	2,429,000	2,100,000	1,607,000
New Req. and Early Repl.	26,000	470,000	-	-	-
Emergency Funds	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Total	3,678,000	1,608,000	2,529,000	2,200,000	1,707,000

New Personnel Requests Recommended

Department	Title	Number	Requested Impact
Human Resources	HR & Risk Management Specialist	1	86,588
Parks Facilities	Parks Maintenance Tech I	1	59,169
Total		2	145,757

Reclassification Requests Recommended

Dept	Old Title	Old Grade	New Title	New Grade	Budget Impact
Comm Dev	Planner I	GOVT-10	Land Development Svcs Coordinator	GOVT-11	-
Engineering	Traffic Signal Tech	GOVT-6	Traffic Signal Tech III	GOVT-7	3,735
Engineering	Traffic Signal Tech	GOVT-6	Traffic Signal Tech II	GOVT-6	-
Engineering	Traffic Signal Trainee	GOVT-4	Traffic Signal Tech I	GOVT-4	-
Fire Admin	Admin Coordinator	GOVT-6	Certification Manager	GOVT-11	3,744
Fire Prev	Admin Assistant	GOVT-4	Admin Coordinator	GOVT-6	2,954
Hwys & Streets	Warehouse Supervisor	GOVT-9	Streets Maintenance Worker	GOVT-1	(20,502)
IT	Web Administrator	GOVT-10	Information Systems Specialist	GOVT-9	-
Sanitation	Sanitation Worker	GOVT-1	Sanitation Worker II	GOVT-2	9,896
Water Dist	Water & Sewer Supervisor	GOVT-10	Administrative Assistant	GOVT-4	-
Total					(172)

- Budget impact at full fiscal year.

Schedule

- May 1 First presentation at COW Meeting
- May 15 Discuss any changes at COW
- May 19 Formal budget presentation and public hearing at Council meeting

- June 2 Formal budget adoption at Council meeting

4. Review of Current M&C Agenda

A. COW2025-053 Review of the May 5, 2025 Mayor and Council Meeting Notice and Agenda

ATH2025-075: Kristin Robinson, Deputy City Administrator/CFO, provided the following information:

HB 581, also known as the "Save Our Homes Act" in Georgia, was approved and signed into law during the 2024 Regular Session and is a bill that aimed to provide property tax relief to homeowners by implementing a statewide homestead exemption. The City opted out of new homestead because the City's current floating homestead exemption was more advantageous to the taxpayer. All required hearings were held and the opt out was filed by the deadline. A provision of this bill was that the local governments had to provide an estimated rollback rate to the County Tax Commissioner by March 31 to be placed on tax assessment notices. Finance and Administration, in consultation with legal, provided the anticipated millage rate of 8.99 mills to the County to be included on assessment notices. During the 2025 Regular Session, HB 92 made several modifications to the previously HB 581 to clarify several key areas. One of those was to require a formal vote by the governing authority to certify the Estimated Rollback Rate for the tax assessment notices. This item will provide the formal certification as required.

ATH2025-077: Paul Osburn, Deputy Public Works Director, provided the following background:

This request is based off an already approved stormwater project by mayor and council that was approved on 8.26.24. In an amount not to exceed \$384,840.00. However, due to unforeseen utility issues with Atlanta Gas Light we were required to meet certain depth / coverage requirements by them which required the city to expand our scope slightly to achieve those requirements. In return caused need for a change order in an amount not to exceed \$111,730.00 to be funded from 2025 stormwater.

ATH2025-079: Richard Garland, Community Services Administrator, provided the following background:

The department has a need for dedicated staff to provide promotions and social media. We have used this receptionist position for this need previously and as it is currently open, we would like to reclassify. Discussion took place regarding Community Relations and other departments' social media/public relations communications.

Mayor Norton announced that he will not be present at the Mayor and Council meeting on Monday, May 5, 2025 due to travel; Councilmember Welch will also be traveling and not be present at the meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Tim Gould will run the meeting.

Paul Osburn spoke about StillFire Brewery and their need to shutdown Powder Springs at Atlanta Road. between May 19 through May 23 in order to install the new sanitary sewer service. Signage will go up next week as well as communications from the City to the public. Mayor and Council asked that the detours be as easy as possible to navigate and understand so as not to inconvenience residents.

5. Other Business / Staff Comment

A. COW2025-055 Discussion regarding Windy Hill Paving request from Baldwin – Eric Randall

Eric Randall, Public Works Director, explained that Baldwin Paving has asked permission to pave overnight. They sent a letter with a description of their plan, and it is as follows:

Baldwin Paving would like to explain the sequencing of the paving operation when we place topping on the mainline as well as both the WB and EB local access lanes. See below.

- Paving the mainline and local access roads and side streets will all take place a night until finished.
- Baldwin will have traffic cops blocking the sections of road as we are paving on the local access roads.
- Baldwin plans to pave the mainline lanes starting the night of May 8th, 2025. We will start with EB side starting just past Old Concord Rd toward South Cobb Drive intersection, skip the intersection and continue moving toward to Atlanta Road and flip and go WB from Atlanta Road back toward South Cobb Drive to Old Concord Rd. We will pave throughout the week until finished. We expect 4-5 nights to pave this portion.
- Local Access - Will start on WB from Atlanta Rd moving toward South Cobb Drive then loop around and pave EB from South Cobb Drive toward Atlanta Rd
- The first section will be WB from Atlanta Rd to Bridge #2; we will pave 15'ft wide pulls from the barrier wall
- The second section will be WB from Bridge #2 to Bridge #1; we will pave 15'ft wide pulls from the barrier wall
- The third section will be WB from Bridge #1 to South Cobb Drive; we will pave 15'ft wide pulls from the barrier wall
- We will come back and start WB from Atlanta Rd to Bridge #2 and pave the remaining 4'ft and any side streets and continue the section sequence from Bridge #2 to Bridge #1 and then from Bridge #1 to South Cobb Drive.
- We estimate that each local access road will take 3 nights to pave.
- When we start on the EB side, we will pave 15'ft wide pulls like the WB side from South Cobb Drive to Bridge #1, then from Bridge #1 to Bridge #2, and last Bridge #2 to Atlanta Road.
- Once the 15'ft pulls are complete, we will pave the remaining 4'ft pulls with the same sequence starting back from South Cobb Dr. to Bridge #1 and so forth.
- Baldwin will have our striping sub onsite to stripe temp on final as the pave operation goes along

Discussion took place regarding the timing of these road closures because it is graduation season and Mother's Day weekend. This item will be added to the Consent Agenda.

Mayor Norton discussed issues with Cobb County and the City of Mableton. Discussion took place about the street closures for the Market Village area. A reasonable compromise came forward that allowed for exit and entrance at the major openings and only closing the middle portions. This would only be during the times King Street is closed for safe access to the greenspace. The road closure item will be added to the Consent Agenda until an alternative comes forward so they are prepared for the Sundays to come. Mayor Norton also mentioned that the American Idol / Hometown Hero group contact the city to celebrate a local contestant. More information will come later.

Richard Garland, Community Services Administrator, updated the Mayor and Council on the following projects:

- Creatwood Park – Nest Steps: Stone stack columns, deco fencing, archway, landscaping, mulch
- River Line Park Splash Pad – Next Steps: Storm water, foundations
- Village Green Bathroom & Playground – Next Steps: Retaining wall, plumbing, building pad. Anticipated complete date is July 2025
- Tolleson Park Aquatics – Next Steps: Complete demo, grade out to pad ready site, design work ongoing
- Sports Lighting Conversion – Next Steps: Complete River Line (currently underway), complete Jonquil, complete Cobb
- Library Restroom Renovations – Next Steps: First Floor Men’s Bathroom plus ADA bathroom
- Other Projects – Tolleson Park Bridge Replacement: Construction documents have been approved; bid documents are being assembled to open project for bids in May 2025. Rose Garden Park Pavilion and Playground (CDBG): Currently in design with staff on the schedule for this week; anticipated date to open project for bids is Fall of 2025.

Councilmember Lindley asked that the project updates presentation be placed on the city website in a prominent, easy-to-find place, possibly with a “Coming Soon” button. He also stated that the open house this past Monday was a huge success. There were many volunteers and city staff that did an awesome job. He also mentioned downtown signage for road closures. First Methodist Church has some good examples. He thanked all for the Jonquil Festival. It was very well-attended. Before the Fall Jonquil Festival, he would like the entrance across from City Hall near the library to remain open for local residents. The Pop up Legal clinic is Saturday.

Mayor Pro Tem Gould had a great meeting with the Smyrna Business Association with the three principals from Campbell High School, Osborne High School, and Whitefield Academy.

Councilmember Hines mentioned the busy weekend coming up with the Jonquil Jog, the Garden Tour, the Pop-up Legal Clinic. She attended the Council for Quality Growth in place of Councilmember Lindley. She brought Andrea Worthy, Economic Development Director.

Councilmember Pickens had a meeting with Kevin Moore this week. The remaining Campbell land will be sold off – around 2- acres. All of that land is in the city. They talked about developing some of it and preserving some of it.

Councilmember Oglesby said the Smyrna Elite Track team represented the city well at the state championships. He attended the Jonquil Festival with his son, and he really enjoyed it. Juneteenth Festival is coming, and he has fielded calls, texts, and emails every day. He will have a meeting with the community volunteers. The Smyrna Public Art Committee will have a meeting tomorrow at 11:30 AM. Mayor Norton mentioned that in front of Zucca they want to place a Jonquil there, so Robert Harrison may be presenting some ideas tomorrow. Mother’s Day weekend is when the fire hydrant art work will begin.

Kristin Robinson, Deputy City Administrator, stated that Richard Garland will be filling in for her at the council meeting so she can attend a recognition for her daughter’s soccer team. She asked that if council has been sending emails to Joe Bennett to please begin sending those items to her.

6. Executive Session (As Needed)

Councilmember Latonia P. Hines made a motion Enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel; seconded by Councilmember Rickey N. Oglesby Jr.

The motion to Enter into Executive Session at 7:04 PM carried with the following vote:

Aye: 7 – Councilmember Pickens, Councilmember Hines, Councilmember Lindley (virtual), Councilmember Welch, Councilmember Wilkinson, Mayor Pro Tem / Councilmember Gould, Councilmember Oglesby
Nay: 0 – None
Recuse: 0 – None

Councilmember Glenn Pickens made a motion Return to Regular Session; seconded by Councilmember Rickey N. Oglesby Jr.

The motion to Return to Regular Session at 7:22 PM carried with the following vote:

Aye: 7 – Councilmember Pickens, Councilmember Hines, Councilmember Lindley (virtual), Councilmember Welch, Councilmember Wilkinson, Mayor Pro Tem / Councilmember Gould, Councilmember Oglesby
Nay: 0 – None
Recuse: 0 – None

7. Adjournment

Mayor Derek Norton adjourned the May 1, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting at 8:08 PM.

Facilities are provided throughout City Hall for the convenience of persons with disabilities.

**THIS MEETING WAS PROPERLY NOTICED AND POSTED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NOTICING STANDARDS AS OUTLINED IN O.C.G.A. 50-14-3:
The City of Smyrna website – www.smyrnaga.gov
City Hall, 2800 King Street SE, Notice Boards**