

MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING AND WORK SESSION
G.L. Gilleland Council Chambers on 2nd Floor
Thursday, January 9, 2025
5:00 P.M.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Walden called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.
2. **ROLL CALL:** Councilmember Sandy Sawyer, Councilmember Mark French, Councilmember Caleb Phillips, City Attorney Kevin Tallant, City Manager Bob Bolz, Deputy City Clerk Tracy Smith, Public Works Director Trampas Hansard, Utility Director Jacob Barr, Finance Director Robin Gazaway, Downtown Development Director Amanda Edmondson and Planning Director Ron Haynie.

Councilmember William Illg was absent.
3. **INVOCATION AND PLEDGE:** Invocation and pledge were led by Councilmember Sawyer.
4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Mayor Walden encouraged everyone to be safe during the snowstorm. He also announced that the applicant has withdrawn their requests concerning items #9, #15 and #16. The City of Dawsonville received a \$7,500,000 grant from the State for the construction of the wastewater treatment plant.
5. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Motion to approve the agenda with the removal of items #9, #15 and #16 made by M. French; second by C. Phillips. Vote carried unanimously in favor.
6. **PUBLIC INPUT:** None
7. **CONSENT AGENDA:** Motion to approve the consent agenda made by C. Phillips; second by S. Sawyer. Vote carried unanimously in favor.
 - a. Approve Minutes
 - Regular Meeting and Work Session held December 16, 2024
 - Executive Session held December 16, 2024
 - Special Called Meeting held December 23, 2024
 - Executive Session held December 23, 2024
 - b. Approve and Set Qualifying Fees for the 2025 Municipal Election: *The qualifying fees were set as follows:*

Councilmember, Post 2	\$265.00
Councilmember, Post 4	\$265.00
8. **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:** The Mayor and Council awarded David Medina (not in attendance) a one year service award and Beth Tuttle received a four year service award. Sara Beacham was awarded the November Employee of the Month; Annette Watson was awarded the December Employee of the Month and Sara Beacham was awarded Fall Employee of the Quarter and the 2024 Employee of the Year award.

BUSINESS

9. Removed from the agenda; applicant withdrew the request (ZA-C2500044).
10. **SPECIAL CALLED MEETING FOR MAYOR & COUNCIL RETREAT:** Mayor Walden called a Special Called Meeting for the City Council to be held on Friday, February 7 – Saturday, February 8, 2025 for the purpose of a Mayor and Council retreat. The meeting will be held at the Amicalola Lodge located at 418 Amicalola Falls Road in Dawsonville, Georgia beginning at 8:30 a.m. on February 7, 2025.
11. **2025 VAPE LICENSE FOR SIF INVESTMENT LLC:** Motion to approve the 2025 vape license for SIF Investment, LLC made by M. French; second by C. Phillips. Vote carried unanimously in favor.
12. **UNCOLLECTED DEBT ON UTILITY ACCOUNTS:** Motion to approve writing off uncollected debt on utility accounts in the amount of \$4,254.00 made by M. French; second by C. Phillips. Vote carried unanimously in favor.

PUBLIC HEARING

13. **VAR-C2500068:** Hardeman Communities, Inc (Creekstone Subdivision) has requested a variance for a reduced front setback from the required 20 feet to 15 feet; located at TMP 083 026 189, 210 Timber

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Ridge, Lot 64, Dawsonville, GA. Public Hearing Date: City Council Regular Meeting, Thursday, January 9, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

Planning Director Haynie read the variance request and stated it does not meet the criteria according to the City's ordinances due to exceeding the twenty percent threshold for a setback variance. He stated this applies to both requests – VAR-C2500068 and VAR-C2500069.

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

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

- George Butler, 132 Hawkins St, Dahlonga, GA – He is the attorney representing Hardeman Communities and asked to speak for both items #13 and #14. He provided details regarding the variance request and stated he understands the Council cannot grant the variances as requested.

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

- Mr. Butler asked to be allowed to withdraw the requests and reapply with the twenty percent limitation.

Attorney Tallant asked for confirmation from Mr. Butler as to whether he was asking for the Council to allow him to withdraw the requests without prejudice; Mr. Butler confirmed that is accurate. Attorney Tallant informed the Council they could suspend the public hearing if they were inclined to accept the withdrawal of the requests without prejudice. The Council decided to continue the public hearing on this request to allow those present to be heard.

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

- Logan Samples, 235 Timber Ridge, Dawsonville, GA – He spoke against both item #13 and item #14 citing safety concerns including fire and the length of the driveway creating potential obstructions. He also voiced concerns over his home's value diminishing and believes even with a new variance application this would not work as the home would be built too close to his home. He also stated he does not believe the builder is experiencing a hardship without the approved variance since they created the lots themselves and considers the issue to be self-induced by the builder. He suggested the lot be combined and build one home to the existing setback allowances or to allow the lots to be turned into greenspace for the community.
- Shelby Argento, 213 Timber Ridge, Dawsonville, GA - She spoke against the variance requests for both items #13 and #14 stating her concerns about creating a shorter driveway which would likely result in street parking detracting from the community's appeal and possibly decreased home values. She also feels the addition of these two homes with reduced setbacks would create an overcrowded and cramped space in the cul de sac. She also suggested combining the lots or using it for greenspace.

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

Mayor Walden asked the applicant to confirm their request to withdraw the variance requests for the record; the applicant confirmed.

Motion to approve the request from the applicant to withdraw VAR-C2500068 and VAR-C2500069 without prejudice made by M. French; second by C. Phillips. Vote carried unanimously in favor.

14. Public hearing suspended; applicant withdrew the request and Council approved without prejudice (VAR-C2500069)
15. Removed from the agenda; applicant withdrew the request (VAR-C2500072).

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16. Removed from the agenda; applicant withdrew the request (VAR-C2500073).

STAFF REPORTS

- 17. **BOB BOLZ, CITY MANAGER:** City Manager Bolz reported the leak adjustment total was \$73.47.
- 18. **ROBIN GAZAWAY, FINANCE DIRECTOR:** Finance Director Gazaway provided the financial reports representing fund balances and activity through December 31, 2024 in the agenda packet.

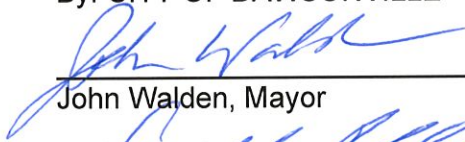
MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS: None

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.59 p.m. a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by C. Phillips; second by S. Sawyer. Vote carried unanimously in favor.

Approved this 3rd day of February 2025

By: CITY OF DAWSONVILLE



John Walden, Mayor



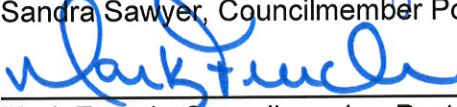
Caleb Phillips, Councilmember Post 1




William Illg, Councilmember Post 2



Sandra Sawyer, Councilmember Post 3



Mark French, Councilmember Post 4

Attest: 

Beverly A. Banister, City Clerk

