



City of Jasper
200 Burnt Mountain Road
Jasper, GA 30143
MINUTES | COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING
Thursday, February 26, 2026, 6:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Kirk Raffield
Jim Looney
Brandon Hannah
Steve Lawrence
Tony Davis - virtually

STAFF

Brandon Douglas
Kim Goldener
Lindsey Williams
Matt Dawkins
John Sherrer
Mary Elizabeth Burgess
Josh Davis

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE

See Attachment "A"

MEMBERS ABSENT

John Foust

LEGAL COUNSEL

David Syfan via cellphone

PRESS

Mari Livsey – Know Pickens
Tonya Jarrett – Pickens Progress

I. Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Raffield

Mayor Raffield called on Council Member Brandon Hannah who confirmed that a quorum was present.

II. Adopt Agenda

Mayor Raffield

Mayor Raffield requested an amendment to the agenda to add Kim Goldener as the City Clerk for this meeting. Motion: Council Member Brandon Hannah
Second: Council Member Jim Looney
Vote: Passed 4-0

III. Planning Commission Update

Mary Elizabeth Burgess

- Variance Request from Amicalola Propane to reduce driveway spacing from 125 ft to 0 ft.
- Alcohol License request for the gas station at West Church Street and Jonah Drive.

IV. Development & Infrastructure Committee Update

Council Members Foust & Hannah
Council Member John Foust – Absent

Engineering/Design

Council Member Brandon Hannah requested that the discussion regarding a potential turning lane addition to Pioneer Road at Burnt Mountain Road be moved to the Monday, March 2nd meeting since Council Member Foust is leading the topic.

- Mayor Raffield clarified that this item is not an action item and will continue at the committee level.

Stormwater Assessment

Council Member Brandon Hannah and staff discussed the need for a comprehensive stormwater assessment.

City Manager Brandon Douglas provided background:

- A pavement assessment was completed during 2023-2024 to identify roadway conditions and priorities.
 - A similar stormwater assessment is needed to identify system deficiencies and create a prioritized project list.
 - Public Works Director Josh Davis previously met with Kimley-Horn and identified at least six areas of concern.
 - While funding is not yet identified, an engineering assessment would allow the City to evaluate potential project costs and sequence.
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Planning & Development Director Mary Elizabeth Burgess reported that Kimley-Horn provided an updated cost estimate of \$34,000 for the study and noted that delaying assessments typically results in higher costs over time.

V. **City Manager's Office Update**

City Management

GDOT - LMIG (Local Maintenance Improvement Grant)

- The annual LMIG allocation is based on the total number of centerline road miles for each local road system and the total population of each city or county. We apply for this grant each year. The application requires us to submit a list of projects; however, we are not held to these projects.
- This year's allotment is for \$93,000 and we are required to provide a 30% match which brings us to approximately \$124,000.
- These funds can be used for engineering, planning, construction/repairs, etc.
- The projects originally submitted with our application last month did include some proposed projects like the possibility of adding a turning lane on Pioneer Road at Burnt Mountain Road. This is an item that came from our Development & Infrastructure committee, and we wanted to see if this project was even feasible. The other project is Indian Forest Road which includes some stormwater concerns.
- Management met with Catherine Fox who works heavily in water, sewer and stormwater fields with interns to help them get experience and credit on various real projects. One of our long-term goals has been to get our stormwater mapped on GIS. This may be a project for this group of interns.
- Staff would like to bring these items to full council for discussion at the March 2nd meeting.

General Obligation (GO) Bond

- The bond was validated on February 11th.
- Staff met with bond attorney and financial advisor regarding next steps.
- Approval was given to proceed with marketing the bonds.
- Total bond value: approximately \$4.5 million.

Sanitation

- The City's only sanitation truck was involved in an accident and is now inoperable
- Staff have developed an interim plan and consulted Waste Pro as a part of due diligence.
- Mayor Raffield assigned this topic to the Enterprise Committee, with an update expected at the April 6th Council meeting.

A brief recess was taken from 6:24pm to 6:25pm to assist Mr. Tony Davis off and on TEAMS connectivity. Connection was successfully restored.

Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) update

- Staff reported ongoing discussions with GMC and GEFA regarding current projects and potential additional funding opportunities. They recommended pursuing the Hurricane Helene Resilience Funding, which is intended to support projects that mitigate risks like our critical water sources. Because the City's primary water supply relies on the creek, wells, and mines, the proposed connection to the Gilmer County-Ellijay Water Authority line qualifies as an eligible resilience project.
- The City submitted a request for \$15 million and was notified last week that it has been included in GEFA's Intended Use Draft Plan. The City is eligible up to \$7.5 million in principal-forgiveness funding, pending full EPA approval of the program. Once the federal funding is confirmed, the City will be required to complete the formal application process.

GDOT – Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grants

- We have received two TAP grants to pursue projects like sidewalks, bike paths, and other non-traditional transportation related activities to increase walkability and connectivity of our community.
- 2023 grant was for preliminary engineering type work for four different projects:
 - Sidewalk on Library Lane to Burnt Mountain Rd

- Sidewalk from Stegall to Lee Newton Park and correct issues with sidewalk on Stegall
- Sidewalk corrections on Mark Whitfield up to Main Street
- Sidewalk on Burton Street
- 2024 grant is for sidewalk along Main Street to Chambers Street up to Revolution Church. Burton Street Sidewalk would then tie into this sidewalk.
 - We have received notification of being approved for another TAP Grant for \$537,000 and we will be responsible for 20% matching amount or approximately \$107,000. This will take us to the next step passed the preliminary work. Options for coming up with the 20% match or \$107,000 or not:
 - Explain that we cannot take the grant because we do not have the match and would need them to make a plea to the Georgia Infrastructure Transportation Bank for any kind of funding that could be potentially gotten from that. We have received some funding from here in the past.
 - Could potentially use some 2026 SPLOST dollars but remember that those dollars are going to come in slowly.
 - We could potentially use General Fund dollars from our savings account.
 - Staff is looking for direction from Council how to proceed.

VI. Mayor's Update

Mayor Raffield

- Discussed a letter that is being submitted to Representative Jasperse regarding funding needs.
- Dr. Keller presented an idea for electric vehicle charging stations and motorcycle parking. This matter was assigned to Development & Infrastructure Committee to review, with a report due at the April 6th Council meeting.
- Review the 2026 DDA Event Calendar and discussed the possibility of adding a March 20th event where a recognized band has availability for this date only.

Proposed March 20, 2026, Event

Council Member Brandon Hannah noted that the DDA Board approved an event for March 20th requiring road closures and is submitting it to Council for approval.

Council Member Tony Davis described potential event configurations and stated the band is well-known and available at a cost below a typical DTL event. He noted he would be willing to donate \$1,000 toward the event.

Council Members discussed the DDA budget and event logistics. Mayor Raffield stated:

- The annual Event Calendar was approved by Council on February 2, 2026.
- The proposed event was not presented until February 20th.
- Proper Planning requires more time.
- The DDA is willing to reallocate \$9,000 from the September DTL event to support the proposed March event.
- He recommended considering the event later in 2026 or in 2027.

Mayor Raffield stated that it takes two council members to add an action item to a Council meeting agenda. Mayor Raffield asked if two Council Members wished to add this item to the March 2nd Council meeting agenda.

- Council Member Tony Davis supported adding the item.
- No other Council Member agreed.
- Result: This item will not be added to the agenda.

VII. Executive Session - Legal

Mayor Raffield

Mayor Raffield called for a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss legal items.

Motion to enter: Council Member Jim Looney at 7:07pm

Second: Council Member Brandon Hannah

Vote: Passed 4 – 0

Motion to exit: Council Member Steve Lawrence at 7:39pm
Second: Council Member Brandon Hannah
Vote: Passed 4 to 0.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion: Council Member Brandon Hannah at 7:40pm
Second: Council Member Tony Davis
Vote: Passed 4 to 0.





Mayor, Kirk D. Raffield



City Clerk, Lorrie Waters