

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Newnan, Georgia was held on Tuesday, May 12, 2026 at 2:30p.m. in the Richard A. Bolin Council Chambers of City Hall with Mayor James Shepherd presiding.

**PRESENT**

Mayor James Shepherd: Council members present: Jim Thomasson, Jennifer Morrison, Cynthia Jenkins and Paul Guillaume. Absent: Scott Berta, Dustin Koritko. Also present: City Manager, Cleatus Phillips; Assistant City Manager, Hasco Craver; Assistant City Manager, Meg Kelsey, City Clerk, Megan Shea and City Attorney, Brad Sears.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Shepherd called the meeting to order. Andrew Chappell, Senior Pastor at Newnan First United Methodist delivered the invocation.

**READING OF MINUTES**

**A. Minutes from the Regular Meeting on April 28, 2026**

Motion by Councilwoman Morrison, seconded by Councilman Thomasson to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular Meeting on April 28, 2026, and adopt them with the correction.

**MOTION CARRIED. (5-0)**

**REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

**B. 1 Appointment – Christmas Commission, 3-year term**

Continue to next agenda.

**C. 1 Appointment – Development Authority, 4-year term**

Continue to next agenda.

**D. 1 Appointment – Newnan Urban Redevelopment Agency, 3-year term**

Mayor Shepherd nominated Zachary Potter and said he would be a cross member to both NURA and the Housing Authority. He thanked Jess Barron for serving.

Motion by Mayor Shepherd, seconded by Councilwoman Jenkins to appoint Zachary Potter to the Newnan Urban Redevelopment Agency.

**MOTION CARRIED. (5-0)**

**REPORTS ON OPERATIONS BY CITY MANAGER**

City Manager did not have anything.

**REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM MAYOR**

Mayor Shepherd reminded everyone to get out and vote. He also explained that there would be an off-agenda item coming up. Generally, the agenda is published ahead of time so everyone knows what will be discussed but occasionally something comes up at the last minute.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**E. Consideration of a Contract Award for Sidewalk Repair and Replacement at various locations**

Ray Norton, Public Works Director, said that this was in the budget to repair some broken sidewalks. 6 bids were received and CGS Waterproofing was the lowest bid. There was an error on the bid tab, but staff spoke to them and cleared it up.

Motion by Councilwoman Jenkins, seconded by Councilman Thomasson to approve the contract award as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED. (5-0)**

**F. Communications Assessment Presentation by Nikki Perry**

Aimee Hadden, Communications Manager, explained that Nikki Perry conducted a communications assessment for the city, conducting interviews with staff and evaluating communications strategies. She introduced Ms. Perry to present her findings.

Ms. Nikki Perry said that conducting this assessment sends a message to the community that public trust and transparency are valued. She gave an overview of what she assessed such as digital outreach, website, traditional media, community engagement and internal communications. She found that the city has a high level of engagement from the communications staff, leadership and department heads. The city has a well-established brand.

Ms. Perry went over her recommendations. She suggested shifting from volume to strategy and increasing collaboration between departments. She also recommended adding communication support for police, fire and leisure services. She discussed updating the social media policy and social media archiving, as well as reviving council meeting highlights or recaps for the public. Ms. Perry said she was impressed with the community engagement across all departments.

Motion by Councilman Thomasson, seconded by Mayor Shepherd to direct staff with the city attorney to review the recommendations presented and make recommendations for city council to consider.

**MOTION CARRIED. (5-0)**

**G. Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing Participation in an Amicus Brief in the Chang V. City of Milton Appeal**

Mr. Sears stated that this is related to an accident that took place in the city of Milton. The Court of Appeals upheld the \$30 million judgement against the city and then the Supreme Court reversed it but sent it back to the Court of Appeals to make a determination from a negligent standpoint. The City of Newnan is being asked to participate in the Amicus Brief, as the city previously did. Mr. Sears said the recommendation is for the Court of Appeals to reverse the case based upon negligence.

Mayor Shepherd asked what the legal liability for Newnan might be if this case is not reversed? Mr. Sears said it would be catastrophic, as it would affect all the utility poles, fire hydrants etc. that are in the right of way. It is a very important issue.

Motion by Councilwoman Morrison, seconded by Councilman Thomasson to adopt the resolution as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED. (5-0)**

**H. Election of GMA's District 4 Officers for 2026-2027**

Mr. Phillips explained that in the past Council has accepted the slate presented from GMA.

Motion by Councilwoman Jenkins, seconded by Councilman Thomason to elect the slate of GMA District 4 Officers for 2026-2027 as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED. (5-0)**

**I. Discussion regarding Cemetery Ordinance updates as proposed within the Cemetery Master Plan**

Ray Norton, Public Works Director, went over the possible changes to the ordinance. Changes include written permission to bury someone that has no interest in a lot, authority to superintendents to compel owners to keep trees and shrubs trimmed, right of interment to lay out who is entitled to be buried in a family plot, size limits for headstones, ensuring consistency among all the cemeteries, and giving city manager authority if there was more than one interment in one spot.

Councilwoman Jenkins asked about headstones. Mr. Norton said you do still need a certain lot size of 4 for a large family headstone. Mr. Phillips said this is just to get feedback to draft the ordinance so Council can still given input. Mr. Norton said he would try to bring the ordinance draft back to the next meeting.

**J. Consideration of a Contract Award for Pedestrian Safety, Walkability & Multimodal Transportation Study**

Abigail Strickland, Main Street Manager, explained that as downtown has continued to grow there is a need to look at how to transport people through the district safely. The firm TSW would help staff do that.

Motion by Councilwoman Morrison, seconded by Councilwoman Jenkins to approve the contract award as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED. (5-0)**

**Off Agenda**

Motion by Councilman Thomasson, seconded by Councilwoman Morrison to direct staff with the city attorney to develop options to potentially incorporate the pond behind the Lofts apartments into the city's park system.

**MOTION CARRIED. (5-0)**

Councilman Thomasson said he received pictures from two citizens, Beverly Jennings and Jan Taylor, suggesting that something be done with the pond. He thanked them and encouraged other citizens with ideas to bring them to Council.

**VISITORS, PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS & COMPLAINTS**

**K. Request from the Newnan-Coweta Humane Society to close part of Savannah St. on November 7, 2026 from 2pm-9pm for event at The Reserve at Line Creek**

Bill Johnson with the Newnan-Coweta Humane Society stated that this is a major fund-raising event. This will allow them to bring in more vendors and food trucks and allow kids to run around safely. They will not block the businesses on either end.

Motion by Councilman Thomasson, seconded by Councilman Guillaume to approve the request as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED. (5-0)**

**L. Request from Joe Wright to extend closure of Madison St. between Jackson St. and Jefferson St. on June 6, 2026 until 7pm for Annual Poker Run**

Joe Wright explained that the street is already shut down for a market day and he wants to extend that closure. Mr. Phillips asked about the timing with the market going on. Mr. Wright said they aren't due there until 4pm and the market ends at 3pm.

Motion by Councilwoman Jenkins, seconded by Councilwoman Morrison to approve the request as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED. (5-0)**

**M. Request from Chad Smith and Casey Smith to extend restaurants to sidewalks to provide goods and services during Porchfest event on May 30<sup>th</sup> from 12pm-9pm**

Mr. Phillips said that Council may consider making this extension available to the whole district, as other business owners have reached out to him about doing this. Councilwoman Jenkins asked what the setup would look like. Casey Smith said it would extend the brick and mortar, to provide services outside, the

same as inside. They will not block traffic or sidewalk traffic. Council asked if this would be like Summer Wined Up and Chad Smith said it helps with people who want to sit and eat and people who just want to grab drinks.

Councilwoman Jenkins asked if this gets adopted for this specific event, with a defined area so people know where they can and cannot go.

Motion by Councilman Thomasson, seconded by Councilwoman Morrison to allow in the open container district on May 30<sup>th</sup> from 12pm-9pm the extension of sales to the sidewalk.

**MOTION CARRIED. (5-0)**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Councilman Thomasson, seconded by Councilman Guillaume to adjourn the meeting at 3:15pm.

**MOTION CARRIED. (5-0)**

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Megan Shea, City Clerk

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James Shepherd, Mayor