

**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 3, 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 City Manager Jeff Drobney City Attorney Sam Hensley, Jr.
---------	--

1. Invocation

The Chamber observed the Invocation led by Carlene Fregeolle.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Chamber recited the Pledge of Allegiance led by Andrew Bramlett.

3. Call to Order

4. Announcements

Mayor Derek Easterling opened the First Public Hearing on the City of Kennesaw's proposed millage rate with the following remarks:

As required by Georgia law, the City of Kennesaw is holding this public hearing on the proposed millage rate. I want to take a moment to explain an important point that can often be confusing. State law requires this hearing to be advertised as a tax increase because of the way the rollback rate is calculated. However, maintaining the City's current millage rate does not automatically mean that Kennesaw homeowners will pay higher City property taxes. This is because of the City's Floating Homestead Exemption. This exemption was specifically designed to protect homeowners who live in and have homesteaded their primary residence from paying higher City property taxes simply because their property's taxable value has increased.

For homeowners who have a homestead exemption on their primary residence, the assessed value used for calculating City property taxes does not increase due to market appreciation. In other words, as property values rise, the exemption "floats" to offset those increases, helping to keep the City's assessed value for that home essentially the same from year to year, unless there are improvements made to the property or other qualifying changes. In short, maintaining the current millage rate

does not constitute a tax increase for the vast majority of Kennesaw homesteaded homeowners. The City's proposed millage rate of 7.75 mills simply maintains the current rate.

It is important to note that this protection applies to qualified homesteaded primary residences. Property owners who do not qualify for the homestead exemption — such as commercial properties, rental properties, second homes, or vacant land — may see changes in their City property taxes if their assessed values increase. The Mayor and Council remain committed to being good stewards of taxpayer dollars while maintaining the exceptional quality of services that make Kennesaw a great place to live, work, and do business.

5. Presentations

6 Public Comment

.

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

The Mayor opened and closed the floor for public comment(s).

6:04 PM FLOOR OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

NO COMMENT(S)

6:05 PM FLOOR CLOSED FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

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 Megan Turner, who delivered an overview of item 10A on the agenda: Maintenance and Operations (M &O) Millage Rate.

Per Ms. Tuner, the City of Kennesaw is proposing a millage rate of 7.75 mills for M&O which is the same as last year. The dates of the public hearings and the Current 2026 Tax Digest and 5 Year History of Levy were properly advertised in the Marietta Daily Journal on July 18, 2026, whereas the other advertisements were published on both July 18 and 25, 2026 in accordance with O.C.G.A. Section 48-5-32. The second and third public hearings will take place on August 3, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., respectively.

City Finance Director Jennifer Gordy delivered brief remarks concerning the millage rate process. As required by Georgia law, the City of Kennesaw is holding this public hearing regarding the proposed millage rate. Residents who have a Floating Homestead Exemption on their primary residence will not pay higher taxes. The exemption is designed to “float” to offset increases in property value, keeping the assessed value the same from year to year. As a result, maintaining the current millage rate does not constitute a tax increase for the vast majority of Kennesaw homeowners who have homesteaded their primary residence. (See chart below entitled "Homestead Property.")

Homestead Property				
Tax Year 2025				
Fair Market Value of Home	\$260,510			
Taxable Value	Float	Assessed Value	City of Kennesaw M&O Millage Rate	Taxes Owed
\$104,204	53,016	51,188	7.75	\$396.71
Tax Year 2024				
Fair Market Value of Home	\$255,810			
Taxable Value	Float	Assessed Value	City of Kennesaw M&O Millage Rate	Taxes Owed
\$102,324	51,136	51,188	7.75	\$396.71

The City's proposed millage rate of 7.75 mills simply maintains the current rate. It is important to note that this protection applies to qualified homesteaded primary residences. Property owners who do not qualify for the homestead exemption—such as commercial properties, rental properties, second homes, or vacant land—may see changes in their City property taxes if their assessed values increase. (See chart below entitled "Non-Homesteaded Property.")

Non Homestead Property				
Tax Year 2025				
Fair Market Value of Home	\$260,510			
Taxable Value	Float	Assessed Value	City of Kennesaw M&O Millage Rate	Taxes Owed
\$104,204	0	104,204	7.75	\$807.58
Tax Year 2024				
Fair Market Value of Home	\$255,810			
Taxable Value	Float	Assessed Value	City of Kennesaw M&O Millage Rate	Taxes Owed
\$102,324	0	102,324	7.75	\$793.01

Motion by Council member Tracey Viars to approve the Resolution to adopt the proposed 2026-2027 Maintenance & Operations (M&O) Millage Rate as presented.
Motion seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Antonio Jones.

6:40 PM FLOOR OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

NO COMMENT(S)

6:41 PM FLOOR CLOSED FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Vote taken: approved, 5-0. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

B. Third and Final Public Hearing: Bond Millage Rate

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

Property Tax Administrator Megan Turner delivered an overview of item 10B on the agenda: Bond Millage Rate.

Per Ms. Tuner, the City of Kennesaw is proposing a millage rate of 1.4 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 September 21, 2004. The dates of the public hearings and the Current 2026 Tax Digest and 5-Year History of Levy were properly advertised in the Marietta Daily Journal on July 18, 2026, whereas the other advertisements were published on both July 18 and 25, 2026 in accordance with O.C.G.A. Section 48-5-32. The second and third public hearings will take place on August 3, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., respectively.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Antonio Jones to approve the Resolution to adopt the proposed 2026-2027 Bond Millage Rate as presented. Motion seconded by Council member Madelyn Orochena.

6:42 PM FLOOR OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

NO COMMENT(S)

6:43 PM FLOOR CLOSED FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Vote taken: approved, 5-0. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

11. Consent Agenda

A. Minutes: July 13, 2026 Work Session

Approval of the July 13, 2026, City Council work session minutes.

B. Minutes: July 13, 2026 Executive Session

Approval of the July 13, 2026, City Council executive session minutes.

C. Minutes: July 20, 2026 Regular Meeting

Approval of the July 20, 2026, City Council regular meeting minutes.

D. Minutes: July 20, 2026 Executive Session

Approval of the July 20, 2026, City Council executive session minutes.

E. Cemetery Deed: Section III-36-E

Authorization for the Mayor to sign a deed for a cemetery lot purchased by Terry and Martha Key in the Kennesaw City Cemetery.

F. Cemetery Deed: Section III-58-F

Authorization for the Mayor to sign a deed for a cemetery lot purchased by Mrs. Ellen Edmondson in the Kennesaw City Cemetery.

Motion by Council member Tracey Viars to accept the Consent Agenda engross.

Motion seconded by Council member Madelyn Orochena.

Vote taken: approved, 5-0. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

12. General and Administrative

13. Public Safety

A. Resolution: 911 Console Project Cost Increase

Consideration for approval of a Resolution authorizing additional funds for the 911 Dispatch Console Replacement Project.

Staff is requesting approval to increase the previously approved console project funding from \$116,372.49 to \$131,112.82.

During the initial budget planning process, the renovation project was estimated at approximately \$125,000. A vendor quote was subsequently received in the amount of \$116,372.49, which was approved by Mayor & Council. As the project moved forward, additional coordination and internal review were completed prior to finalizing the purchase. During that timeframe, the vendor provided updated pricing, resulting in a revised project cost of \$131,112.82.

Staff have continued working to move the project forward. However, the revised vendor quote exceeds the amount previously approved by Mayor & Council. Although \$125,000 was included in the FY26 budget for this project, the revised vendor quote of \$131,112.82 exceeds the original project budget by \$6,112.82.

Approval is requested to increase the previously approved project funding from \$116,372.49 to \$131,112.82 in order to proceed with the project. The additional \$6,112.82 funding will come from the 911 reserve funds.

Motion by Council member Madelyn Orochena to accept the Resolution authorizing

additional funds for the 911 Dispatch Console Replacement Project as presented. Motion seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Antonio Jones.

Vote taken: approved, 5-0. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

14. Information Technology

15. Public Works and Building Maintenance

A. Resolution: 2026 Pipe Rehabilitation Project

Consideration for approval of a Resolution to award the Bid and Contract for the 2026 Pipe Rehabilitation Project to Video Industrial Services.

Requests for Bids were advertised to repair failing storm water pipes throughout the City. Thirteen (13) bids were received. The lowest bid was found to be an incomplete submission. Therefore, the lowest bid considered was from Video Industrial Services. Their bid is in the amount of \$319,570.00. The Public Works Director recommends approval of bids, award of the contract to Video Industrial Services for \$319,570.00 and recommends the Mayor to sign the attached Contract and Resolution.

The Public Works Director recommends approval of bids, award of the contract to Video Industrial Services for \$319,570.00 and recommends the Mayor to sign the attached Contract and Resolution.

Motion by Council member Madelyn Orochena to approve the Resolution to award the Bid and Contract for the 2026 Pipe Rehabilitation Project to Video Industrial Services as presented. Motion seconded by Council member Tracey Viars.

Vote taken: approved, 5-0. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

B. Resolution: Selling of City Property

Consideration for approval of a Resolution authorizing the selling of right-of-way property to Cobb County Department of Transportation.

The Cobb County Department of Transportation has approached the City seeking to purchase 0.327 acres of City-owned property for right-of-way purposes. The property has a non-numbered Old Hwy 41 address and parcel number 20020702180. The offer made to purchase is for the amount of \$7,200.00. The property is needed for the construction of the Noonday Creek Pedestrian Bridge project. This has been reviewed by legal. The Public Works Director recommends approving the sale of the property and requests the Mayor and Council approve the Resolution.

Motion by Council member Madelyn Orochena to approve the Resolution authorizing

the selling of right-of-way property to Cobb County Department of Transportation as presented. Motion seconded by Council member Jonathon Bothers.

Vote taken: approved, 5-0. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

16. Recreation and Culture

17. Community Development

18 Public Comment

.

This section is for general comment.

6:47 PM FLOOR OPEN TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

ANDREW BRAMLETT [City Resident]: Mr. Bramlett read his monthly missive highlighting Kennesaw history. Today's segment chronicled the City's famous connection to the Great Locomotive Chase of 1862, where nineteen of the Union soldiers who participated received the Medal of Honor. However, they are not the only individuals to receive the medal for actions in our area. Just two years after the chase, the United States Army returned to Kennesaw, this time as part of the Civil War's Atlanta Campaign.

One of the men in the Atlanta Campaign was Thomas Timothy Fallon. A native of Ireland, he served in several Union regiments during the Civil War. He was present in the first major battle of the Civil War while serving in a New York regiment and then served in an artillery unit. In 1863, his enlistment expired, so he re-enlisted in a New Jersey regiment.

In June 1864, he was at Big Shanty (now Kennesaw) when he led a charge towards the Confederate earthworks. Fallon and the men he led captured twenty-nine men, including a Confederate officer. For his action in Kennesaw, along with earlier heroism in Virginia, he was awarded the Medal of Honor in 1891. Fallon passed away in 1916 in New Jersey. [See Exhibit A.]

SAMUEL RUSCH [City Resident]: Holding up his cell phone, which displayed a timer, Mr. Rusch asked Mayor and Council the following questions to the Mayor and the City Manager:

- Why did Mr. Rusch and Mr. Lyons receive what Rusch perceived to be pushback from the Mayor for filing over ninety-two (92) seeclixfix.com requests focused on the Woodland Acres community?
- Why isn't Woodland Acres Park and Pine Mountain Park listed in the City of Kennesaw's Parks and Recreation Playbook?
- Why hasn't the City Manager shared documentation directly with him verifying infrastructure funding for the Woodland Acres community?

- When will the chain blocking the entranceway to Woodland Acres Park be replaced with a bollard?
- What are the updates for amenity improvements at Woodland Acres Park?

6:51 PM FLOOR CLOSED TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

19. City Manager's Report

Kennesaw City Manager Dr. Jeff Drobney delivered remarks on upcoming events happening around the town in the month of August. The Kennesaw Concert Series will feature a Fleetwood Mac tribute band named Rumours ATL on Saturday, August 22nd and the First Friday Concert Series will resume in downtown Kennesaw with G. Clef and the Playlist on Friday, August 7th.

A. Reports, Discussions, and Updates

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.

21. Council Reports & Discussions

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 6:53 p.m. The next work session will be held on Monday, August 10, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The public is encouraged to attend.

Respectfully submitted,

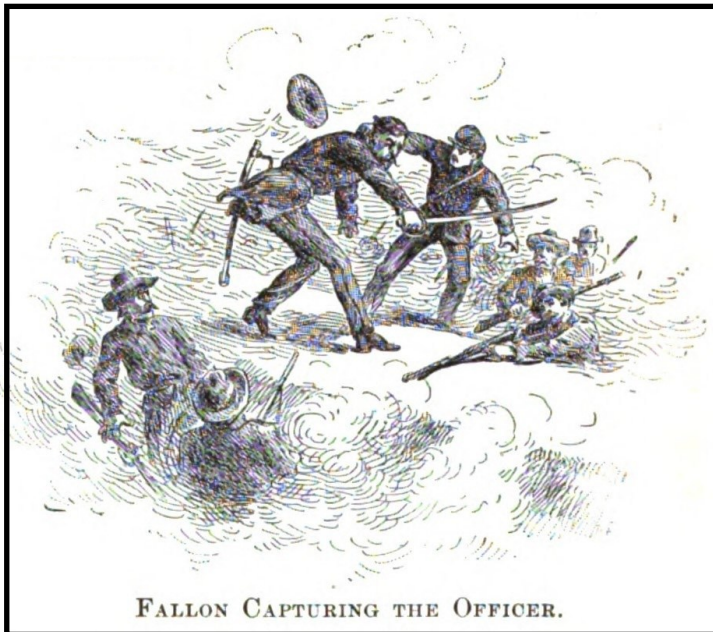
Nicholas Simpson, Deputy City Clerk

KENNESAW HISTORY

T. T. Fallon

Our town's most famous connection to the Medal of Honor is of course the Great Locomotive Chase of 1862, where nineteen of the Union soldiers who participated received the medal. However, they are not the only individuals to receive the medal for actions in our area. Just two years after the chase, the United States Army returned to Kennesaw, this time as part of the Civil War's Atlanta Campaign.

One of the men in the Atlanta Campaign was Thomas Timothy Fallon. A native of Ireland, he served in several Union regiments during the Civil War. He was present in the first major battle of the Civil War while serving in a New York regiment, and then served in an artillery unit. In 1863, his enlistment expired, so he reenlisted in a New Jersey regiment.



In June 1864, he was at Big Shanty (now Kennesaw) when he led a charge towards the Confederate earthworks. Fallon and the men he led captured twenty-nine men, including a Confederate officer. For his action in Kennesaw, along with earlier heroism in Virginia, he was awarded the Medal of Honor in 1891. Fallon passed away in 1916 in New Jersey.

Thomas T. Fallon
From *The Story of American Heroism* (1895)

Presented by Andrew J. Bramlett at the August 3, 2026,
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 Regular Meeting
8/3/2026
Public Comment Sign-in**

	Name	Address	Topic
1	Andrew J. Brantlett	2990 Somerset Ct	Local History
2	Samuel Rusch	2459 Pine Dr NW	Woodland Park and acres neighborhood
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
19			