

**MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
Council Chambers
(2529 J.O. Stephenson Avenue, Kennesaw, GA 30144)**

**Livestream: www.kennesaw-ga.gov/publicmeetings/
August 4, 2025
6:30 PM**

Present	Mayor Derek Easterling Mayor Pro Tem Pat Ferris Councilmember Madelyn Orochena Councilmember Tracey Viars Councilmember Antonio Jones Councilmember Anthony Gutierrez City Clerk Lea Alvarez City Manager Jeff Drobney City Attorney Sam Hensley, Jr.
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1. Invocation

Mayor Easterling led the Invocation.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Kennesaw Police Captain Ricky Shumpert led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Call to Order

Mayor Easterling called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

4. Announcements

5. Presentations

6. Public Comment

This section is for comment on any item on the agenda.

6:30 p.m. Floor Open for Public Comments

No comments.

6:31 p.m. Floor Closed for Public Comments

7. Old Business

8. New Business

9. Committee and Board Reports

10. Public Hearing(s)

A. Third and Final Public Hearing: Maintenance and Operation (M&O) Millage Rate

Consideration for approval of a Resolution to adopt the proposed Maintenance and Operation (M&O) Millage Rate.

Property Tax Administrator Tom Jankowski presented a resolution adopting the proposed Maintenance and Operation (M&O) millage rate. Mr. Jankowski stated that the City of Kennesaw is proposing an M&O millage rate of 7.75 mills, which remains unchanged from the previous year. The public hearing dates, along with the Current 2025 Tax Digest and 5-Year History of Levy, were properly advertised in the Marietta Daily Journal on July 19, 2025. Additional required advertisements were published on both July 19 and July 26, 2025, in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 48-5-32. The first and second public hearings were held on July 28, 2025, at 6:00 pm and August 4, 2025, at 10:30 am, respectively.

Motion by Councilmember Viars to approve [Resolution No. 2025-45](#) adopting the Maintenance and Operation (M&O) millage rate of 7.75 mills as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Jones.

6:32 p.m. Floor Open for Public Comments

No comments.

6:33 p.m. Floor Closed for Public Comments

Vote taken: motion unanimously approved 5-0. Motion passed.

B. Third and Final Public Hearing: Bond Millage Rate

Consideration for approval of a Resolution to adopt the proposed Bond Millage Rate.

Mr. Jankowski presented a resolution adopting the proposed Bond millage rate. He stated that the City of Kennesaw is proposing a millage rate of 1.5 for the Bond, which is the same as last year. The Bond millage rate is levied to fund the debt service on the \$15 million Recreation and Traffic Safety Bonds that were approved by the voters on September 21, 2004. The dates of the public hearings were properly advertised in the Marietta Daily Journal on July 19 and 26, 2025, whereas the Current 2025 Tax Digest and 5-Year History of Levy was published once, on July 19, 2025, in accordance with O.C.G.A. Section 48-5-32. The first and second public hearings were held on July 28, 2025, at 6:00 pm and August 4, 2025, at 10:30 am, respectively.

Councilmember Ferris noted that during the second millage rate hearing held this morning, staff reported an excess in the fund balance and confirmed that rolling back the millage rate to 1.4 would not negatively impact paying off the debt early.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Ferris to approve [Resolution No. 2025-46](#) adopting the Bond millage rate of 1.4 mills. Seconded by Councilmember Jones.

6:35 p.m. Floor Open for Public Comments

No comments.

6:36 p.m. Floor Closed for Public Comments

Vote taken: motion unanimously approved 5-0. Motion passed.

11. Consent Agenda

A. Minutes: July 14, 2025 Work Session

Approval of the July 14, 2025, City Council Work Session minutes.

B. Minutes: July 21, 2025 Regular Meeting

Approval of the July 21, 2025, City Council Regular Meeting minutes.

C. Cemetery Deed: Section III-41-H

Authorization for the Mayor to sign a Deed for a Cemetery Lot purchased by Victoria Ramsey.

D. Resolution: Update to Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual

Consideration for approval of a Resolution revising the Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual section 15.5 Training, Conference, and Meeting Attendance Travel Policy.

Resolution No. 2025-47

Motion by Councilmember Gutierrez to approve the Consent Agenda engross.
Seconded by Councilmember Viars.

Vote taken: motion unanimously approved 5-0. Motion passed.

12. General and Administrative

A. Alcohol License: Legacy Liquors LLC

Consideration for approval of an Alcohol Retail Package License for Beer, Wine, Liquor and Sunday Sales for Legacy Liquors LLC d/b/a Bottle Shop located at 2774 Cobb Pkwy NW Ste. 111 Kennesaw, Ga 30152. Applicant: Kantilal Dadhaniya

Business License Manager Mariyah Nall presented an Alcohol Retail Package license for Beer, Wine, Liquor, and Sunday Sales for Legacy Liquors LLC d/b/a Bottle Shop located at 2774 Cobb Parkway NW, Suite 111. The applicants have completed the required alcohol workshop in accordance with Sec. 6-69. Proper signage has been posted, and the application has been advertised in compliance with Sec. 6-36. The current application and background check results are on file. A distance survey conducted by a certified surveyor confirmed that the business is not within the prohibited distance of any property line or structure identified in Ordinance Sec. 6-42 and Sec. 6-43. This application is the result of a transfer of ownership.

Motion by Councilmember Jones to approve an Alcohol Retail Package license for Beer, Wine, Liquor and Sunday Sales for Legacy Liquors LLC d/b/a Bottle Shop located at 2774 Cobb Parkway NW, Suite 111 as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Orochena.

Vote taken: motion unanimously approved 5-0. Motion passed.

13. Public Safety

14. Information Technology

15. Public Works and Building Maintenance

A. Resolution: Contract with C.W. Matthews Contracting Co., Inc., for Street Resurfacing

Consideration for approval of a Resolution awarding a contract to C.W. Matthews Contracting Co., Inc., for the resurfacing of various streets.

Public Works Director Ricky Stewart presented a resolution to award a bid and contract to C.W. Matthews Contracting Co., Inc. for the resurfacing of various streets. Staff solicited bids from qualified contractors for the resurfacing of twenty-eight (28) streets of varying lengths. Seven companies submitted bids, with C.W. Matthews Contracting Co., Inc. submitting the lowest responsive bid in the amount of \$1,679,358.61. Funding for this project will be provided through the State's LRA grant, Capital Outlay Reserve Funds, the 2016 SPLOST, and the 2022 SPLOST.

Mayor Easterling reiterated that both Councilmember Jones and Mayor Pro Tem Ferris reside on or near streets scheduled for resurfacing. He noted that, as stated by the City Attorney during last week's work session, neither official is required to recuse themselves from the vote; however, they should publicly disclose this information.

Motion by Councilmember Viars to approve [Resolution No. 2025-48](#) awarding the bid and contract to C.W. Matthews Contracting Co., Inc. for the resurfacing of various streets as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Orochena.

Vote taken: Motion unanimously approved 5-0. Motion passed.

16. Recreation and Culture

17. Community Development

A. Central Business District Project Application: 2785 Watts Dr

Consideration to review a Central Business District project application request to construct a residential development consisting of eight (8) detached dwelling units on 0.363 +/- acres located at 2785 Watts Drive (Parcel #20013900580). Case #CBD2025-03

Zoning Administrator Darryl Simmons presented an application for a Central Business

District (CBD) project located at 2785 Watts Drive, proposing the construction of a residential development consisting of eight detached dwelling units on approximately 0.363 acres.

Mr. Simmons explained that this property is part of a larger mixed-use development originally approved in 2014, which included two primary components: multifamily apartments and approximately 10,000 square feet of commercial space. Two development agreements were executed in 2014 and 2021, both of which clearly outline the City's expectations for the site as a mixed-use development, combining residential and commercial uses.

He emphasized that it has been the position of the Mayor and Council to hold developers accountable to those expectations. The City has consistently communicated that when a development is approved as mixed-use, the commercial component is a required element.

The current application was reviewed by the Kennesaw Downtown Development Authority (KDDA) on July 11, 2025, which recommended approval based on the revised business plan for eight detached units, projected to be priced around \$800,000. Additionally, the project was reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission on July 18, 2025, which focused on ensuring compliance with historic design standards.

Staff strongly recommended denial of the application, not based on the quality or type of residential construction, but to preserve the integrity of the City's long-standing policy on mixed-use developments. Approval of this request would remove the commercial element entirely, contradicting the approved master plan and effectively nullifying the two binding development agreements. Mr. Simmons warned that granting this request could set a concerning precedent.

Applicant Eric McConaghy addressed the history of the property. He shared that the homes would be priced around \$550,000 each and argued that the CBD zoning allows for both residential and commercial use. He acknowledged the original intent for commercial development but noted that despite 10 years of effort, no commercial developers have been willing to invest. He believes the proposed residential use will enhance the area and bring more residents downtown, adding that the units will be owner-occupied.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Ferris to deny the Central Business District project application request to construct a residential development consisting of eight detached dwelling units on 0.363 +/- acres located at 2785 Watts Drive as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Jones.

Vote taken: motion approved 4-1 (Councilmember Viars opposed). Motion passed.

18. Public Comment

This section is for general comment.

6:53 p.m. Floor Open for Public Comments

ANDREW BRAMLETT [City Resident]: Mr. Bramlett shared some local history on the Roberts Cemetery [See **Exhibit A**].

6:54 p.m. Floor Closed for Public Comments

19. City Manager's Report

A. Reports, Discussions, and Updates

Dr. Drobney announced that National Night Out, originally scheduled for tomorrow, has been canceled due to anticipated inclement weather. However, the Kennesaw Police Department will still host the Main Street Cruise-In from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Kennesaw First Baptist Church this Saturday, August 9.

20. Mayor's Report

- A. Mayor and Council (re)appointments to Boards and Commissions. This item is for (re)appointments made by the Mayor to any Board, Committee, Authority, or Commission requiring an appointment to fill any vacancies, resignations, and to create or dissolve boards and commissions, as deemed necessary.

Motion by Councilmember Viars to accept the resignation of Lacey Ragus from the Planning Commission. Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferris.

Vote taken: motion unanimously approved 5-0. Motion passed.

21. Council Reports & Discussions

Councilmember Jones shared that it felt good to be home after spending two weeks in Ghana.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferris expressed disappointment that National Night Out had been canceled and inquired whether it would be rescheduled. Captain Shumpert clarified that because it is a national event, it will not be rescheduled.

Councilmember Gutierrez noted there were no new updates but mentioned that he is looking forward to Pigs & Peaches.

Councilmember Orochena extended a welcome back to school to all students and staff who returned today.

Councilmember Viars announced that the City is seeking Hispanic artists for a special exhibition at the Ben Robertson Community Center in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month. The exhibit will run from September 1 through November 1.

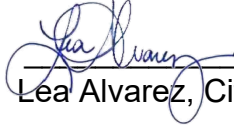
22. Executive Session

Pursuant to the provisions of O.C.G.A 50-14-3, the City Council could, at any time during the meeting, vote to close the public meeting and move to executive session

to discuss matters relating to litigation, legal actions and/or communications from the City Attorney; and/or personnel matters; and/or real estate matters.

23. Adjourn

Mayor Easterling adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m. The next work session will be held on Monday, August 11, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The public is encouraged to attend.



Lea Alvarez, City Clerk

KENNESAW HISTORY

Roberts Cemetery

On Old 41, between McCollum Parkway and Cobb Parkway, is a small family cemetery. The cemetery is home to the Roberts, who were some of the first settlers of Cobb County. We know that they owned a large amount of land between modern Kennesaw and Kennesaw Mountain as early as the 1840s.

The cemetery is home to the descendants of John Stanley Roberts, whose father Wiley was the first in his family to settle in this area. The oldest burial in the Roberts Cemetery is Lucy Roberts, the infant daughter of John who died in 1849. The newest burial is John Wiley Roberts, a grandson of John who died in 1889.

Being large landowners in antebellum Georgia, we know that the Roberts owned slaves and supported secession. In fact, one of the Roberts daughters (buried elsewhere) was named Georgia Secession. The

graves of the enslaved laborers were down the hill from the modern cemetery. In 1949, when Cobb Parkway was under construction, these burials were moved to Sardis Cemetery in downtown.



The Roberts Family Cemetery

Presented by Andrew J. Bramlett at the August 4, 2025,
City of Kennesaw Mayor & Council Meeting

Names and Addresses will be disclosed in the Permanent Minutes of the
City of Kennesaw

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR NAME IS LEGIBLE AND CLEAR

**City Council Meeting
8/4/2025
Public Comment Sign-in**

	Name	Address	Topic
1	<i>Andrew Branlett</i>	<i>2990 Kennelwood Dr.</i>	<i>Local history</i>
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