



CITY OF BROOKLET

104 CHURCH ST. BROOKLET, GA 30415 PHONE (912) 842-2137 FAX (912)842-5877

January 15, 2026

**City Council
Meeting
7:00 PM**

Minutes

Members Present: Mayor L.W. "Nicky" Gwinnett, Jr., Mayor Pro-Tem Hubert K. Roughton, Councilman Phillip Oliver, Councilman Brad Anderson, Councilwoman Rebecca Kelly, Councilwoman Sheila Wentz, Interim City Manager Lori Phillips, Planning & Zoning/Assistant City Clerk Melissa Petitt, and Interim Chief of Police Sergeant Nickki Garman.

1. Call to order and welcome - Mayor L.W. "Nicky" Gwinnett, Jr.

2. Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance

3. Oath of Office administered by Mayor L.W. "Nicky" Gwinnett, Jr. to:

- A. City Council Post # 3, Rebecca Kelly
- B. City Council Post # 4, Councilman Phillip Oliver
- C. City Council Post # 5, Councilwoman Sheila Wentz

Mayor Gwinnett administered the oath of office to three council members elected in the November municipal election: Rebecca Kelly (Post #3), Phillip Oliver (Post #4), and Sheila Wentz (Post #5). Each oath included a pledge to uphold the U.S. and Georgia constitutions, the city charter, and city ordinances, as well as affirmations related to eligibility and public trust.

4. Recognition and promotion of Police Officers, presented by Interim Police Chief Nickki Garman to:

- A. Officer Justin Odom to Advance Patrol Officer
- B. Officer Zachary Stender to Corporal

Interim Police Chief Nickki Garman formally recognized two promotions within the Brooklet Police Department, emphasizing the professionalism and dedication required of officers and the support provided by their families. Justin Odom was promoted to

advanced patrol officer, with Garman citing his continued commitment, sound judgment, and faithful service to the city. Zachary Stender was promoted to corporal in recognition of his leadership and professionalism.

5. Public Hearing:

A. Variance Application Number: VA2025-002 Map/Parcel #: B03 000052 000 - Russell Davis, who is the property owner of 404 West Lee Street, Brooklet, GA., 0.41 acres, presently zoned R-1, requests a shorter rear setback of 5ft instead of 10ft and a shorter side setback of 25ft instead of 35ft to build a (15x20) 300 square foot storage building.

- **Public Discussion**
- **Discussion from the City Council**

Davis explained that the reduced side setback would align with neighboring structures on the street, while the rear setback adjustment was needed because his lot is shallower than those in the area. He also stated that the adjacent property owner had no objection to the request. No one spoke in opposition.

6. Public Comments (Agenda Item):

Citizens are encouraged to participate in the City of Brooklet City meetings. The City of Brooklet encourages civility in public disclosure and requests that speakers direct their comments to the Chair. Those attendees wishing to share a document and or comments in writing for inclusion into the public record must email the item to lori.phillips@brookletga.us no later than noon on the day of the meeting.

7. Approval of Agenda

Motion to amend the agenda to move Item O to H on the agenda.

Motion to Approve

Motion: Rebecca Kelly

Second: Brad Anderson

Ayes: Brad Anderson, Keith Roughton, Phillip Oliver, Sheila Wentz, and Rebecca Kelly

Nays: None

The motion carried 5-0

8. Consideration of a motion to elect Mayor Pro Tem, per Brooklet Municipal Code, Section 2.16 of the City Charter.

Councilwoman Kelly made a motion to elect Sheila Wentz as the Mayor of Pro-Tem for 2026.

Motion to Approve

Motion: Rebecca Kelly

Second: Brad Anderson
Ayes: Brad Anderson, Keith Roughton, Phillip Oliver, Sheila Wentz, and Rebecca Kelly
Nayes: None
The motion carried 5-0

9. Approval of Minutes

A. December 18, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes

Motion to Approve

Motion: Brad Anderson

Second: Rebecca Kelly

Ayes: Brad Anderson, Keith Roughton, Phillip Oliver, Sheila Wentz, and Rebecca Kelly

Nayes: None

The motion carried 5-0

10. Approval of the December Financial Reports

The city has collected approximately 73 percent of its total budgeted revenues across all funds as of the end of December.

Motion to Approve

Motion: Sheila Wentz

Second: Brad Anderson

Ayes: Brad Anderson, Keith Roughton, Phillip Oliver, Sheila Wentz, and Rebecca Kelly

Nayes: None

The motion carried 5-0

11. Comments by:

- Interim City Manager / City Clerk Lori Phillips explained that while the sanitation fund appeared to be over-expended, the discrepancy was tied to hurricane-related cleanup costs that had to be paid while the city awaited FEMA reimbursement. Staff reported that FEMA funds have now been received and that accounting adjustments will be made to properly reflect those expenses. Council was advised that continued monitoring of general fund expenditures would be necessary moving forward. Phillips reported progress on a generator grant originally awarded in 2024. Phillips said the project stalled following the death of Jim Standoff, who had been overseeing the effort, but staff recently met with grant representatives and secured an extension. The city is now moving forward with installing two generators—one at a well house and one at the public works building—with a total city cost of \$13,000.

Mayor Gwinnett noted that the grant had been approved prior to Standoff's passing and thanked staff for resuming the project.

- City Attorney Ben Perkins informed the council that a sheriff's deputy served the city with a lawsuit upon his arrival at the meeting. Perkins said the suit was filed by Becki Hodges against the City of Brooklet, the municipal court, and Municipal Court Judge Johnny Vines. He characterized the filing as an attempt to appeal against a matter that had been dismissed the previous year. Perkins also updated the council on negotiations with the Bulloch County School District regarding water and sewer service for existing and future school facilities. He said the city recently submitted its current proposal and believes an agreement may be close.
- City Engineer Wesley Parker provided updates on several ongoing and upcoming infrastructure projects. He reported that a pre-construction meeting for city street paving projects is scheduled for next week, and that only one remaining wetland crossing remains for the sewer connection project to Statesboro, which is expected to be completed in February. Parker also reported that materials have arrived for the Highway 80 water main project and that plans for the Cone Street sewer project are complete and will be submitted to the Environmental Protection Division. He noted that the city has applied for hurricane recovery grants to support additional sewer extensions, with more information expected in the coming months.
- Planning & Zoning Administrator Assistant City Clerk Melissa Petitt reported that six candidates have applied for upcoming planning commission seats, with interviews scheduled for January 31 involving the mayor and two council members. She also announced that the city is working to integrate its utility meters with Georgia Power's automated meter-reading system, which would eliminate the need for manual meter readings if the implementation proceeded smoothly.
- Interim Chief of Police, Sergeant Nickki Garmen, reported that a 2018 Dodge Charger patrol vehicle had been struck by a deer for the second time and would be undergoing repairs. She also addressed questions related to vehicle inventory and equipment ordering timelines, noting that some new equipment is still being delivered.
- Safety Coordinator Johnny Alamia was absent from the meeting.

12. Comments by Council Members:

- Mayor Pro-Tem Sheila Wentz had no reports.
- Councilmember Brad Anderson had no reports.
- Councilmember Phillip Oliver had no reports.

- Councilmember Rebecca Kelly had no reports.
- Councilmember Keith Roughton had no reports.
- Mayor L.W. "Nicky" Gwinnett had no reports.

13. Ordinances:

A. Consideration of a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance No. 2025-031 – Amending and restating the Official Zoning Map of Brooklet, Georgia.

Motion to Approve

Motion: Brad Anderson

Second: Sheila Wentz

Ayes: Brad Anderson, Keith Roughton, Phillip Oliver, Sheila Wentz, and Rebecca Kelly

Nayes: None

The motion carried 5-0

B. Consideration of a motion to approve the recommendation from the Planning & Zoning Commission to approve Variance Application VA2025-002, requesting a reduction of the rear setback from 10 feet to 5 feet and the side setback from 35 feet to 25 feet, to allow construction of a 15-foot by 20-foot storage building at 404 West Lee Street.

Motion to Approve

Motion: Brad Anderson

Second: Keith Roughton

Ayes: Brad Anderson, Keith Roughton, Phillip Oliver, Sheila Wentz, and Rebecca Kelly

Nayes: None

The motion carried 5-0

14. Other Discussion Items:

- A. Hagan Road Investments, LLC requests consideration for allowing the Hunnicutt Tract (21015 Highway 80 East) to receive water and sewer service from the City of Statesboro rather than the City of Brooklet. The request is based on the distance and cost of extending Brooklet utilities, and on the proximity of Statesboro infrastructure. The applicant seeks consideration prior to any changes to the Bulloch County Service Delivery Strategy. Their specific request to the City of Brooklet is to allow the City of Statesboro, whose existing infrastructure is closer to the above-referenced parcel, to serve this parcel with water and sewer. The City of Statesboro has sufficient capacity to serve this tract.**

One of the longest discussions of the night was centered on a request from Hagan Road Investments, LLC, regarding the Hunnicutt Tract near Highway 80. The developer requested consideration for receiving water and sewer service from the City of Statesboro rather than from Brooklet, citing distance, cost, and proximity to existing infrastructure. Mayor Gwinnett noted that the tract falls within Brooklet's service delivery area under the city's most recent service delivery agreement. While acknowledging the financial realities of extending sewer service, he cautioned against weakening the city's long-term position by relinquishing control of service territory. Council members discussed the city's limited sewer capacity and elevation challenges and expressed concern that allowing another jurisdiction to serve the area could restrict Brooklet's future growth. Several members said they could potentially support allowing sewer services through Statesboro, if necessary, but emphasized the importance of retaining control of water and sanitation services. Staff and council agreed that more information is needed, including project scope, timelines, and the number of proposed homes. Several speakers suggested initiating discussions with the City of Statesboro leadership to better understand future infrastructure plans and explore cooperative solutions. Perkins advised that any agreement would need to be formalized in writing to protect Brooklet's delivery interests.

15. Comprehensive Plan – Update vs. Amendment Designation

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has indicated it will treat the current comprehensive plan submittal as a full update, which would extend the City's next required update deadline to 2031. Alternatively, the city may retain its current deadline of June 30, 2029—consistent with the remainder of Bulloch County—by revising the transmittal letter to replace the word “update” with “amendment.” The Comprehensive Plan Review Committee (CRC) recommends maintaining consistency with the rest of the county by keeping the existing June 30, 2029, deadline. The City of Brooklet has completed an amendment to its comprehensive plan and is submitting it for review by the Coastal Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs. Council discussed the city's comprehensive plan timeline, noting that the Department of Community Affairs has offered to treat the current plan as a full update, extending the next deadline to 2031. Council indicated a preference for remaining aligned with Bulloch County's planning schedule.

16. Discussion on setting a date and time for a future Town Hall meeting.

Brooklet's 2nd Annual Hot Dog Social and Town Hall Meeting will be held on March 12, 2026, at 6:00 PM at the Randy Newman Community Center.

Before entering executive session, a Brooklet citizen addressed the council to offer a public apology to Phillips for comments made during a prior meeting. The speaker acknowledged losing perspective during a disagreement and praised Phillips for her service and institutional knowledge, calling her one of the city's strongest employees. He said the apology was offered publicly in the spirit of accountability and moving forward.

17. Consideration of a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss "Personnel Matters," "Real Estate," and/or "Potential Litigation" in accordance with O.C.G.A. 50-14-3(b)

Motion to Approve

Motion: Sheila Wentz

Second: Brad Anderson

Ayes: Brad Anderson, Keith Roughton, Phillip Oliver, Sheila Wentz, and Rebecca Kelly

Nayes: None

The motion carried 5-0

18. Consideration of a motion to exit the Executive Session and enter back into the Regular Session for any motions that need to be made.

Motion to Approve

Motion: Sheila Wentz

Second: Brad Anderson

Ayes: Brad Anderson, Keith Roughton, Phillip Oliver, Sheila Wentz, and Rebecca Kelly

Nayes: None

The motion carried 5-0

19. Adjournment

Motion to Approve

Motion: Brad Anderson

Second: Keith Roughton

Ayes: Brad Anderson, Keith Roughton, Phillip Oliver, Sheila Wentz, and Rebecca Kelly

Nayes: None

The motion carried 5-0

Approved this 19 day of February, 2026.


L.W. (Nicky) Gwinnett, Jr., Mayor


Lori Phillips, Int. City Manager/City Clerk

