

**MINUTES**  
**CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING AND WORK SESSION**  
**G.L. Gilleland Council Chambers on 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**  
**Monday, December 16, 2024**  
**5:00 P.M.**

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1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Walden called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.
2. **ROLL CALL:** Present were Councilmember William Illg, Councilmember Sandy Sawyer, Councilmember Mark French, Councilmember Caleb Phillips, City Attorney Kevin Tallant, City Manager Bob Bolz, City Clerk Beverly Banister, Public Works Director Trampas Hansard, Utility Director Jacob Barr, Downtown Development Director Amanda Edmondson and Planning Director Ron Haynie.
3. **INVOCATION AND PLEDGE:** Invocation and pledge were led by Councilmember French.
4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Mayor Walden thanked everyone who came out and celebrated the 165<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the City. He also wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.
5. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Motion to approve the agenda as presented made by W. Illg; second by M. French. Vote carried unanimously in favor.
6. **PUBLIC INPUT:** None
7. **CONSENT AGENDA:** Motion to approve the consent agenda for the following items (a-e) made by S. Sawyer; second by C. Phillips. Vote carried unanimously in favor.
  - a. Approve Minutes
    - Regular Meeting held December 2, 2024
    - Executive Session held December 2, 2024
  - b. Approve the Two Year Appointment of Municipal Court Judge Ronald Reemsnyder and Agreement
  - c. Approve 2025 Professional Services
    - *City Attorney – Tallant Howell*
    - *Auditor – Alexander, Almand and Bangs LLP*
    - *Engineers – Turnipseed Engineers, Inc.*  
*BField Engineering, LLC*  
*Civil Engineering Consultants, Inc.*
    - *City Solicitor – Jonah Howell*
    - *Wastewater Testing – Environmental Management Services*
    - *Geologist – A&S Environmental Services*
    - *Repair/Installation of Water & Sewer Infrastructure – Townley Construction*
    - *Airport Consultant Engineering Services – Lead Edge Design Group*
    - *Long Term Water Quality Monitoring – Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.*
  - d. Approve 2025 Mayor and Council Board Designations and Compensation  
*Compensation of one meeting per month as designated below when attended:*
    - *Planning Commission – Caleb Phillips*
    - *Historic Preservation Commission – Mark French*
    - *Downtown Development Authority – William Illg*
    - *Family Connection – Sandy Sawyer*
    - *Board of Health – Mark French*
    - *Animal Control Board – Caleb Phillips*
    - *Chamber of Commerce – Mayor or Mayor Pro-Tem*
    - *Dawsonville History Museum – Mayor or Mayor Pro-Tem*
    - *Georgia Municipal Association – Mayor or Mayor Pro-Tem*
    - *Georgia Mountain Regional Commission – Mayor or Mayor Pro-Tem*
  - e. Approve Intergovernmental Agreement with Dawson County: 2025 Municipal Election
8. **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:** The Mayor and Council awarded John Tatum a three year service award and Stacy Harris received a seven year service award. City Manager Bolz announced the November Employee of the Month was Sara Beacham who was not in attendance.

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**PUBLIC HEARING**

9. **ZA-C2500044**: Habitat for Humanity-NCG has petitioned to rezone 3.128 acres, Located at Stegall Place (TMP D01 047 005, D01 047 006, D01 047 007, D01 047 008, D01 047 009, & D01 047 010) from R-2 (Single-Family Residential District) to RCT (Residential Cottage). The applicant is proposing 22 cottages. Public Hearing Dates: Planning Commission on Monday, December 09, 2024, and City Council on Monday, December 16, 2024. City Council for a decision on Thursday, January 9, 2025.

Planning Director Ron Haynie read the rezone request.

Motion to open the public hearing made by M. French; second by W. Illg. Vote carried unanimously in favor. Mayor Walden conducted the public hearing.

The following person(s) spoke in favor of the request:

- Hal Stringer, 3594 Morningwood Ct., Suwanee, Georgia – As a representative from Habitat for Humanity he provided an overview of the statistics and business model of Habitat for Humanity. He further included data concerning supply vs. demand and their intent for the community they'd like to build within the City.

The ten minute allowance for the public hearing expired. Motion to extend the public hearing by five minutes for both sides made by M. French; second by C. Phillips. Vote carried unanimously in favor.

- Mr. Stringer further emphasized their intention to provide a showcase property providing well built, energy efficient and pedestrian friendly homes which helps solve the middle and senior housing crisis.
- Caleb Regnier, 7306 Jordan Lane, Dawsonville, Georgia – He advocated for the Habitat for Humanity model claiming it would help meet a need to be able to purchase affordable starter homes within the community.

The following person(s) spoke in opposition to the request:

- Shon Geddes, 4085 Copper Leaf Lane, Cumming, Georgia – He stated he owns several investment properties near the site of the proposed development and he spoke against the requested variances (not on this agenda) and about an increased number of people which creates the concern for parking. He also shared concerns regarding potential landscaping noise, the location of the dumpster and would like there to be an evergreen privacy buffer. He did state he is not against Habitat for Humanity but would like to see the Council think through the first-time Cottage zoning designation in the downtown area.

Motion to close the public hearing made by W. Illg; second by M. French. Vote carried unanimously in favor.

Councilmember Illg stated he likes the design of the cottages and the community aspect and believes it will fill a need for affordable homes; however, he does have concerns about parallel parking on Stegall Place which could pose problems and asked about additional parking options within the community. He further stated he is concerned about the future residents, fifteen to thirty years from now, who were not original owners and didn't labor with the community to build it. He also inquired how the HOA would work and the landscaping of the properties.

Corey Guthrie, the engineer working on the project, stated they could consider other alternatives for parking to eliminate parallel parking on Stegall Place. Regarding the HOA, Mr. Stringer from Habitat for Humanity stated the HOA is important to us and self-governance is the key to keeping this subdivision preserved but to date, the HOA has not been structured. He said there have been concerns of rentals but Habitat for Humanity does not allow persons holding a mortgage with them to rent their home and would consider adding a ten percent inclusion to the covenants of the HOA to limit renters. He also stated the intention would be to have one landscaping contract.

Councilmember Sawyer asked why this piece of property in the City of Dawsonville was chosen for the project. Mr. Stringer stated this property became available and had a wastewater connection

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plus they like the area and want to be here. She further asked about the density and wanted to know if it could be lowered, saying the original proposal was for less housing. Mr. Stringer stated they became aware of data that suggested a lot of seniors were being displaced from their homes and changed some of the homes from three bedrooms to one and two bedroom homes. He also said the density helps with lowering the overall cost of the homes but being in the working phase, it could be reduced. Councilmember Sawyer again stated her concern about the density since there is a lot of construction occurring within the quarter to half-mile radius of this project. She would also like to see amenities within the community and would like them defined and laid out for review. Mr. Stringer said there is a community center planned and a playground. Lastly, she wanted confirmation that all of the homes were detached and not duplexes; Mr. Stringer stated they are all detached with the intention to have a raised foundation.

Councilmember Phillips asked Mr. Guthrie if the sewer would have to be pumped to the City and where it might be located. Mr. Guthrie confirmed that it would need to be pumped and would likely be located in the greenspace on the northeast side of the property.

Councilmember French asked Mr. Stringer if this is the only property being considered for this project; Mr. Stringer responded yes. Councilmember French also asked whether or not the HOA will have the ability to place a lien on a property that is not being maintained properly; Mr. Stringer responded yes that would be the intention but reiterated the HOA has not yet been structured.

Councilmember Sawyer asked whether or not Habitat for Humanity owns this property; Mr. Stringer responded yes.

Mayor Walden asked about the original design presented to him which had twelve to fifteen units versus the latest design which contains twenty-two units and wanted to understand why the units had increased. Mr. Stringer stated he did originally produce a design with less units but larger in size and explained the architect didn't think the layout worked well. Mr. Stringer then received the data concerning the need for one bedroom units and wanted to meet that need resulting in additional units but smaller in size. Mayor Walden expressed his concern for safety and privacy and feels the units seem a bit cramped. Mr. Stringer explained it does contribute to the overall community feeling for the development but the number of units could be decreased.

Councilmember Illg asked if the architect had designed other communities like this one and if so, he would like to take a look at them. Mr. Stringer stated he would have to find out. Councilmember Phillips agreed that it would be helpful if they could see one of the communities before the next meeting.

Councilmember Sawyer wanted to know if all the homes had driveways. Mr. Guthrie stated there is a mixture but, in some areas, there is centralized parking to keep all the front of the homes facing a greenspace which contributes to the elements of the cottage designation.

Councilmember Phillips asked about the type of material for siding; Mr. Stringer stated they use Hardie board. Councilmember Phillips asked Attorney Tallant whether or not the Council could place stipulations on the HOA covenants despite there being no HOA in existence yet; Attorney Tallant replied they could.

## **BUSINESS**

- 10. FY 2023-2024 FINANCIAL AUDIT:** Motion to accept the FY 2023-2024 audit as presented by Alexandar, Almand & Bangs at the December 2, 2024 meeting made by W. Illg; second by M. French. Vote carried unanimously in favor.
- 11. 2025 VAPE LICENSES:** Motion to approve four 2025 vape licenses as presented made by W. Illg; second by C. Phillips. Vote carried unanimously in favor.

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12. **DAWSON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION: REQUEST FOR DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING PERMIT FEE WAIVER:** Motion to approve the waiver for permit fees for the Dawson County Board of Education for Phase 2 of the Dawson County High School Baseball & Softball Complex in the amount of \$4,931.95 made by W. Ilg; second by C. Phillips. Vote carried unanimously in favor.
13. **RESOLUTION NO. R2024-08: RAISE GRANT:** Motion to approve Resolution No. R2024-08 as presented made by W. Ilg; second by C. Phillips. Vote carried unanimously in favor. (Exhibit "A")
14. **GEORGIA POWER COMPANY: GRANT SUPPORT OF FEASIBILITY STUDY OF A CANNERY AND SHARED KITCHEN BUSINESS INCUBATION PROJECT:** Motion to accept the \$12,000 grant from the Georgia Power Company made by M. French; second by S. Sawyer. Vote carried unanimously in favor.
15. **CAMERA SYSTEM UPGRADE:** Motion to approve a bid from All Secure Alert Systems Inc. in the amount of \$23,875.50 for the placement of additional cameras in Main Street Park and to approve adding audio capabilities to the City Hall lobby camera made by W. Ilg; second by M. French. Short discussion regarding adding more cameras for a full view of the parking lot. Vote carried unanimously in favor.
16. **2025 MAYOR PRO TEMPORE APPOINTMENT:** Motion to appoint Caleb Phillips as the 2025 Mayor Pro Tempore made by W. Ilg; second by S. Sawyer. Vote carried three in favor (Ilg, Sawyer, French) with one abstained (Phillips).

**STAFF REPORTS**

17. **BOB BOLZ, CITY MANAGER:** City Manager Bolz presented his report in the agenda packet and reported the leak adjustment total was \$467.60.
18. **ROBIN GAZAWAY, FINANCE DIRECTOR:** (Not in attendance) Finance Director Gazaway provided the financial reports representing fund balances and activity through November 30, 2024 in the agenda packet.

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS:**

Mayor Walden reported Granddaddy Mimms ran their first batch of distilled spirits in their new location next door.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 6:00 p.m. a motion to close regular session and go into executive session for real estate acquisition, pending/potential litigation and/or personnel was made by M. French; second by C. Phillips. Vote carried unanimously in favor.

At 6:34 p.m. a motion to close executive session was made by C. Phillips; second by M. French. Vote carried unanimously in favor.

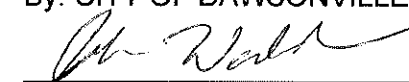
Motion to resume regular session was made by M. French; second by C. Phillips. Vote carried unanimously in favor.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 6:35 p.m. a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by S. Sawyer; second by C. Phillips. Vote carried three in favor (Phillips, Sawyer, Walden) with two opposed (French, Ilg).

**Approved this 9<sup>th</sup> day of January 2025**

By: CITY OF DAWSONVILLE

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Walden, Mayor

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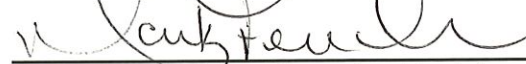
Caleb Phillips, Councilmember Post 1

*absent 1/9/2025*

William Illg, Councilmember Post 2

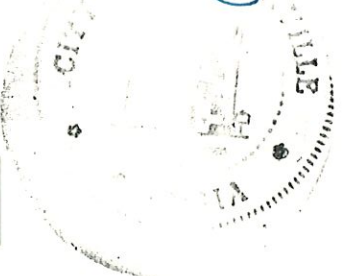


Sandra Sawyer, Councilmember Post 3



Mark French, Councilmember Post 4

Attest:  Deputy City Clerk  
For Beverly A. Banister, City Clerk



STATE OF GEORGIA  
COUNTY OF DAWSON

AFFIDAVIT OF THE CITY OF DAWSONVILLE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Mayor John Walden, Councilmember Caleb Phillips, Councilmember William Illg, Councilmember Sandra Sawyer and Councilmember Mark French; being duly sworn, state under oath that the following is true and accurate to the best of their knowledge and belief:

1. The City of Dawsonville Council met in a duly advertised meeting on December 16, 2024.
2. During such meeting, the Board voted to go into closed session.
3. The executive session was called to order at 6<sup>00</sup> p.m.
4. The subject matter of the closed portion of the meeting was devoted to the following matter(s) within the exceptions provided in the open meetings law: (check all that apply)

Consultation with the City Attorney or other legal counsel to discuss pending or potential litigation, settlement, claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions brought or to be brought by or against the City or any officer or employee or in which the City or any officer or employee may be directly involved as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(1);

Discussion of tax matters made confidential by state law as provided by O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2(2) and \_\_\_\_\_;

Discussion of future acquisition of real estate as provided by O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(1);

Discussion or deliberation on the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a City officer or employee as provided in O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(2);

Other \_\_\_\_\_ as provided in: \_\_\_\_\_.

This 16<sup>th</sup> day of December 2024; By the City of Dawsonville, Mayor and Council:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Walden, Mayor

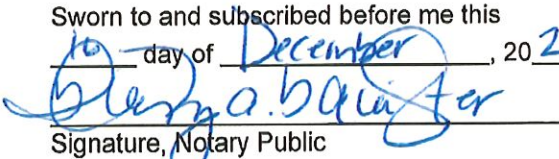
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Caleb Phillips, Councilmember Post #1

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
William Illg, Councilmember Post #2

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sandra Sawyer, Councilmember Post #3

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark French, Councilmember Post #4

Sworn to and subscribed before me this  
16 day of December, 2024.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature, Notary Public

My Commission expires: Feb 18, 2028





**RESOLUTION NO. R2024-08**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DAWSONVILLE, GEORGIA TO SEEK RAISE GRANT ASSISTANCE FROM THE US DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR HIGHWAY 53 PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Dawsonville is duly constituted under the laws of Georgia; and,

**WHEREAS**, in every case, it is the intention of the City of Dawsonville to develop opportunities for the public good and the general welfare of the citizens of the City of Dawsonville and the State of Georgia; and,

**WHEREAS**, the proposed Highway 53 pedestrian improvement project will have a significant local and regional impact on traffic and pedestrian safety, advance the City of Dawsonville and the U.S. Department of Transportation's priorities of safety, equity, climate and sustainability, and workforce development, job quality and wealth creation; and,

**WHEREAS**, the health, safety, and general welfare of the residents of the City of Dawsonville is essential to the well-being of the City, and,

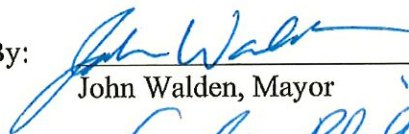
**WHEREAS**, the financing of the project through the FY2025 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program is critical to adequately addressing the needs of the residents of the City of Dawsonville; and,

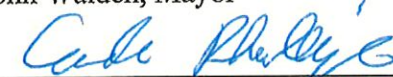
**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the City of Dawsonville will seek RAISE Grant Assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation as a necessary funding component for this project.

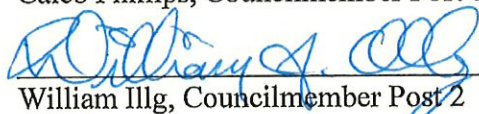
**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the City Council of the City of Dawsonville, Georgia this 16<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2024.

**MAYOR AND DAWSONVILLE CITY COUNCIL**

By:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Walden, Mayor

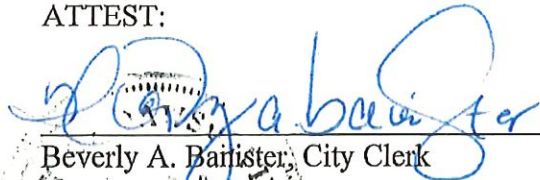
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Caleb Phillips, Councilmember Post 1

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
William Illg, Councilmember Post 2

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sandy Sawyer, Councilmember Post 3

  
Mark French, Councilmember Post 4

ATTEST:

  
Beverly A. Barister, City Clerk

