



**CITY OF WALESKA
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
March 3, 2025**

Present: Mary Helen Lamb - Mayor
Peter Brown - Councilmember
Dennis Cochran - Pro Tem
Eddie Blackwell - Councilmember
Logan Patrick - Councilmember
Michael Greene - Councilmember
Kim Kirsch - City Clerk/City Manager
Chris Lumpkin - Water Maintenance
John Meier - City Attorney
Lamar Rogers - Turnipseed Engineers

Absent: Kristi Bosch - Councilmember

- Item 1: Call to Order**
Mayor Mary Helen Lamb called the meeting to order, with a quorum present.
- Item 2: Pledge of Allegiance/Innovation**
Mayor Lamb led the Pledge to the Flag
- Item 3: Five Minute Public Hearing**
None
- Item 4: Consideration to Approve Regular Council Meeting Minutes February 17, 2025**
Mayor Mary Helen Lamb asked for a motion to approve the Regular Council Minutes for February 17, 2025. A motion was made by Councilmember Greene, seconded by Councilmember Cochran, and approved by all members present.
- Item 5: Water penalties and non-payment – First Read to Amend Resolutins 26-62**
- A motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell to waive the reading of the amendment of 26-62 as this was sent to the Mayor and Council

prior to the meeting for their review, seconded by Councilmember Cochran, and approved by all members present.

Item 6: Cherokee County – Brantley Day – Discuss Land Bank

- Mrs. Kirsch presented a detailed data sheet to the council provided by Cherokee County in connection with the 2025 State of the County Land Bank. Mrs. Kirsch reviewed information obtained from her conversations with a couple of employees in the county and skimmed over information on p. 4 of the presentation which explains the percentage of AMI, who would be eligible and what the monthly rent amount would be based on individuals AMI. A motion was made to not join the land bank at this time by Councilmember Greene, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell, and approved by all members present.

Item 7: Nationwide – Contact Change Authorization

- Mrs. Kirsch asked the council for approval to change the Plan Sponsor Contact name from a former City Clerk to the Mayor. All of council agreed to list Mayor Mary Helen Lamb as the contact person for the city's retirement fund. Mrs. Kirsch will complete the Plan Sponsor Contact form and return that to Nationwide.

Item 8: New computer modem for front counter

- Mrs. Kirsch notified the mayor and council members that one of the computers used to take payments needed to be replaced. The replacement cost will be \$1,599.99 plus an additional \$150.00 a month. Mrs. Kirsch feels this would be a good investment as the only other computer used to take payments at the drive-thru was several years old and did not want to risk that one going down and not being able to take payments. A motion was made to approve the purchase of the computer by Councilmember Brown, seconded by Councilmember Greene and approved by all members present. Mrs. Kirsch will have the new computer installed at the drive-thru location and that computer installed in the front office as the drive-thru could use a faster computer.

Item 9: Water System Report

- Mr. Rodgers with Turnipseed Engineers updated the council that he had heard from the developer of the Abbington Hall project. They still need to address the EPD on the design of the project. Mrs. Kirsch added that she had spoken with the permitting department at Cherokee County who does the plan review of the structures, and the land disturbance permits. The developer does have approved plans for buildings 100 and 200 but do not have a land disturbance permit. The building permit cannot be issued until the LDP has been approved and paid for. Mrs. Kirsch has invited the developer to come to a council

meeting to go over the list of items still needed before construction can begin. The city will continue to monitor this project.

- Mr. Rogers let the council know that he had spoken with Mr. Manfield who is working on the High Point project. Mr. Manfield is handling the “water part” for the developer L&M Development. The engineer on this project is Gaskins. There will be 66 lots. This project will be located next to the Hickory Log ground storage tank in Cherokee County on Lower Burris Road. Mr. Rogers said at this point he is waiting for them to submit plans to him. This project has been on the radar in the past. The city will continue to monitor the progress. Mr. Rodgers did say the water would feed off the highest point.
- Mr. Lumpkin discussed replacing the pump station at the Dry Pond location. There is not an immediate need to do this, but it was decided by the council that we need to be proactive. Mr. Lumpkin received two quotes. One was for \$24,135.00 by Stanco and the other for \$22,185.00 by GWI. Mr. Rogers said he had worked with GWI in the past and felt they would be the best of the two to complete this project. Mrs. Kirsch will verify the estimate with Mr. Rogers and Mrs. Bracken to confirm this money can come out of the SPLOST account. Mrs. Kirsch will update the council at the next meeting.
- Mrs. Kirsch updated the council that she had researched the water rate increase for the City of Canton and Cherokee County. Mrs. Kirsch was directed to do this at the last council meeting by the city attorney as the council is considering increasing the water rates. Mrs. Kirsch does not believe now is the time to increase the rates until she and other staff can sort out the fluctuations in month-to-month water loss. The council agreed and will table this until more information from research that is being done internally can shed more light on water loss and how to correct that.
- Mrs. Kirsch updated the council that the unbilled water loss for the month was 3,719,554 gallons. Mrs. Kirsch and Mr. Lumpkin are going to do a detailed inventory of the 19 large meters the city has. They will update the council at the next meeting what they can find out. Mrs. Kirsch also updated the council that Mrs. Smith is keeping a detailed spreadsheet of all water leaks starting on December 21, 2024. Mr. Lumpkin is going to start gathering data logs for all large meters to use as a tool to try and resolve the water loss issue.
- Mrs. Kirsch updated the council that she and Mrs. Smith did send revised bills to RM Moore Elementary for the month of August 2024, December 2024, and January 2025 due to the multiplier in the office billing software not matching the multiplier on their meter. This causes a discrepancy in the billing usage and dollar amount. Mrs. Kirsch and

Mr. Lumpkin will continue to monitor this meter when the monthly readings are performed in a week or so.

Item 10: City Manager's Report

- Mrs. Kirsch updated the council that she had received a letter from Georgia Department of Audits & Accounts stating that the city's corrective action plan meets the requirements specified in the O.C.G.A.
- Mrs. Kirsch presented information to the council about the Annual GMA Convention located in Savanna this June. For now, no one on the council is interested in attending. There is money in the budget if any of the council members decide they wish to attend.
- Mrs. Kirsch presented information about the Georgia Fund 1 investment entity. Large cities and counties use this as a resource for investment. Mrs. Kirsch contacted them about their rates, terms, and procedures. The current rate is 4.37%, the administration fees are 5.5 basis points, there are no terms. As was explained to Mrs. Kirsch by a representative, you can invest for one day or for however many days as you see fit. The interest earned is paid out at the beginning of every month for the prior month. If an emergency withdrawal is needed those funds can be in the city's bank account in 24 hours. Mr. Meier suggested Mrs. Kirsch verify these funds are insured. Mrs. Kirsch will do that and update the council at the next meeting so discussion can continue as this could help with revenue.
- Mrs. Kirsch asked permission from the council to investigate adding cell phone towers to the property the city owns. She has been doing some preliminary research and believes this could be an option for revenue. The city has two large, elevated water tanks that could be good locations for cell tower equipment. Mr. Rogers commented he has several clients that install cell equipment on top of water tanks. Of course, this would all need to be vetted, and a thorough contract drawn up and presented to the mayor, the council, and the citizens for approval. Mrs. Kirsch will bring more information to the council by the end of April.
- Mrs. Kirsch presented several house plans to the council for preliminary design approval. A couple were on Darby Road in Hawks Crest, and three will be located on Cable Road in the Hawks Crest development. Mrs. Kirsch is working with Cherokee County Development Services, Permitting, and the Planning & Zoning departments to have all new building plans within city limits to come before the council for preliminary approval of home design before going to Cherokee County to start the permitting and land disturbance process. This is a new procedure so there will probably some changes in how this process is done. This procedure is in no way, the council or

the City of Waleska approving building plans. That will still be a requirement. The City of Waleska has an IGA (intergovernmental agreement) with Cherokee County that the county is to review and issue all building permits.

Item 11: City Attorney's Report

- Memorandum of Understanding Between the City of Waleska and the Cherokee County Board of Tax Assessors. MOU is to enable the Tax Assessor to send out 2025 ad valorem tax notices. The city is required to provide an estimated rollback millage rate to the Chief Appraiser and the Tax Commissioner by April 15th of each year. The parties agree that the process set out in the MOU promotes the efficient, effective and responsible procedural property tax changes outlined in HB581.

Item 12: Mayor's Report

- None

Item 13: Council Remarks

- Councilmember Brown mentioned there is a sidewalk repair needed due to Gas Company repairs on Reinhardt College Parkway. Mrs. Kirsch will look into this and update the council at the next meeting.

Item 14: Adjourn Regular Council Meeting

APPROVED THIS 17th DAY OF March, 2025.

Mary Helen Lamb
Mary Helen Lamb, Mayor

Attest:

Kim Kirsch, City Clerk