



City of Hogansville

City Council

Called Work Session, Public Hearing, and Called Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 – 5:30 pm

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| Mayor: <i>Jake Ayers</i> | 2025 | City Manager: <i>Lisa E. Kelly</i> |
| Council Post 1: <i>Michael Taylor, Jr</i> | 2025 | Assistant City Manager: <i>Oasis Nichols</i> |
| Council Post 2: <i>Jason Baswell</i> | 2025 | City Attorney: <i>Alex Dixon</i> |
| Council Post 3: <i>Mandy Neese *</i> | 2027 | Chief of Police: <i>Jeffrey Sheppard</i> |
| Council Post 4: <i>Mark Ayers</i> | 2027 | City Clerk: <i>LeAnn Lehigh</i> |
| Council Post 5: <i>Kandis Strickland</i> | 2027 | * Mayor Pro-Tem |

CALLED WORK SESSION – 5:30 pm

BUSINESS

1. Discussion of Proposed 2025/2026 Budget

PUBLIC HEARING – 7:00 pm

1. Public Hearing to Hear Citizen Comments on the Proposed 2025/2026 Budget

CALLED MEETING – Immediately Following Public Hearing

CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Jake Ayers

BUSINESS

1. Adoption of 2025/2026 Budget

ADJOURN

Meeting held at Hogansville City Hall, 111 High Street, Hogansville GA 30230

CALLED WORK SESSION MEETING

June 25, 2025

Call to Order: Mayor Jake Ayers called the Work Session to order at 5:31pm. Present were Council Member Michael Taylor, Council Member Jason Baswell, Council Member Mandy Neese, Council Member Mark Ayers, and Council Member Kandis Strickland. Also present were City Manager Lisa Kelly, Assistant City Manager Oasis Nichols, Attorney Alex Dixon, Police Chief Jeff Sheppard, and City Clerk LeAnn Lehigh.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Discussion of Proposed 2025/2026 Budget

City Manager Lisa Kelly gave an overview of Version 3 of the proposed budget. The main reason for this revision was to adjust the starting pay for police officers, and to achieve parity with other departments and comparable cities. Final total increase after all adjustments: \$80,980 (including all benefits: retirement, long-term disability, city-provided benefits). Payroll increases and parity adjustments are citywide and include all seven proposed new positions.

The preliminary tax digest was lower than expected, requiring downward revision of revenue projections. Staff adjusted property tax revenue: \$1,075,000 (see page 4 of the budget).

AMR (ambulance) subsidy reduced to \$300,000 (down by \$125,000), but retained as a cushion for negotiations as the county plans to add paramedics to all stations within 12-18 months.

Two development projects submitted construction drawings, allowing for an increase in projected development/building permit fees (+\$150,000). After these adjustments, the budget is balanced.

Council Requests and Additions

- Early voting funding for the municipal election in Hogansville included:
 - Covers Friday, Saturday, and the last full week before the election (7 days total).
- Intergovernmental support line item increased to \$25,000 (from \$5,000):

Discussion on Funding for Nonprofits/Youth Programs

- Council expressed strong support for youth programs but emphasized:
 - The city should not be the sole or primary funder for any organization.
 - Preference for organizations to demonstrate diversified funding and provide clear financial accountability.
 - Past practice: Other funded organizations (e.g., Pioneer, Elevation) provided detailed financials, operated year-round, and city funding represented a small percentage of their budgets.
 - Georgia Youth Impact Project received \$6,000 in December as a pilot; council requests a detailed accounting of how those funds were spent before considering further funding.
 - Council is open to continued support but expects:
 1. Clear report on use of previous city funds.
 2. Evidence of other funding sources.
 3. Detailed, actionable plans for future programs.

- Funding for new or pilot programs will be allocated from the \$25,000 discretionary line item, distributed monthly, not as lump sums.
- Council intends to develop formal guidelines for nonprofit funding, including expectations for matching funds, reporting, and phased support (e.g., pilot funding, then phased reduction over years).

Budget Impact and Departmental Sacrifices

- No major departmental sacrifices required; department heads were prepared to make cuts if necessary, but revenue adjustments and payroll parity allowed all priorities to be maintained.
- Property tax revenue shortfall explained: Tax assessments are based on property status as of January 1; new construction will impact future years' revenue, not the current year.

Police Pay and Retention Incentives

- New starting pay for officers: \$27.51/hour, matching nearby cities.
- Retention incentives:
 - \$1,000 after three years of service.
 - \$2,000 after ten years.
 - \$1,000 for living within city limits (after one year residency).
 - Estimated cost for incentives this year: \$13,000.
- Nine officers will reach the three-year mark this year.
- High turnover historically: 60 officers left since 2012; 52% left within 1-4 years.
- Goal: Create a culture and incentive structure to retain officers, rather than serve as a "springboard" to larger agencies.

Future Planning and Guidelines

- Council recognizes the need for clear, written guidelines for nonprofit funding to ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability.
- Plan to review practices from other municipalities and possibly discuss at a council retreat.

Mayor Ayers adjourned the Work Session at 6:41pm.

Respectfully,



LeAnn Lehigh
City Clerk



Meeting held at Hogansville City Hall, 111 High Street, Hogansville GA 30230

PUBLIC HEARING

June 25, 2025

Mayor Jake Ayers called the Public Hearing to order at 7:00 pm to hear citizen comments on the proposed 2025-2026 Budget.

City Manager Lisa Kelly gave a presentation on version 3 of the budget, including budget highlights, emphasizing prudent efforts, improving quality of life, and the budget's role as a one-year snapshot with long-term implications for the City's growth.

Frederick Manley addressed Council asking if funding had been set aside in the budget for swings at Strozier Park. Mayor Ayers answered that there is not funding in the budget for swings, those funds typically come from SPLOST. Mr. Manley also asked where the City is with Holland Ware Park. Mayor Ayers answered that the City and the County are currently working with the Holland Ware foundation on plans for the park.

With no additional citizen comments, Mayor Ayers closed the Public Hearing at 7:19 pm.

CALLED MEETING

June 25, 2025

Mayor Jake Ayers called the Called Meeting to order at 7:19pm. Present were Mayor Ayers, Council Member Michael Taylor, Council Member Jason Baswell, Council Member Mandy Neese, Council Member Mark Ayers, and Council Member Kandis Strickland. Also present were City Manager Lisa Kelly, Assistant City Manager Oasis Nichols, City Attorney Alex Dixon, Police Chief Jeff Sheppard, and City Clerk LeAnn Lehigh.

BUSINESS

1. *Adoption of the 2025/2026 Budget*

Motion: Council Member Neese moved to approve the adoption of Version 3 of the 2025/2026 budget. The motion was seconded by Council Member Ayers.

Discussion: None

Motion Carries 5-0

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Council Member Neese and duly seconded, Mayor Ayers adjourned the meeting at 7:21 pm.

Respectfully,

LeAnn Lehigh
City Clerk