

Minutes of the  
REGULAR MEETING  
of the  
CITY COUNCIL  
LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN, GEORGIA

June 12, 2025  
6:00 p.m.

**PRESIDING:** Mayor David S. Bennett

**PRESENT:** Council Members Arch Willingham, Taylor Watson, Tony Towns, and Kevin Leckenby; City Attorney Bill Pickering; City Manager Kenny Lee; and Chief of Police and Fire Jason Lewis.

**CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE:** Mayor David Bennett called the Regular Meeting of the City Council to order at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 12, 2025, at City Hall, 1214 Lula Lake Road, Lookout Mountain, Georgia 30750. Chief Jason Lewis led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Council Member Arch Willingham made a motion to approve the minutes of the Council's Regular Meetings of November 14, 2024, December 12, 2024, January 9, 2025, February 13, 2025, March 13, 2025, and April 10, 2025; Public Hearings of January 9, 2025, and May 8, 2025; and Special Meetings of January 14, 2025, April 3, 2025, and May 13, 2025. The motion was seconded by Council Member Taylor Watson and passed unanimously.

**LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN INN – APPLICATION FOR PRIVILEGE LICENSE:** The Lookout Mountain Inn, formerly the Garden Walk Bed and Breakfast, has submitted an application for a privilege license. City Attorney Bill Pickering advised that the application was generally in order but did not include verification of the amount of the Inn's liability insurance. Council Member Taylor Watson made a motion to approve the Lookout Mountain Inn's application for a privilege license, subject to the Inn's providing verification of the amount of its liability insurance. The motion was seconded by Council Member Arch Willingham and passed unanimously.

**RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING SEWER CHARGES:** Based on substantial anticipated increases in the Sewer Department's expenses as well as significant new debt service obligations the City will have in connection with the rehabilitation of the existing Chickamauga Trail pump station, City Auditor Paul Johnson has advised that Sewer Fund revenue needs to be increased significantly. The Council has determined that a 30% increase in sewer rates is necessary. City Attorney Bill Pickering presented a Resolution establishing new sewer charges to be effective July 1, 2025. The new charges include rate increases of 30% for all categories of users, including City residential, City commercial, and persons and entities outside the City's corporate limits. Council Member Arch Willingham made a motion to approve and adopt the Resolution Establishing New Sewer Charges. The motion was seconded by Council Member Taylor

Watson and passed unanimously. The written Resolution with a schedule of the new sewer charges is filed with these minutes.

**TOMMY GIFFORD - GEORGIA FUND 1 AND PINNACLE BANK ICS ACCOUNT:**

Former Mayor Tommy Gifford has been working with the current administration in identifying ways for the City to get a better return on its savings and investments while ensuring that the City's money will be federally insured or otherwise protected. Mr. Gifford was unable to attend today's Council meeting. In his absence, City Manager Kenny Lee advised that a proposal would be submitted during the July Council meeting.

**FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE 350 - AMEND BUDGET FOR 2024-2025 FISCAL**

**YEAR:** City Attorney Bill Pickering presented and read Ordinance No. 350, an ordinance to amend the budget for the City of Lookout Mountain for the fiscal year July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. Council Member Arch Willingham made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 350 on first reading. The motion was seconded by Council Member Tony Towns and passed unanimously.

**FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE 351 – ADOPT BUDGET FOR 2025-2026 FISCAL**

**YEAR:** City Attorney Bill Pickering presented and read Ordinance No. 351, an ordinance to adopt a budget for the City of Lookout Mountain for the fiscal year July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026. Council Member Arch Willingham made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 351 on first reading. The motion was seconded by Council Member Taylor Watson and passed unanimously.

**PLANNING COMMISSION UPDATE – ARCH WILLINGHAM:** Council Member Arch Willingham reported that during the Municipal Planning Commission's most recent meeting, the MPC had approved the moving of one lot line in Kirkgate and another on McFarland/Whitt Road. The MPC also discussed a potential subdivision around 1700 Lula Lake Road and discussed options of flag lots, easements, and major and minor subdivisions. The MPC advised the property owner that it needed to obtain input from City Attorney Bill Pickering before proceeding.

**FIRE AND POLICE UPDATE – TAYLOR WATSON:** Council Member Taylor Watson provided the monthly fire and police report. Ms. Watson reported that things were going smoothly and that she was pleased with the progress being made under Chief Lewis and Assistant Chief Dedman. Volunteer fire fighters are working with the Tennessee fire department. Fire and police personnel will be actively involved in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade, and all residents are encouraged to attend.

**STORMWATER COMMITTEE – TONY TOWNS:** Council Member Tony Towns advised that there was no update from the Stormwater Committee. The committee is waiting on a plan that will be provided by Chris Wallace of Walker County.

**RECREATION BOARD:** Council Member Tony Towns provided an update on the activities of the Recreation Board. The Board is planning a fundraiser that will involve the sale of used sports equipment. The Board also hopes to get quotes for lighting at Carter Field.

**PUBLIC WORKS – KEVIN LECKENBY:** Council Member Kevin Leckenby presented the monthly Public Works report. Mr. Leckenby's detailed written report, which also includes a Gardens Update, is filed with these minutes.

**CITY MANAGER – KENNY LEE:** City Manager Kenny Lee advised that the July 4th parade will be starting at the Commons and moving from there to the Georgia City Hall. Bike Across Georgia will take place in June 2026 and will originate in the City. Mr. Lee complimented City Attorney Bill Pickering, Vice Mayor Arch Willingham and City Auditor Paul Johnson on their hard work on the loan from the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) for the financing of the pump station rehabilitation project.

**SEWER ADVISORY BOARD UPDATE – PUMP STATION REPAIRS – WES HASDEN:** Mr. Hasden reported that the necessary documents for the financing of the pump station rehabilitation project have been submitted to GEFA. The City is ready to move forward with the project, with the next step being the solicitation of bids for construction.

**HAYES AND ALLEN CHANDLER – 1210 ELFIN ROAD:** Hayes and Allen Chandler, who live at 1210 Elfin Road, appeared before the Council to discuss issues with the apron of their driveway which is suffering from runoff from Oberon Trail. The Chandlers advised that asphalt around the driveway apron and a culvert were caving in. They have obtained an estimate of \$10,000 to repave the apron and another \$8,000 to repair the driveway. City Manager Kenny Lee advised that driveway issues in the City right-of-way (which is owned by the property owner) were generally the owner's responsibility. Mr. Lee stated, however, that he wanted to study this matter further and have the issue reviewed by Mr. Pickering to be sure that was the correct interpretation in this particular case. Council Member Tony Towns volunteered to take pictures of the location and provide them to Mr. Pickering.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:** Mayor Bennett read the following notice regarding qualifying for this year's municipal election:

*Notice is hereby given that the qualifying period for the 2025 Municipal Election of the City of Lookout Mountain, Georgia, will begin on Monday, August 18, 2025, at 8:30 a.m., and will end on Friday, August 22, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.*

*Candidates for the office of Mayor or City Council must file their Notice of Candidacy, Affidavit and qualifying fee at City Hall during the qualifying period, or they will not be eligible for election. Candidates must also submit the Nomination Petition required by the City Charter. Candidates are strongly encouraged to submit the Nomination Petition during the qualifying period.*

*Qualifying packets may be picked up at City Hall during normal business hours.*

*The Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025.*

**PROPOSAL FOR TOWN CENTER COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT:** The City reissued its Request for Proposals (RFP) for the commercial development of parts of the Town

Center property on April 3, 2025. The bid opening was on May 16, 2025. The City received one proposal for the development of the property.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Council Member Kevin Leckenby made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the proposal, which involves the potential sale or disposition of the City's real property, and for consultation with legal counsel. The motion was seconded by Council Member Taylor Watson and passed unanimously. The Council then met in Executive Session for the purpose stated.

**REOPEN REGULAR MEETING:** Following the Executive Session, the Council reopened the Regular Meeting. Council Member Tony Towns made a motion that Vice Mayor Arch Willingham and City Attorney Bill Pickering be authorized to proceed with contract negotiations with the bidder for the commercial development of the Town Center property. Any contract will be subject to approval by the City Council. The motion was seconded by Council Member Kevin Leckenby and passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Roberts  
City Clerk