



**CITY of POOLER**  
— GEORGIA —

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**CITY COUNCIL PLANNING RETREAT – MINUTES**

August 4, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. | Cohen’s Retreat, 5715 Skidaway Rd, Savannah, GA 31406

**I. ROLL CALL/DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

Present: Rebecca C. Benton, Mayor  
Tom Hutcherson, Mayor Pro Tem  
Shannon Black, Councilmember  
Aaron Higgins, Councilmember  
Stevie Wall, Councilmember  
John Wilcher, Councilmember  
Karen Williams, Councilmember  
Robert Byrd, City Manager  
Craig Call, City Attorney  
Chris Lightle, Finance Officer  
Brian Crooks, City Planner  
Nicole Dixon, Planning & Development Director  
Chief Wade Simmons, Fire Department  
Chief Ashley Brown, Police Department  
Matthew Saxon, Assistant City Manager  
Caroline Hankins, Director of Human Resources  
Kiley Fusco, Clerk of Council

Guests: Chris Burke, HGB  
Holmes Bell, HGB  
Leon Davenport, Thunderbolt Consultants

Absent: John Wilcher, Councilmember

**II. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Rebecca Benton called the retreat to order at 11:16 a.m.

**III. DEPARTMENT REPORTS & UPDATES**

**A. Planning & Zoning Report**

Planning & Development Director Nicole Dixon and City Planner Brian Crooks presented a Planning & Zoning, Inspections, and Development Authority update. Their presentation has been provided as an attachment.

**B. Capital Project Report**

Holmes Bell and Chris Burke of Hussey Gay Bell presented an update on the water projects, sewer projects, wastewater treatment plant, and the proposed library. Their presentation has been provided as an attachment.

**C. Quacco Road Update**

Leon Davenport of Thunderbolt Consultants presented an update on the Quacco Road Widening. His presentation has been provided as an attachment.

**D. Finance Report**

Chris Lightle, Finance Officer, presented an update on the City's finances and reviewed the credit card convenience fee and transaction fee processes. His handout has been provided as an attachment.

**E. Police Report**

Chief Ashley Brown presented an update on the Police Department. His presentation has been provided as an attachment.

**F. Fire-Rescue Report**

Chief Wade Simmons presented an update on Fire-Rescue Services. His presentation has been provided as an attachment.

**IV. TRAINING & GENERAL DISCUSSIONS**

**A. Election Year Guidelines – Review**

City Attorney Craig Call review municipal election guidelines for the elected officials and staff present. A memo has been provided as an attachment.

**B. Topics for Discussion – Staff**

**1. Country Home Estates Roadways**

Robert Byrd noted that Craig Call, Ben Perkins, and an additional attorney will review the authority/process for the ability of the City to deed property to the Development Authority for future sale.

**2. Public Library**

Robert Byrd reported that there is currently property and 4.4M in funding put aside by the City for the new public library. There may be an opportunity to generate the additional funds needed through Chatham County Building Authority bonds.

**3. Staff Member Relocation**

Robert Byrd reported that Perry Robinson will be joining to the Public Works team and landscaping for the City Hall property will be contracted.

**4. Consultant Services**

Robert Byrd reported on the opportunity to keep Leon Davenport of Thunderbolt Consultants on retainer at a monthly rate (as opposed to his current hourly rate) while he serves as Project Manager for the Quacco Road widening.

**5. Federal Holiday Addition**

Caroline Hankins reviewed the potential addition of Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples' Day to the city calendar.

**6. Ordinance O2023-05.B**

Nicole Dixon and Brian Crooks presented the draft ordinance regarding the display of goods in parking or loading areas for review and discussion. A draft of the ordinance has been provided as an attachment.

**7. Ordinance O2023-05.C**

Nicole Dixon and Brian Crooks presented the draft ordinance regarding the addition of horizontal mixed-use development for review and discussion. A draft of the ordinance has been provided as an attachment.

**C. Topics for Discussion – Elected Officials**

**1. Scot Turner/Eternal Vigilance Action**

Councilmember Aaron Higgins reported on the opportunity to have Scot Turner come speak before Council regarding GA HB 200 (the "Instant Runoff/Ranked Choice Voting Bill").

**2. E-Mobility Success for Local Governments**

Councilmember Aaron Higgins reported on the opportunity to attend an upcoming educational session on Georgia’s E-Mobility transition, which will focus on creating charging infrastructure and successful state, local, and private partnerships.

**3. Polling Places**

Councilmember Karen Williams reported that the YMCA will be a new polling place for the City of Pooler, but the National Mighty Eighth Museum will not.

**4. Monument Sign**

Councilmember Stevie Wall requested an update on the GA DOT monument sign. Matthew Saxon reported that the DOT sign permits are now in place; however, there is not yet an exact date of installation.

**5. City Hall Lobby**

Councilmember Stevie Wall reported that his interest in officially naming the lobby/entrance hall in City Hall after Captain Robert William Pooler.

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Rebecca Benton adjourned the retreat at 2:49 p.m.

The foregoing minutes are true and correct and are approved on this

\_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

CITY OF POOLER, GEORGIA

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Rebecca Benton, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Kiley Fusco, City Clerk