

CITY OF STATHAM
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Statham Community Center
336 Jefferson Street, Statham, GA 30666



PUBLIC HEARING & WORK SESSION

August 4, 2026

6:30 P.M.

I. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Councilmember Patterson gave the invocation.
 Mayor Krause led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Krause called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.
 Present: Mayor Krause, Councilmembers Terilli, Burnette, Patterson, Penn, and Barton.
 Also Present: City Attorney Jody Campbell, City Clerk Nicole Sapp,
 Public Works Director Brett Day, Asst. City Accountant Karine Brooms,
 City Administrator Cheryl Venable, and P.D. Personnel.

III. MINUTE APPROVAL

III.1 July 21, 2026 Regular Meeting

Councilmember Burnette made a motion to approve the July 21, 2026 meeting minutes.
 Councilmember Terilli second the motion.
 Terilli- Yes, Burnette-Yes, Patterson-Yes, Penn-Yes, Barton- Yes
 Motion passed 5-0.

IV. REPORTS

IV.1 Finance Department Report- Karine Brooms gave the finance department report.
 IV.2 Police Department Report- Lt. Hood gave the police department report.
 IV.3 Public Works Department Report- Brett Day gave the public works report.
 IV.4 Mayor Report- Mayor Krause gave the mayor report.

July 16 Meeting with Mayor Janet Jones July 20 Meeting with Morgan Kline in reference to Hillman Ballfield, July 22 Meeting with Northeast Georgia Food Bank Schedule a Food Truck for the City of Statham December 9th, July 27 Legacy Park dedication Winder July 29 Meeting with Linda Blechinger July 30 Barrow County Chamber Board Meeting. After meeting with Northeast Georgia Food Bank, I spoke with Eddie Jackson in response to 1025 Church sponsoring a food truck for December and using funds from the Sunflower Festival to reserve the truck. A full truck is \$1,500 and half truck is \$750.00. I had planned to do something this summer to have a food distribution that would be kind friendly. However, that was not possible. If this is what the council wants to do let me know. If not, then I need to know what the governing body would like to do with the funds. I also would like to make a correction lieu of the July 21st meeting. The correction has to do with millage rate. In 2024 when I came into office, we did have to raise taxes. It was not due to employee rises as reported, it was due to no increase in taxes for eleven years and the city was not keeping up economically. The city had been taking money from the utility fund and not replenishing it. Sort of like robbing Peter to pay Paul but Peter was never being repaid. We were told by Rachel Bembry, our accountant, if we did not start putting money back into the utility fund, we would not be a city in 7 years. That resonated with me and the employees of this city began working together on revenue sources and by 2025 we were able to do a roll back on the millage 6.75 and again a roll back in 2026 of 6.65. Although these are small percentages, we did not raise taxes. We are also giving a senior exemption, and it will be on the ballot this fall for a vote. Again, we will need to be mindful of additional revenue as we move forward to cover the exemption. Revenue sources are

very important for our city, and we must be mindful of how we continue to move forward as a city. There is still a lot of work to be done.

IV.5 Committee Reports- no reports were given.

V. PUBLIC HEARING

V.1 CU-26-02 Atlanta Hwy SE & Pleasant Hill Church Rd

Councilmember Patterson made a motion to enter into the Public Hearing at 6:45 p.m.

Councilmember Penn second the motion.

Terilli- Yes, Burnette- Yes, Patterson-Yes, Penn- Yes, Barton- Yes

Motion passed 5-0.

Jody Campbell discussed the conditional use rezone application for the property located at Atlanta Hwy SE & Pleasant Hill Church Rd.

Attorney Stanton Porter, with Stanton Porter Law, discussed the proposed Atlanta Hwy SE & Pleasant Hill Church Rd. conditional use rezone. He explained that the owner is requesting the conditional use rezone so that he can use the property for a salvage yard.

Councilmember Burnette asked when the building on the proposed plan would be built. Stanton stated that the building is planned to be built at the very beginning. Councilmember Burnette then asked if it would just be the one building and Stanton stated, yes, just the one building with the approximate size being 10,000 square feet.

Councilmember Patterson asked Stanton to review the buffer areas between any residential properties and this property. Stanton stated the minimum buffer is 50 feet from the salvage yard and showed council on the proposed conditional rezone map the buffer area that goes all the way around the property.

Councilmember Penn asked what type of material the parking area is going to be. Stanton stated it would be asphalt. Councilmember Penn asked if there was any type of EPD regulations on the proposed salvage yard since there will be petroleum products and lubricants from the salvaged materials. Stanton stated yes that they will have to have storm water management to treat any runoff. He also stated that the owner has completed a full engineering site plan that he is happy to share with anyone that would like to review it. Councilmember Penn said that he would like to review the topography and to completely understand the proposed conditional use rezone project. Councilmember Penn did state that there is a citizen that lives near the property that has expressed some concerns. He asked if the owner would be open to negotiating the 50-foot buffer to 75 feet or maybe even 100 feet to put people's mind at ease. Stanton stated he does not see that as being an issue, but he will confirm that with the owner of the property.

Councilmember Burnette asked where the access road to the property would be located. Stanton referred to the map and said that there is an easement located off of Dooley Town Road and stated that is the only access point to the property.

Councilmember Terilli asked if the access would share Clover's drive. Stanton stated that it is the recorded easement.

Mayor Krause asked how big the trucks that will be hauling into the property are. Stanton stated that it would be tow-trucks.

Councilmember Patterson asked if the hauling would happen in the middle of the night, he stated he was concerned about the noise during the night. Stanton stated that he could not promise that hauling would not happen in the evening, but the design of this kind of yard is more of a long-term yard where vehicles are inventoried and then parted out. He stated this is more of a daytime operation.

Councilmember Penn asked if the owner does the work to the vehicles himself. Stanton stated he does do the work himself.

Councilmember Burnette asked if has other yards in business. Stanton stated he does not. He stated the owner has done this type of work before in Gwinnett and wants to move it to Statham so can expand the business.

Stanton stated that he hopes the council will vote in favor of the proposed conditional use rezoning.

Jody Campbell asked if there was anyone else wanting to speak in favor of the conditional use rezone. No one was present.

Jody Campbell asked if there was anyone wanting to speak in opposition to the conditional use rezone.

Citizen, Larry Baker, read from a statement "I am here to oppose the conditional use permit for the salvage yard on Dooley Town Road. My property is located at 402 and 408 Pleasant Hill Church Road. Both of my properties back up to the property that is being proposed for the salvage yard. The 408 property is inside the city limits and is where my house is located. If the salvage yard is approved, it will be approximately 120 feet from my house and less than 75 feet from my back yard. I was aware that the city of Statham had rezoned the property to light industrial, but I did not think you would allow a salvage yard to be located on the property and not this close to my house. Light industrial use is typically intended for warehouses and similar type buildings, not salvage yards. Not only did you rezone this piece of property to light industrial where the salvage yard is being proposed, but you also rezoned my property where my house is located to light industrial and I just found out about it within the past month. I am asking that you change my property back to residential zoning since it should not have been changed. As a result of rezoning my property to light industrial, the drawing for the proposed salvage yard shows only a 10-foot set back from my property line with no buffer. This is totally unacceptable to me. The drawing also does not show any screening along the Atlanta highway which does not comply with the Georgia Code for screening salvage yards along main highways. I don't think that any of you would like a salvage yard in your back door and neither do I. I do not understand why Barrow County does not allow salvage yards less than 500 feet of a residence, but Statham allows them to be a few feet from a person's back yard. You should want to improve the appearance of the city rather than allowing a junk yard to come in. Why would you allow this? Do you really want this in the city limits of Statham and on the main highway? We have enough junk vehicles out in plain view already without inviting more. I have seen salvage yards start out complying with regulations and then they gradually grow out of control and become a nuisance and eyesore for the neighbors. Look at the one on Pleasant Hill Church Road. I hope that you will consider the impact on surrounding neighbor's property when you review the permit proposal. The salvage yard will not only have an impact on my property value, but it will also have a visual impact, noise impact, and potential property that runs onto my property, and it must be protected from any hazardous materials run-offs as oils and other hazardous materials. I am asking that you deny this conditional use permit,

but if you are compelled to approve it, I ask that you at least require a minimum 50-foot buffer for the entire length of the property along my property line. Thank you.”

Councilmember Burnette asked Larry Baker what his home address was. Larry stated that his address is 408 Pleasant Hill Church Road.

Business owner and Citizen, Chris Dejiacomo stated he sold the easement that is being discussed a long time ago under the thought that they were going to build an industrial park, not knowing that it was going to be a salvage yard. He stated that he has the same concerns as the previous citizen spoke about, mostly environmentally. He asked if cars would be crushed as the salvage yard. Chris also asked whatever they do not part out, are they going to sell or crush. He stated all the water that runs off the proposed property runs behind a house and goes down into a creek, which runs into another creek. He stated that all the oil and everything will be washed into the water and pollute everything downstream. Chris also owns the brick home right in front of the property, and he will have renters living there with tow-trucks coming in and out and no one knows what time of day. He stated that the city of Statham is trying to build a city, not an industrial park. Chris stated it would be much better to have a subdivision go in there than have a salvage yard go in there because we want to bring people to Statham, we do not want to push people out.

Business owner and Citizen, Angela Dejiacomo stated that their business property Clover Enterprises is located near the proposed property on five acres and is zoned as light industrial. In 2007 they built their 12,500 square foot warehouse for their business. She stated that their property is fully fenced because they have their grandchildren and dogs there on the property. Angel stated they are concerned about the proposed property being a salvage yard. She is concerned about the safety of their family that live and play on their property and the wildlife that is located there as well. Angela stated that the visual look of the salvage yard is going to be bad for Statham. She talked about all of the improvements that have happened in Statham and wants to see that continue. Angle stated she is concerned about the noise that the trucks will make when bringing the junk cars. She asked council to please protect the property and not allow the area to become a salvage yard.

Stanton Porter approached the podium and spoke about the concerns raised by the opposed citizens. He stated that he will send council the full engineered plans so that it can be seen that storm water run-off and environmental protection have never been stronger compared to other salvage yards in the past. Stanton also stated that there would be no objection to adding the 50-foot buffer near Larry Baker’s property since it is not presently on the plans.

Councilmember Burnette asked what type of fencing is proposed to be around the property. Stanton stated that it would be chain-link fencing in addition to the landscape buffer.

There was no additional discussion or public comment made regarding the proposed CU-26-02 conditional use rezoning.

V.2 R-26-03 1609 Bethlehem Road

Jody Campbell discussed the rezone application for the property located at 1609 Bethlehem Road.

Attorney Jeffrey DeLoach with EHD&H, LLC discussed the proposed 1609 Bethlehem Road rezone. He explained that the owner is requesting the rezone from Light Industrial to Highway Business so that he can use the property to build a convenience store with gas pumps.

Councilmember Barton asked how accurate the proposed drawings of the plans were. Jeffrey stated that it is intended to be very accurate depiction of the finished project. Councilmember Barton asked if the convenience store also plans to install EV chargers. Jeffrey stated yes.

Councilmember Penn asked how many other stores the owner owns or operates. Jeffrey did not know the answer to that question. Councilmember Penn asked Jeffrey if he could find that out please and Jeffrey said yes, he could get that information.

Councilmember Burnette asked if this store would include the sale of lottery. Jeffrey stated yes.

Councilmember Patterson asked for Jeffrey's contact info and Jeffrey stated that he can get him some business cards, but his contact info is also at the bottom of the letter of intent.

Jeffrey asked if there were any additional questions, and the council did not have any.

Jody Campbell asked if there was anyone wanting to speak in opposition to the rezone.

Citizen, Kim Castang, read from a statement "Good evening, Mayor, and Council. My name is Kim Castang, and I live at 474Price St. My family owns and lives in parcels directly across Bethlehem Rd from this property. Our land is zoned R1 and is used as pasture for grazing, keeping, riding, and housing horses. I'm asking you to deny this rezoning. Your code requires a minimum of one acre to establish a gas station with a convenience store. This parcel is 0.86 acres. Under Section 3-038, it doesn't qualify for the use it's being rezoned to allow. I believe this rezoning is premature. GDOT project P.I. 0010352, the grade-separated interchange near this site, is under active construction and won't be finished until 2028. Traffic patterns and access points around this parcel are going to change before this project would even be ready to open. Approving a rezoning now, based on conditions that are actively changing, doesn't make sense. Our property is R1, directly across the road. Are the required setbacks, buffers or landscaping achievable on a lot this size? Bethlehem Road here is only two lanes, and the Statham Fire Department is about 300 feet away. Adding a high-turnover fuel and convenience use, this close to the fire station means more traffic turning and queuing right where emergency vehicles need a clear path. This lot also shares access with Statham Dr., the city-maintained street serving Statham Industrial Park (zoned L-1). Routing convenience store and fuel truck traffic through or adjacent to an access point shared with industrial park traffic raises additional concerns about driveway conflicts, delivery truck movements, and traffic on a shared access point that the current L-1 use was never designed to carry at this intensity. I'd ask you to weigh whether there's even a need for this. Statham already has three gas stations within two minutes of each of them, and five convenience stores. It's hard to see what public benefit justifies rezoning this specific undersized lot when that much supply already exists. Finally, the proposed site is directly visible from our homes and pasture, the canopy lighting, headlights, and nighttime activity of a fuel station and convenience store would be plainly visible from our properties every night. Horses are prey animals with a strong startle response to sudden noise, light, and motion, and I'm concerned about their safety and the safety of anyone handling them if this kind of activity becomes a constant, visible presence right across the road. To summarize: this site doesn't meet your minimum acreage requirement, it's premature given the active DOT project, the setback hasn't been shown to work, it sits next to the fire station on a two-lane road, and Statham already

has ample existing supply. For all of these reasons, I'm asking you to deny this rezoning. Thank you.”

Jeffrey Deloach approached the podium and spoke about the concerns raised by the opposed citizen. He stated the property is already zoned Light Industrial and there are many uses there that would be more intense and would result in as many of the issues she has described. Jeffrey stated the truck traffic on Statham Road created by convenience store and gas station in comparison what could with LI use weighs in favor of this proposed use rather than what would be permissible as a matter of right. He stated that HB is immediately adjacent to the proposed property already and surrounding it is LI. Jeffrey stated the market will support the project since there is nothing adjacent. He stated that he is open to answering any additional questions that anyone may have.

Jeffrey stated that he hopes the council will vote in favor of the proposed rezoning.

There was no additional discussion or public comment made regarding the proposed R-26-03 rezoning.

Councilmember Penn made a motion to exit out of the Public Hearing at 7:27 p.m.

Councilmember Patterson second the motion.

Terilli- Yes, Burnette- Yes, Patterson-Yes, Penn- Yes, Barton- Yes

Motion passed 5-0.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

VI.1 Bates, Carter & Co., LLP FY2025 Audit- Councilmember Patterson and Jody Cambell discussed the Bates, Carter & Co., LLP FY2025 Audit.

VI.2 Financial Policy Amendment- Councilmember Terilli, Mayor Krause, and Jody Campbell discussed the Financial Policy Amendment.

VI.3 False Alarm Ordinance- Jody Campbell and Major Daniels discussed the False Alarm Ordinance.

VII. CITIZEN INPUT

VII.1 Gary Venable- spoke about the Amended FY27 Budget

I want to talk about the budget it's been a discussion lately and along with the budget came one single cut to one single salary. I will say I am speaking on my own behalf and for no one else other than myself, with that being said there some discussion where people have been upset about the previse tax increases and there are some allusion to that the \$22,000 that was cut by the council was related to the tax increase, may not have been directly said but there has been some hints towards that in my opinion. It's easy for people to deflect looking over there at that person and not look at us in what we are doing. When it comes to this budget and the past budgets, only 5 people sitting on the council can make that vote, it's their responsibility and they are the ones who are in charge of that concerning these tax increases and the expenditures. Let's just look at a few of the things that the council has approved of over the past couple of years. On July 15, 2025, Councilmember Terilli motion to approve \$6,594.37 for a mural on the side of city hall, Councilmember Patterson 2nd with a unanimous vote. August 19,2025

council voted to purchase land on Baker Street for \$79,500. I am not sure if anyone knows the plan for that, I haven't heard. Councilmember Penn made a motion to purchase and Councilmember Patterson 2nd, it passed with a unanimous vote. Moving onto January 20,2026 the council decided to spend \$4,900 on a mass notification system motioned by Councilmember Patterson, 2nd by Councilmember Penn again passed unanimously. At the last council meeting in July the council approved the software contract with no bids, no RFP's, and not even quotes, for \$69,115 to start up and \$15,925 annually. There was more discussion over \$1,920 for car wash services, then \$85,000 for a software contract. It was awarded by Councilmember Terilli and Councilmember Patterson 2nd. The only lone no vote was given by Councilmember Barton, thank you. So, in fiscal year 2024 the Polic Department budget was \$1,200,000 with \$130,000 in Police Administration this included a K-9. Moving to fiscal year 2027 the Police Department budget was \$1,500,500 and Police Administration \$155,000, this is an increase of over \$350,000 in a very short time. This budget does not include a K-9 unit. While the Road and Street budget decrease, Public Works increased its bottom line. The point is I am not here to bash the departments; I am not bashing any of the departments, that's not the point. I believe we have very good people working for this city but let's quit pretending that a single person's salary forced a tax increase or the overly concern about the tax increase or spending. Your votes have proven and spoken otherwise and even as of the last meeting.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

VIII.1 Meeting to discuss or deliberate upon the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or employee as provided in Georgia Code section 50-14-3(b)(2).

Councilmember Patterson made a motion to enter into the Executive Session at 7:43 p.m.

Councilmember Burnette second the motion.

Terilli- Yes, Burnette- Yes, Patterson-Yes, Penn- Yes, Barton- Yes

Motion passed 5-0.

Councilmember Patterson made a motion to enter into the Public Hearing at 7:55 p.m.

Councilmember Burnette second the motion.

Terilli- Yes, Burnette- Yes, Patterson-Yes, Penn- Yes, Barton- Yes

Motion passed 5-0.

Jody Campbell stated the Mayor and City Council adjourned into executive session to discuss matters exempt from the Open Meetings Act. Specifically, to discuss and deliberate upon the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or employee. The City Council did not receive any evidence or argument related to personnel matters. No decisions or votes were made during or after the executive session.

IX. ADJOURN

Councilmember Patterson made a motion to adjourn the public hearing and work session meeting.

Councilmember Barton second the motion.

Terilli- Yes, Burnette- Yes, Patterson-Yes, Penn- Yes, Barton- Yes

Motion passed 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

