



CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

City Council Chambers

Monday, February 10, 2025 at 7:00 PM

MINUTES

Members Present

Mayor, Becky S. Smith, Council Members: Brenda Boyd, Brent Guffey, Nellie Floyd, Michael Brooks, Donnie Griffin and Allen Hook were all present. City Manager, Josh Ross and City Attorney David Smith were present. A quorum was present.

Call to Order, Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order. First Baptist Church, Senior Pastor Olin Byrum led the audience in prayer. Mayor Smith led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adjustment and Approval of the Agenda

By motion of Brent Guffey and unanimous vote, the February agenda was approved with no revisions.

Special Presentation

Student Appreciation- Students from Bessemer City High School, Bessemer City Middle School, Bessemer City Central Elementary School, Bessemer City Primary School, and Tryon Elementary were recognized by their principals and City Council as part of the Student Appreciation Program:

Dr. Rebecca Wilson, Principal of Bessemer City Middle School, and Mayor Smith, recognized the following students of the month: Raven Whittington and Carlos Fuentes, 6th grade representatives; Ky'Lahsia Alston, 7th grade representative; Liliana Johnson and Kamarie Smith 8th grade representatives; and Liliana Hernandez and Bailee Skidmore, Encore representatives.

Ms. Johana Perez, Guidance Counselor of Bessemer City Central School, and Mayor Smith, recognized the following students of the month: Princeton Summers and Zayden Wyatt, 3rd grade representatives; Sophia Rodrigues Duran and Maddilynn Cape, 4th grade representatives; and Naomi Riggs and Rhiley Hamrick, 5th grade representatives.

Mrs. Erin Morehead, Guidance Counselor of Bessemer City Primary and Mayor Smith, recognized the following students of the month: Stephanie Dorvil and Raylee Christopher, Kindergarten representatives; Madison Lobos and Wyatt Bailey, 1st grade representatives; and Layla Aguilar Campuzano and Abby Stafford, 2nd grade representatives.

Mrs. Kelsey Nixon, Kindergarten Administrator of Tryon Elementary and Mayor Smith, recognized the following students of the month: Kyendi Esiet, Kindergarten representative; Alyxa Esparaguera, 1st grade representative, Charlotte Aurora Falls, 2nd grade representative, Adelynn Bailey, 3rd grade representative; Brinly Oldham, 4th grade representative; and Mason Daniels, 5th grade representative.

Request to Speak/Opportunity for Public Comment

Mayor Smith opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

Consent Agenda

The following items on the Consent Agenda were unanimously approved by motion of Brenda Boyd:

- 1. Approval of Minutes:** City Council will consider adopting the Regular Meeting minutes of the January 13, 2025 meeting.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:** City Council will consider adopting Work Session Meeting minutes of the January 28, 2025 meeting.

Proclamation: City With A Heart Day

Mayor, Becky S. Smith read the City With a Heart Day Proclamation aloud and declared Friday, February 14th, 2025 as City with a Heart Day.

By motion of Allen Hook and unanimous vote, the Proclamation was adopted.

Proclamation: African American History Month

Mayor, Becky S. Smith read the African American History month Proclamation aloud and declared February 2025 as African American month.

By motion of Nellie Floyd and unanimous vote, the Proclamation was adopted.

Adoption of FY 2025-2026 Budget Calendar

City Manager, Josh Ross addressed Council regarding the adoption of a formal budget calendar. This calendar list budget session #1 on March 25, 2025 budget session #2 on April 29, 2025 and budget session #3 on May 27, 2025.

By motion of Michael Brooks and unanimous vote, the fiscal year 2025-2026 budget calendar was adopted.

Public Hearing –Economic Development Grant (Project Program):

City Manager, Josh Ross addressed Council regarding an Economic Development Incentive Level 1 for Project Garland. Gaston County Commissioners have adopted a similar resolution to provide an incentive for a private entity. The proposed Economic Development Agreement grant is very similar to other projects in the City like Dhollandia, Tosaf, and Trinity Capital.

Alisha Summey, Assistant Director at Gaston County Economic Development Commission, addressed the Board with some general information about the project, as it is a confidential matter. This economic development incentive program grant request is for property located in Bessemer City. The investment is a total of \$13,000,000.00 and set to establish a facility that will bring over 30 jobs. The property would receive a portion of their tax payment back over a 5-year period of paid taxes. The private entity must pay their taxes in order to receive the monies back. The first year they would receive 90% back, the second year they would receive 80% back, and so forth.

By motion of Donnie Griffin and unanimous vote, the public hearing regarding the economic development incentive was opened at 7:37 PM.

Mayor Smith asked if there was anyone present to speak in favor of the economic development incentive. There was none.

Mayor Smith asked if there was anyone present to speak in opposition of the economic development incentive. There was none.

By motion of Michael Brooks and unanimous vote, the public hearing regarding the economic development incentive was closed at 7:37 PM.

Resolution Approving Incentives Pursuant to NCGS §158-7.1 And To Authorize Bessemer City To Enter Into An Economic Development Agreement (EDA) With Project Garland (Level I Investment):

By motion of Michael Brooks and unanimous vote, the resolution for the level 1 investment grant was approved for Project Garland.

Establish Public Hearing- Rezoning Request CD 05-2024 (N. 12th Street/Parkview Commons)

By motion of Michael Brooks and unanimous vote, a public hearing will be held at the March 2025 Regular Meeting on Monday, March 10th, 2025 at 7:00 PM to hear public comment regarding a rezoning request for property located at tax parcels #120283 and #120286 from Neighborhood Residential (NR) to Urban Residential- Conditional District (UR-CD) to accommodate the development of a multi-family residential community that will consist of 41 townhomes.

Resolution - Natural Gas Fee Schedule

City Staff addressed Council regarding the approval of a fee schedule for natural gas additions. For the sustainability of the Natural Gas fund, City staff is requesting the approval of some additional fees for connection services. This fee would only be applied to new lines of service and customers.

By motion of Michael Brooks and a 4 to 3 vote, with Donnie Griffin, Allen Hook, and Brent Guffey in opposition, the resolution regarding the natural gas fee schedule was adopted.

February 2025 Work Session Cancellation

By general consensus, City Council has canceled the regularly scheduled Work Session for Tuesday, February 25th as the Board will meet in special session on Thursday, February 27th and Friday, February 28th, 2025 for the planning retreat.

City Manager's Report

City Manager, Josh Ross, addressed the Board regarding the following:

- Central Drug Store Bid: The city is still conducting the upset bid process for city property located at 112 West Virginia Avenue. In January staff received the initial bid for \$260,000. However, the bid is up to \$309,905 this week.
- New Restaurants: TexMex Backwood Grill which is located next door to City Hall at 128 West Virginia Avenue is open for business. The business owners are happy with the amount of business the community is generating.
- Osage Mill: Osage Mill will have a ribbon cutting on April 9, 2025 at 3 PM. Mayor and Council have been invited to attend.
- Economic Development: The city is seeing growth and movement in development projects. Creekside will begin phase II. The Townes at Bessemer City along Virginia Avenue are starting. Meritage Homes is grading the site.

- Staff Appreciation: City Manager, Ross commended the public safety and public works department for their work and commitment to the city's operations.

Council General Discussion

Mayor Smith opened the floor for Council general discussion. Council Member, Donnie Griffin expressed is sentiments to the Kelly family, who recently lost a beloved City employee. Council Member, Brenda Boyd commended Jamie Ramsey and the Public Works staff for attending to issues in her ward. Mrs. Boyd also inquired about a code enforcement issue along 12th Street. City Clerk, Hydeia Hayes reminded City Council of the upcoming training opportunities.

Adjournment

Being no further business to come before the board, by motion of Brent Guffey and unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 PM.

Becky S. Smith, Mayor

Hydeia Y. Hayes, City Clerk