

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

**Livestream: www.kennesaw-ga.gov/publicmeetings/
May 11, 2026
6:30 PM**

Present	Mayor Derek Easterling Mayor Pro Tem Antonio Jones Councilmember Madelyn Orochena Councilmember Tracey Viars Councilmember Jonathon Bothers Councilmember Anthony Gutierrez-Leon Deputy City Clerk Nicholas Simpson Assistant City Manager Marty Hughes City Attorney Sam Hensley, Jr.
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1. Invocation

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Call to Order

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

4. Announcements

5. Presentations

6. Old Business

7. New Business

8. Committee and Board Reports

9. Public Hearing(s)

10. Consent Agenda

11. General and Administrative

A. Temporary Use Permit: Super Show Fireworks

Consideration for approval of a Temporary Use Permit for Super Show Fireworks. Applicant: Brian Lilly

Business License Manager Kayla Willis presented a temporary use permit request for Super Show Fireworks to sell fireworks in the parking lot located at 2600 Cobb Parkway NW, Kennesaw, GA 30152. The applicant is Brian Lilly.

Property owner Monalibahan Patel of Kings Liquor, has given written permission to conduct this activity on his property from June 4, 2026 to July 4, 2026. The plat where the stand will be placed is available for review. Photos of proper signage per State regulations have been provided to the City. The Certificate of Liability insurance is on file. This approval is contingent upon successful plan review by the Cobb County Fire Marshal's Office.

The Finance Director recommends approval.

With Council consensus, Mayor Easterling recommended placing the item on the Consent Agenda for the 05-18-2026 regular City Council meeting.

B. Resolution: Hazard Mitigation Plan

Consideration for approval of a Resolution approving the 2026 Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Assistant City Manager Marty Hughes presented the City's 2026 Hazard Mitigation Plan. Cobb County and its municipal governments are required to complete a Hazard Mitigation Plan per the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. City staff has worked alongside Cobb County Emergency Management Agency to make updates to the existing plan, last updated and approved in 2021. GEMA has approved the submitted 2026 Hazard Mitigation Plan, and they will now submit it to FEMA. The County and all Cities are now in the process of formally adopting the plan, which may be done prior to FEMA's final approval.

The City Manager recommends approval.

With Council consensus, Mayor Easterling recommended placing the item on the Consent Agenda for the 05-18-2026 City Council regular meeting.

12. Public Safety

A. Surplus: Body Cameras

Approval to surplus Motorola Si500 body cameras on GovDeals.

The Kennesaw Police Department has 87 Motorola Si500 body cameras, including associated batteries, car charges, outlet charges, and mounts, that are no longer in operational use. These devices were previously utilized but have since been phased out as part of a technology upgrade to newer equipment. As a result, the cameras are no longer required to support current agency operations.

The Chief of Police recommends approval of the surplus.

With Council consensus, Mayor Easterling recommended placing the item on the Consent Agenda for the 05-18-2026 City Council regular meeting.

B. Crime Stats: April 2026

Consideration for the acceptance of the April 2026 crime statistics.

Kennesaw Police Chief Bill Westenberger presented the April 2026 city crime statistics.
[See Exhibit A]

Mayo Pro Tem Anonio Jones, noting the upward trend in drug arrests, asked Chief Westenberger if the increased incidences of drug arrests included hard drug offenses. Westenberger responded affirmatively, and explained that incidents of drug-related arrests stem from either calls for service, wherein an officer is dispatched to a location by request or something that officers encounter when they are conducting field work. Either way, the incident is reported.

13. Information Technology

A. Resolution: Network Infrastructure Equipment for the new Public Safety Building

Consideration for approval of a Resolution authorizing the purchase of network infrastructure equipment for the new Public Safety Facility.

Information Technology Director Berry Wilson presented a Resolution authorizing the purchase of network infrastructure equipment for the new public safety facility.

The proposed network infrastructure equipment will support secure connectivity, communications, and operational technology needs for public safety operations and related city services. PC Solutions & Integration pricing is based off current State of Georgia Contract pricing. The quote totals \$99,461.83 and will be paid from the 2022 S.P.L.O.S.T. Public Safety account.

The Director of IT recommends approval.

With Council consensus, Mayor Easterling recommended placing the item on the Consent Agenda for the 05-18-2026 regular City Council meeting.

14. Public Works and Building Maintenance

A. Resolution: Engineering Design Services for the Parking Project at 2250 Lewis Street

Consideration for approval of a Resolution accepting Patterson & Dewar's proposal for engineering design services for the parking project at 2250 Lewis St.

Public Works Director Ricky Stewart presented a Resolution accepting Patterson & Dewar's proposal for engineering design services for the parking project at 2250 Lewis Street.

Patterson & Dewar Engineers has submitted a proposal to provide civil engineering services, including survey, engineering, design, construction documents, and bidding assistance for the 2250 Lewis Street Parking Project. The request for approval will be a total of \$88,750.00.

The Public Works Director recommends approval of the proposal.

With Council consensus, Mayor Easterling recommended placing the item on the Consent Agenda for the 05-18-2026 regular City Council meeting.

B. Resolution: Cooperation Agreement for the Urban County CDBG Program

Consideration for approval of a Resolution authorizing the Cooperation Agreement for requalification of the Urban County CDBG Program between Cobb County and City of Kennesaw.

Public Works Director Ricky Stewart presented a Resolution authorizing the Cooperation Agreement for requalification of the Urban County CDBG Program between Cobb County and City of Kennesaw.

Cobb County is required to requalify as an Urban County every three years. The requalification allows the Cobb County CDBG Office to be the lead entity for the Cobb Urban County CDBG Program. As part of the requalification, the County requests that the municipalities within the County provide documentation that they intend to participate in the program. By participating in the program, municipalities seek funds directly through the County and avoid the need to compete for funds statewide with the Georgia State Department of Community Affairs.

The Public Works Director recommends approval and requests authorization for the Mayor to sign the agreement.

With Council consensus, Mayor Easterling recommended placing the item on the Consent Agenda for the 05-18-2026 regular City Council meeting.

15. Recreation and Culture

A. Resolution: Holly Days Drone Show

Consideration for approval of a Resolution awarding the 2026 Holly Days Drone Show to Northern Lights Drone Shows.

Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation Elizabeth Weaver presented a Resolution awarding the 2026 Holly Days Drone Show to Northern Lights Drone Shows.

A Request for Proposal was issued for the December 13, 2026, Holly Days Drone Show. Four (4) responsive proposals were received. Northern Lights Drone Shows was selected based on cost-effectiveness and positive references. The proposed cost for the drone show with a pyro upgrade is \$28,000.

The Director of Parks & Recreation recommends awarding the contract for the 2026 Holly Days Drone Show to Northern Lights Drone Shows for the amount of \$28,000.

Council member Madelyn Orochena commented that, although she thinks that the drone show was super cool and super fun, the City might be better off investing in entertainment that is more consistently enjoyed. The feedback she has received from the public is that the City does a phenomenal job putting on these amazing events, but

then they come and go, and there is this "lull, the in-between, that everybody worries about." She further commented that there may be something more worthwhile than enhancing a single event.

Council member Jonathon Bothers commented that he attended last year's Holly Days Drone show and found it to be extremely short. He praised the show, but his primary concern was the approximate \$30k cost for the five-minute show.

Council member Tracey Viars commented that she liked last year's Holly Days Drone Show, and she compared the presentation to a fireworks show in terms of price. She further commented that the drone show was part of an entire evening of entertainment that included participation from schools, kids, parents, families and community members. She believed it was unique and fun. While she did understand Council member Bothers' viewpoint, she could not identify a substitute for the drone show at a comparable cost.

Mayor Easterling commented that last year was the inaugural event for the Holly Days Drone Show, which was an opportunity to work out the kinks, and he supposes that the City will expect to see more from this year's presentation. He thinks the City should support staff efforts in organizing the drone show, and do something that sets the City of Kennesaw apart from other cities.

Mayor Pro Tem Anonio Jones commented that while he did not attend last year's drone show, he received positive feedback from event attendees; and therefore, he supports this year's drone show.

With Council consensus, Mayor Easterling recommended placing the item on the Consent Agenda for the 05-18-2026 regular City Council meeting.

B. Resolution: Purchase of Lawn Mowers for Parks and Recreation

Consideration for approval of a Resolution authorizing the purchase of two lawn mowers to be used by Parks and Recreation.

Parks and Recreation Director Bill McNair presented a Resolution authorizing the purchase of two lawn mowers to be used by Parks and Recreation.

Mayor and Council approved approximately \$1,053,000 of supplemental requests to be paid from the General Fund during the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (FY26) budget. The total cost for various FY26 supplemental purchases came in approximately \$90,000 under the estimated budget, particularly the cost of police vehicles. Staff is requesting that \$27,518 of these surplus funds be used to replace two (2) lawn mowers for Parks & Recreation. The equipment will be purchased from Towne Lake Outdoor Power Equipment LLC.

The City Manager recommends approval.

With Council consensus, Mayor Easterling recommended placing the item on the

Consent Agenda for the 05-18-2026 regular City Council meeting.

16. Community Development

A. Resolution: 2026-2027 Main Street Affiliate Memorandum of Understanding

Consideration for approval of a Resolution authorizing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Kennesaw and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for the Georgia Main Streets Program.

Downtown/Main Street Manager Miranda Jones Taylor presented a Resolution authorizing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Kennesaw and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for the Georgia Main Streets Program.

The annual MOU document outlines the responsibilities of the City of Kennesaw/KDDA, Kennesaw's Main Street Manager, and the State of Georgia Department of Community Affairs in the administration of the Main Street Program in Kennesaw. This MOU is the standard MOU used by DCA and is a requirement for participation in the program. The MOU requires signatures from the Downtown/Main Street Manager, Board Chair, and Mayor.

The Economic Development Director recommends approval.

Council member Madelyn Orochena noted that the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) recommends a public downtown visioning event or town hall meeting annually as part of the MOU. She asked Taylor if the City had already implemented visioning events and town halls or was the DCA recommendation something new.

Taylor responded that, as part of the start-up program, KDDA led a visioning session, two in-person meetings, and an online feedback survey as part of KDDA's annual visioning efforts. She will look at doing an in-person outreach session to gauge feedback, identify how KDDA is doing, highlight things that have been accomplished, and figure out what to focus on next.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones asked if there was a way to extend the MOU term or does KDDA have to come back every year for renewal. Taylor responded that KDDA is evaluated by the Main Streets Program on an annual basis, which requires an annual renewal.

Mayor Easterling commented that there are 17-18 pages of line items that the City/KDDA must verify to maintain compliance with the State.

Taylor confirmed that she has a whole checklist of requirements that must be addressed by KDDA annually. Taylor further commented that a goal for the City of Kennesaw, which is currently designated as a Classic Main Street, would be to receive the Georgia's Exceptional Main Street (GEMS) designation in the future.

With Council consensus, Mayor Easterling recommended placing the item on the Consent Agenda for the 05-18-2026 regular City Council meeting.

17. Public Comments

6:48 PM - FLOOR OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

SAM RUSCH {City Resident}: Mayor Easterling asked Mr. Rusch to direct his comments to him and to the Assistant City Manager Marty Hughes during his testimony and not to mention any individual city staff by name. He also thanked Mr. Rusch for meeting with Assistant City Manager Hughes to discuss concerns affecting his community. He stated that there were people in the Council chamber who both support and oppose his efforts to revitalize Woodland Park and Pine Mountain Park. He provided a recap of his meeting with the Assistant City Manager. Rusch stated that Hughes advised him that installing a "tobacco free/breathe easy" sign at park entrances would bankrupt the city. Rusch referenced city ordinance 66-2 which makes it unlawful for any person to smoke any substance in a city park. Rusch also stated that he begged Hughes and the Parks and Recreation director to consider installing a garbage can at Woodland Park for proper garbage disposal. According to Rusch, Hughes promised to look into why the entrance to Woodland Park remains "chained off". Rusch touted his change.org petition to improve Woodland Acres Park and Pine Mountain Park, which received 188 signatures. He asked whom he should send the petition to. He also asked why the 2026 Parks and Recreation playbook excludes Woodland Park and Pine Mountain Park.

Mayor Pro Tem Antonio Jones asked Rusch if he could send a copy of the petition to Council because he always sends it to staff. He also asked Rusch if the petition signers resided in the City of Kennesaw. He also asked if the petition represented 188 homes or 188 individuals. Rusch responded that the petition accounted for 188 adults. Jones retorted that the petition could include two people residing in the same house.

Assistant City Manager Marty Hughes stated that he had not received a copy of Rusch's change.org petition and that he would also like to receive a copy.

Rusch assured Jones and Hughes that he would send them both copies of the petition.

LAURA LYONS {City Resident}: Ms. Lyons is a lifelong resident of Woodland Acres and founder/owner of Fresh on Forest Garden on Forest Drive. Her grandfather purchased her family's Woodland Acres home in 1995, and she played in both Woodland Park and Pine Mountain Park as a child. Back then, they were not just green spaces, they were where she learned the concept of community, made friends, burned off energy, and felt safe playing outside. She inherited her family's Woodland Acres home and moved back to the community to raise her family and found the parks closed, neglected, and not available to families anymore. Her children do not get to experience the safe public spaces she once had, and Lyons believes that children lose connection, pride and opportunities to be children through the loss of safe public spaces for recreation. Through her garden on Forest Drive, Lyons has witnessed life being brought back to her community. Her neighbors mingle outside and forge friendships while children gather in her yard to play. Reopening and investing in these parks is about responsibility, equity and safety. She is asking for the return of something that

has proven its value and was closed due to what many view as false information.

6:52 PM - FLOOR CLOSED FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

18. City Manager's Report

A. Reports, Discussions, and Updates

19. Mayor's Report

20. Council Reports & Discussions

21. 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.

22. Adjourn

Mayor Easterling adjourned the meeting at 6:53 p.m. The next work session will be held on Monday, May 18, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The public is encouraged to attend.



Nicholas Simpson, Deputy City Clerk

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 Work Session
5/11/2026
Public Comment Sign-in**

	Name	Address	Topic
1	Samuel Rusch	2459 Pine Dr NW	Woodland Park + Pine Mountain Park
2	Laura Lyons	2441 Forest Drive NW	Woodland PK & Pine Mountain PK
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