

City of Norcross

*65 Lawrenceville Street
Norcross, GA 30071*



Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 3, 2025

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

Mayor and Council

Mayor Craig Newton

Mayor Pro Tem Marshall Cheek

Councilmember Andrew Hixson

Councilmember Josh Bare

Councilmember Matt Myers

Councilmember Bruce Gaynor

A. Call to Order by Mayor Craig Newton

The Regular Meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Mayor Craig Newton.

B. Invocation

Invocation lead by Councilmember Josh Bare.

C. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America**D. Roll Call (recorded)**

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Craig Newton	Mayor	Present	
Marshall Cheek	Mayor Pro Tem	Present	
Andrew Hixson	Councilmember	Present	
Josh Bare	Councilmember	Present	
Matt Myers	Councilmember	Present	
Bruce Gaynor	Councilmember	Present	

E. Presentation of previous meeting minutes for acceptance**25-7253: Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes****Motion**

A motion to Approve the January 31 Visioning Session minutes, February 3rd Regular Council Meeting minutes, and the February 17 Policy Work Session and Executive Session minutes.

Mayor and Council Retreat – Special Called Meeting - Jan 31, 2025 9:00 AM

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Josh Bare, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Matt Myers, Councilmember
AYES:	Cheek, Hixson, Bare, Myers, Gaynor

Mayor and Council - Regular Meeting - Feb 3, 2025 6:30 PM

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Josh Bare, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Matt Myers, Councilmember
AYES:	Cheek, Hixson, Bare, Myers, Gaynor

Policy Work Session - Policy Work Session - Feb 17, 2025 6:30 PM

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Josh Bare, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Matt Myers, Councilmember
AYES:	Cheek, Hixson, Bare, Myers, Gaynor

F. Set agenda as presented for the scheduled meeting.**1. 25-7254: Acceptance of the Agenda and Approval of the Consent Agenda****Motion**

A motion to Accept the Agenda and Approve the Consent Agenda with the following items being added from the floor:

25-7261: Moratorium on Certain Development Applications for Residential Developments Utilizing Private Roads

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Josh Bare, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Bruce Gaynor, Councilmember
AYES:	Cheek, Hixson, Bare, Myers, Gaynor

25-7262: Homestead Exemption Resolution and Update

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Josh Bare, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Marshall Cheek, Mayor Pro Tem
AYES:	Cheek, Hixson, Bare, Myers, Gaynor

G. Ceremonial Presentations, Recognitions, and Swearing in Ceremonies**1. 25-7255: Proclamation Recognizing Chloe Au**

RESULT:	PRESENTED BY MAYOR NEWTON
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2. 25-7256: Proclamation Recognizing Dr. Wetherington as Principal of the Year for Paul Duke STEM High School

RESULT:	PRESENTED BY MAYOR NEWTON
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3. 25-7257: Swearing in of Officer Theresa Dawes

RESULT:	SWORN IN BY MAYOR NEWTON
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4. 25-7258: Swearing in of Officer King Mitchell

RESULT:	SWORN IN MAYOR NEWTON
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5. 25-7259: Swearing in of Officer Logan Spurgeon

RESULT:	THIS MATTER WAS REFERRED TO
	Next: 4/7/2025 6:30 PM
TO:	Mayor and Council

6. 25-7260: Swearing in of Officer Gabriel Veras

RESULT:	SWORN IN BY MAYOR NEWTON
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H. Floor Open to Citizens Desiring to Address the Governing Authority

a. Comments by Citizens

- Larry Hall
Introduced the third annual Photography Contest hosted by Norcross Gallery and Studios, scheduled to open in the spring. He also announced that Creative Gwinnett has awarded NGS a grant to support the 2025 Photography Contest.
- Bucky Johnson
Expressed disappointment regarding the city's handling of the 551 Sunset development process, emphasizing the need for improved services to the community.
- Jerry Gresham
Shared dissatisfaction with the lack of public information about the 551 Sunset development. He requested that the Council and City Manager reconsider the project's continuation, proposing the construction of two houses instead of the planned four. Additionally, he sought assurance of receiving similar rights and considerations as the applicant for potential future developments on his property.
- Dusty Albury
Expressed his concerns regarding the development at 551 Sunset Drive. After consulting with the City Engineer, he learned that the property could accommodate only two homes. He called for accountability from the City Manager due to oversight by staff and urged the City Council to intervene, suggesting that the developer be permitted to build only two homes on the property.
- Darren Kusman
Applicant of 551 Sunset, Mr. Kusman, addressed the Mayor and Council, expressing concerns about misinformation circulating regarding the project. He urged adherence to city codes and the Zoning Procedures Act in all future discussions and actions related to this development. Mr. Kusman also made mention that another family required a variance for their construction.
- Melvin Everson
Vice President of Community and Government Affairs at Gwinnett Technical College, introduced himself to the Mayor and Council. He highlighted that Gwinnett Tech currently boasts record enrollment numbers. Many students have successfully transferred to esteemed four-year universities, reflecting the college's strong academic foundation. Additionally, Gwinnett Tech has made significant strides in technology and cybersecurity education, underscored by the recent inauguration of a state-of-the-art Cybersecurity building. Mr. Everson extended an invitation to the Mayor and Council to tour this new facility.
- Kevin Kyle
Echoed concerns previously mentioned regarding the 551 Sunset development, aligning with points raised by other community members.
- Tiny Willis
Expressed concerns regarding the approved proposal for expanded downtown parking on Wingo Street. She requested detailed information on the locations of the new parking spaces, including a map, to fully understand the project's scope prior to construction. Additionally, she shared her opinion that the proposed pocket parks, as depicted in the plans, resemble adult playpens and do not align with the city's historic character.

- Lynn Ward
Expressed that she is not against the addition of parking spaces on Wingo Street but voiced concerns over the proposal to remove existing parking to create new spots. She inquired about the inclusion of buffers and landscaping in the plan. Additionally, Ms. Ward questioned whether the current moratorium on public/private roads applies to City Hall. She also recounted a recent incident where she narrowly avoided being struck by a driver who failed to stop at the intersection near the Iron Horse parking lot. Ms. Ward suggested the installation of a flashing light to enhance driver awareness and safety in that area.
- Pierre Levy
Representative of the British Car Show shared that a donation in the amount of \$6,000 was presented to the Norcross Ministries.
- Heather Albury
Address comments made by Mr. Kusman regarding the variance application process for her property, highlighting discrepancies compared to the process followed for the applicants of 551 Sunset Drive. She expressed that the community is opposed to the construction of large mansions across from their homes and voiced disappointment in the city's handling of the situation.
- Faye McFarland
Inquired about the operability of the early warning sirens, emphasizing their importance to many residents.
- Kathleen Corpeda
In representation and support of her neighbors, expressed concerns regarding the construction project at 551 Sunset Drive. She urged the Mayor and Council to preserve Norcross's unique charm, which initially attracted residents, and to avoid developments that might compromise the city's distinctive character.
- Dave Jones
Expressed concerns regarding the green markings on tree trunks along Wingo Street. Mr. Jones feels that the Wingo is often overlooked or treated like the “stepchild” compared to other city roads, which he feels receive more attention and enhancements, such as flags. He also questioned the addition of 49 parking spaces on Wingo Street and inquired about the downfall of the South End project. Mr. Jones called for increased transparency from the city, stating a preference for clear communication over attending numerous meetings to stay informed.
- Jim Eyre
Expressed gratitude to the Mayor and Council for approving the expansion of downtown parking. He addressed public allegations, stating that many are inaccurate, and clarified that the houses on Wingo Street are slated for renovation. He also noted that the green markings on trees are for surveying purposes related to the parking project. Mr. Eyre attributed the spread of misinformation to a lack of public participation in meetings and review of agendas and minutes. He encouraged all who seek transparency to attend meetings and ask questions.

b. Comments by Council

c. Comments by City Manager

* Moratorium on Certain Development Applications for Residential Developments Utilizing Private Roads (Added as an item from the floor)

PH. Public Hearings**PH1. 25-7240: REZ2024-007 Rezoning from R-100 and R-75 to PRD for Single Family Detached Residential Project****Original Motion**

A motion to Approve the zoning component of RZ2024-007, the adoption of zoning standards under the Planned Residence District (PRD) for the property located at 136, 138, 134 & 141 Beutell St. & 87 Hunt Street, with the following conditions as presented with the inclusion of condition 13.

MOVER:	Bruce Gaynor, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Marshall Cheek, Mayor Pro Tem

Amended Motion:

A motion to Approve the zoning component of RZ2024-007, the adoption of zoning standards under the Planned Residence District (PRD) for the property located at 136, 138, 134 & 141 Beutell St. & 87 Hunt Street, with the following conditions as presented with the inclusion of conditions 13 and 14.

1. The PRD zoning designation shall be restricted to a single-family development up to a maximum of 31 units;
2. The property shall be developed in general conformance with the site plan dated receipt 10/28/2024 and shall include a 14-foot setback along the interior property lines;
3. A 2-foot sidewalk landscape strip shall be provided along the interior property lines;
4. The applicant shall provide a minimum of 3 parking spaces per unit all which must be provided on the site;
5. A 2-foot sidewalk landscape strip, 8-foot sidewalk with streetlights shall be installed along Hunt Street and Beutell Street in conformance with Section 205-4.f. of the UDO unless otherwise required by the City Engineer; and the sidewalk in front of existing lots 26 and 27 shall be upgraded from 5' to 8'.
6. All common areas, including but not limited to stormwater systems, shall be maintained by the property manager/owner;
7. It is acknowledged that the Gwinnett County Fire Marshal or another reviewing agency may require modifications to the site for oversized vehicles such as fire and garbage trucks and minor adjustments to the site concept plan shall be approved by the Community Development Director in response to Gwinnett County comments is allowed;
8. The location of any and all crosswalks and traffic calming measures within the development are subject to the approval of the City Engineer;
9. Plant material use on site in landscape strips and buffers are subject to final approval of the City's Arborist;
10. Location of stormwater detention is subject to the approval of the City Engineer;
11. All utilities shall be buried;
12. The development shall comply with the Architectural Review Board's 11 conditions of approval referenced earlier in the analysis. Any changes to previously approved plans shall be subject to the formal advertising and review process of the Architectural Review Board;

13. The applicant work with City Staff to help develop pedestrian connectivity between Hunt Street and Wingo Street, if possible. If it is possible to develop pedestrian connectivity, the applicant shall contribute \$10,000 total in equal assessments on each building permit for the development (\$10,000/31=\$322.38 per permit) into a specified trail/sidewalk fund towards the creation of the connection;
14. The applicant must obtain a Land Disturbance Permit (LDP) within 18 months of this zoning action.
- If not obtained, the applicant shall provide an update to Mayor and Council at a regularly scheduled meeting on the status of the project

RESULT:	APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS [4 TO 1]
MOVER:	Bruce Gaynor, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Josh Bare, Councilmember
AYES:	Marshall Cheek, Josh Bare, Matt Myers, Bruce Gaynor
NAYS:	Andrew Hixson

J. Reports of the Mayor and Councilmembers

a. General Announcements

MARCH CALENDAR OF EVENTS

First Friday Concert: The Gold Standard Band

Friday, March 7 | 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. | Cultural Arts & Community Center

Irish Fest

Saturday, March 8 | 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. | Downtown Norcross

Movie Monday: A League Of Their Own

Monday, March 10 | 1:30 & 6:30 p.m. | Cultural Arts & Community Center

Day Of Play

Friday, March 14 | 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. | Lillian Webb Park

Coffee With Council

Saturday, March 15 | 8:00 a.m. | 45 South Cafe

Policy Work Session

Monday, March 17 | 6:30 p.m. | City Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room

Movie Monday: National Treasure

Monday, March 24 | 1:30 & 6:30 p.m. | Cultural Arts & Community Center

Neighborhood Cleanup & Recycling Day

Saturday, March 29 | 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | Norcross Public Works

Norcross Then & Now Exhibit

Tuesday, April 1 - Wednesday, April 30 | The Rectory

First Friday Concert: Block Party Band

Friday, April 4 | 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. | Cultural Arts & Community Center

*** Clarify date of Easter Egg Hunt with PR. ***

K. Board Appointments

There are no Board, Commission, or Authority appointments or re-appointments for the Mayor and Council to consider at this time.

L. Consent Agenda

RESULT:	ADOPTED ON CONSENT AGENDA [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Josh Bare, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Marshall Cheek, Mayor Pro Tem
AYES:	Cheek, Hixson, Bare, Myers, Gaynor

1. 25-7248: Brookhaven Innovation Academy (BIA) School Zone

Motion

A motion to Approve the adoption of a resolution to be forwarded to the Georgia Department of Public Safety and Georgia Department of Transportation (or any other applicable agency necessary to effect the designations in the resolution) that facilitates the designation of streets surrounding Brookhaven Innovation Academy (BIA) as a School Zone.

2. 25-7249: Expanded Downtown Parking

Motion

A motion to authorize staff to receive at least 3 vendor quotes/proposals from the City's On-call Professional Engineering & Design Services Contract to provide surveying and engineering design to generate a design development level plan for expanding parking in the downtown area.

M. Items for Discussion**1. 25-7261: Moratorium on Certain Development Applications for Residential Developments Utilizing Private Roads****Original Motion**

A motion to Approve the moratorium, as outlined in the agenda packet, on private roads within the City of Norcross until such time that the Mayor and Council can update city ordinances to align with Gwinnett County regulations.

MOVER:	Matt Myers, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Bruce Gaynor, Councilmember

Amended Motion

A motion to Approve an amendment to the original motion that the moratorium apply to all roads being built in a residential development.

RESULT:	DEFEATED [2 TO 3]
MOVER:	Josh Bare, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Andrew Hixson, Councilmember
AYES:	Andrew Hixson, Josh Bare
NAYS:	Marshall Cheek, Matt Myers, Bruce Gaynor

New Motion (1 of 2)

A Motion to Approve a three-month moratorium on private roads in the City of Norcross.

RESULT:	APPROVED [5 TO 0]
MOVER:	Matt Myers, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Andrew Hixson, Councilmember
AYES:	Marshall Cheek, Andrew Hixson, Josh Bare, Matt Myers, Bruce Gaynor

New Motion (2 of 2)

A motion to Approve a three-month moratorium on public roads in residential districts.

RESULT:	APPROVED [4 TO 1]
MOVER:	Josh Bare, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Matt Myers, Councilmember
AYES:	Andrew Hixson, Josh Bare, Matt Myers, Bruce Gaynor
NAYS:	Marshall Cheek

2. 25-7262: Homestead Exemption Resolution and Update**Original Motion**

A motion Approve the attached Homestead Exemption resolution changing the age from 62 years to 65 years.

RESULT:	DEFEATED [2 TO 3]
MOVER:	Marshall Cheek, Mayor Pro Tem
SECONDER:	Andrew Hixson, Councilmember
AYES:	Marshall Cheek, Josh Bare
NAYS:	Andrew Hixson, Matt Myers, Bruce Gaynor

New Motion

A motion to Approve the resolution as presented, with 62 years established as the age.

[Agenda Report - Homestead Exemption Resolution and Update](#)

[Resolution for Local Legislation](#)

RESULT:	APPROVED [4 TO 1]
MOVER:	Bruce Gaynor, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Matt Myers, Councilmember
AYES:	Andrew Hixson, Josh Bare, Matt Myers, Bruce Gaynor
NAYS:	Marshall Cheek

N. Adjourn in memory of**O. Adjourn to Executive Session for Personnel, Real Estate or Legal**

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 PM with a motion made by Councilmember Bare, seconded by Councilmember Myers.

P. Signed by _____ Mayor Craig Newton

Q. Attest: _____ Monique Philip, City Clerk



Mayor: Craig Newton • **Mayor Pro Tem:** Marshall Cheek • **Councilmember:** Andrew Hixson • **Councilmember:** Josh Bare
Councilmember: Matt Myers • **Councilmember:** Bruce Gaynor • **City Manager:** Eric Johnson • **City Clerk:** Monique Philip

AGENDA REPORT

To: Mayor and Council

From: William J. Diehl, Thompson, O'Brien, Kappler & Nasuti, PC

Meeting Date: March 3, 2025 – Regular Council Meeting (RCM)

Item No.: 25-7262

Title: Homestead Exemption Update, Resolution CC:

Eric Johnson, City Manager

Recommendation

Approve the execution of a resolution signed by the Mayor and Council supporting the introduction of local legislation to place a Homestead Exemption Amendment for a resolution to be approved by the Citizens of Norcross.

Background

Our local delegation in consultation with Legislative Counsel for the General Assembly has drafted legislation regarding the City of Norcross's Homestead Exemption. The draft continues the existing age limitation (62 y/o) whereas the City's legislation requested that the age be modified to 65 years of age. The Council will need sign a resolution supporting the local legislation.

Financial Impact

Financial Impacts have been discussed in previous agenda items

Consistent with Comprehensive Plan? (If applicable, please select which goal applies)

1. Continues to Strengthen Norcross as a Livable, Inclusive, and Safe Environment
2. Ensures that Norcross Residents have a Variety of Attainable, Quality Housing Options
3. Furthers the City's Tradition of Strong Leadership and High Level of Quality Services

Attachments

Original Legislative Draft- Resolution

**RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORCROSS
REQUESTING THE INTRODUCTION OF LOCAL LEGISLATION AND A CITY
REFERENDUM PROVIDING FOR AN INCREASE IN THE HOMESTEAD
EXEMPTION FOR MUNICIPAL AD VALOREM TAXES**

WHEREAS, the City Council for the City of Norcross, Georgia (the “City”) met on December 2, 2024 and authorized discussions with Norcross’s local delegation in the General Assembly for the purpose of submitting to the City’s voters the question of expanding the City’s homestead exemption from \$9,000 to \$45,000 and, for those age 62 or older, an increase of the exemption from \$18,000 to \$90,000;

WHEREAS a draft of such local legislation is attached hereto as Exhibit 1 (the “Draft Legislation”);

WHEREAS the City Council desires that the local delegation submit the attached Draft Legislation, or substitute legislation as necessary and appropriate, to the General Assembly such that the question of increasing the City’s homestead exemption can be called for a vote in the November 2025 municipal election;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Norcross petitions the local Gwinnett County delegation and members of the General Assembly to introduce and approve the Draft Legislation, with amendments as necessary and/or appropriate, such that the question of increasing the City’s homestead exemption can be placed before City of Norcross voters on the November 2025 general election.

SO RESOLVED on this ____ day of March, 2025,

Craig Newton, Mayor

Marshall Cheek, Mayor Pro Tem

Andrew Hixson, Councilmember

Josh Bare, Councilmember

Matt Myers, Councilmember

Bruce Gaynor, Councilmember

Attested by:

Monique Philip

Exhibit 1

--Draft Legislation--