



CITY OF BROOKLET
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L.W. (Nicky) Gwinnett, Jr. Mayor
Hubert Keith Roughton, Mayor Pro-Tem
Bradley Anderson, Councilman
Rebecca Kelly, Councilwoman
James Harrison, Councilman
Sheila Wentz, Councilwoman

Carter Crawford, City Manager
Lori Phillips, City Clerk
Melissa Pevey, Assistant Clerk
Ben Perkins, City Attorney

Work Session
October 10, 2024
6:30 PM
Minutes

1. **Call to order and welcome** - Mayor Gwinnett
 - Invocation by Mayor Gwinnett
 - Pledge of Allegiance by all.
2. **Consideration of a motion to approve the agenda**
There was a motion to amend the agenda to add for discussion, Item 1. Agenda Protocol.
MOTION: Brad Anderson
SECOND: Sheila Wentz
AYES: Rebecca Kelly, Sheila Wentz, Brad Anderson, James Harrison, and Keith Roughton
NAYES: None
3. **Discussion Items:**
 - a. Proposed Purchasing Policy
 - b. Proposed Vehicle/Equipment Replacement Policy
 - c. Select Comprehensive Plan Stakeholders
 - d. SPLOST
 - e. Appointment of Sheila Wentz for Water Committee
 - f. All Green Services Invoice#63
 - g. South 301 Auto Body Service Invoice for Police Vehicle Repairs
 - h. Proposed Work Order Software
 - i. Georgia Technologies Quote for Laptops
 - j. Christmas Party and Employee Recognition
 - k. Tree Removal on City Right-of-Ways
 - l. Agenda Protocol

4. Motion to Adjourn

Motion to Approve

MOTION: Brad Anderson

SECOND: Rebecca Kelly

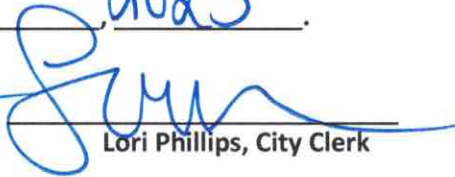
AYES: Rebecca Kelly, Sheila Wentz, Brad Anderson, James Harrison, and Keith Roughton

NAYES: None

The motion carried 5-0

Approved this 17 day of April, 2025.


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


Lori Phillips, City Clerk



Brooklet City Council discusses SPLOST 2024 scenarios

The Brooklet City Council's October 10, 2024, work session focused on several key issues, including preparations for the upcoming SPLOST 2024 referendum and the selection of stakeholders for the town's comprehensive plan. The council also reviewed new purchasing and vehicle replacement policies, discussed tree removal efforts, and debated how best to recognize city employees during the holidays.

The meeting started with Mayor **Nicky Gwinnett** offering a prayer focused on the town's recovery from the recent storm and the hard work of the public works team handling cleanup. The Pledge of Allegiance followed, and the agenda was approved after Councilwoman **Rebecca Kelly** requested an amendment to revisit a previously discussed public comment protocol.

Proposed Purchasing Policy

Carter Crawford, City Manager, presented a new purchasing policy aimed at making Brooklet's purchasing process more efficient while maintaining accountability. The policy outlines steps for different purchase amounts, including guidelines for competitive bidding, and makes smaller purchases easier for city departments. A minor adjustment was proposed to require City Council approval for expenditures over \$10,000 if they aren't part of the annual budget. The council appreciated the simplicity and agreed it would make day-to-day operations smoother.

Vehicle and Equipment Replacement Policy

The council discussed a proposed policy for replacing city vehicles and equipment, based on national guidelines. The policy sets up an annual review process to evaluate the condition of vehicles and equipment, using factors like age, mileage, and repair costs. The review team would consist of the city manager, police chief, and public works director. The council supported this approach, noting that it would help them plan and budget for future replacements. They agreed to move this item to the consent agenda.

Comprehensive Plan Stakeholders Selection

The city needs to form a team of 12-15 community stakeholders to assist with developing Brooklet's comprehensive plan. The team will include local residents, business owners, educators, and developers. Councilman **Bradley**

Anderson stressed the importance of selecting stakeholders who live in Brooklet, as they have a vested interest in the town's future. Councilwoman **Sheila Wentz** suggested including younger voices to bring in fresh perspectives. The council will submit names to the city clerk, and final selections will be discussed in the next session.

SPLOST 2024

The council reviewed several scenarios for using the upcoming \$135 million SPLOST (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) funds. In Scenario 1, \$60 million is allocated for a new jail, with \$11.8 million for judicial projects, leaving fewer funds for other community needs.

Scenario 2 reduces jail funding to \$42 million, freeing up money for indoor recreation facilities in Statesboro and \$2.2 million for sewer improvements in Brooklet.

Scenario 3 also allocates \$42 million for the jail, but introduces more flexibility for community projects by further adjusting funds between the county and cities, with the possibility of additional funds if collections exceed \$145 million. The council discussed the need to gain public support for the March 2024 referendum, emphasizing that if the SPLOST doesn't pass, property taxes may need to increase to fund these projects.

State of Georgia Investment Pool

Brooklet is considering joining the Georgia Fund 1 investment pool, which would allow the city to invest surplus funds while retaining easy access to the money. The current interest rate is 5%, which the council found attractive. More information will be presented at a future meeting, but initial discussions were favorable, as this could provide a good return for the city's unused funds.

Application of Sheila Wentz for Water Committee

Sheila Wentz's application to join the Water Utility Board was approved. The board is responsible for reviewing billing adjustments and setting up payment plans for residents. The council moved her application to the consent agenda for final approval.

All Green Services Invoice

There was some confusion over a past-due invoice from All Green Services, but it was later discovered that the payment had already been processed. The council agreed to wait for final confirmation from All Green before considering the matter closed, expecting it to be resolved by the next meeting.

South 301 Auto Body Service Invoice

The council reviewed an invoice for police vehicle repairs, which totaled \$6,441.31. This amount was covered by insurance, and the council agreed to add this item to the consent agenda for approval.

Roadwork Orders Software

The city is exploring a cloud-based software system for managing public works work orders. The software would allow citizens to submit and track work orders online, helping streamline the process and reduce paperwork. While the system could improve efficiency, the council suggested delaying the purchase until January to better align with the city's budget cycle.

Georgia Technologies Quote for Laptops

The council reviewed quotes for new laptops or iPads to reduce the amount of paper used during meetings. The proposed cost for laptops was \$6,265, while iPads were quoted at \$5,250. Some council members raised concerns about spending this amount of money, given the limited number of meetings. Alternatives such as Chromebooks or shared monitors were suggested, and the decision was postponed until January for further consideration.

Core & Main Bid Proposal

This bid, related to purchasing water meters for a new subdivision, had been deferred from a previous meeting. The council agreed to move the bid to the consent agenda for final approval.

Christmas Party and Employee Recognition

The council debated whether to host a city-funded Christmas party or to redirect the funds toward employee bonuses and a community service project. Mayor Gwinnett supported holding a party as a way to thank employees, while Bradley Anderson suggested giving employees bonuses and organizing a community service event. The council leaned toward the idea of providing bonuses rather than spending city money on a party, but no final decision was made.

Tree Removal on City Right-of-Ways

The council discussed the need to remove aging, potentially dangerous trees along city right-of-ways. A list of trees needing removal will be compiled, focusing on those at risk of falling and causing damage. The council recognized that many trees have been neglected for years and

agreed that action should be taken before future storms cause further issues. The matter will be revisited once the list is complete.

Public Comment Protocol

Councilwoman Kelly brought up a discrepancy in the city's public comment protocol. The current form requires comments to be submitted a week in advance, but citizens don't receive the agenda until 48 hours before the meeting, creating confusion. Kelly proposed updating the form and policy to allow comments on any topic and adjust the submission timeline. The council agreed that the protocol should be revised and asked Kelly to work with the city attorney to resolve the issue.

1. Call to order and welcome - Mayor Gwinnett

- Invocation
- Pledge of Allegiance

2. Consideration of a motion to approve the agenda

- Council approves agenda and moves discussion of the public comment protocols to the end of the item list.

3. Discussion Items:

3.1 Proposed Purchasing Policy

The purchasing policy presented by Mr. Carter was based on a sample from the Georgia Municipal Association, adapted for a smaller city. It outlines various approval levels for city purchases, emphasizing streamlined processes for smaller expenses. The policy includes procedures for bidding, RFPs, and purchase orders. The council suggested an adjustment on approval levels for purchases over \$10,000. The policy was generally well-received.

Summary of the Proposed City of Brooklet Purchasing Policies

Objective

The City of Brooklet aims to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent economically and efficiently. The purchasing policies are designed to promote open and fair competition through competitive means whenever possible. Purchasing levels are periodically reviewed and may be adjusted with City Council approval.

Use of Policy

These policies are established for the City's fiscal responsibility and benefit. They do not confer any rights, duties, or entitlements to bidders or proposers.

Key Definitions

- **Capital Asset:** Property valued at \$5,000 or more with a useful life exceeding one year.
- **Capital Improvement Projects:** Projects involving public infrastructure, included in the City's five-year capital improvement plan.
- **Competitive Bid Process:** Methods like bidding, Requests for Proposals (RFPs), or Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) to secure the best price or contractor.
- **Emergency Conditions:** Situations severely hampering operations or risking life, health, safety, or property, as determined by the Department Director and City Manager.
- **Sole Source Purchase:** Procurement from a single source without soliciting multiple bids under certain conditions.

Purchasing Levels and Approval Requirements

Order Amount	Process Required	Approvals Needed
Less than \$100	No prior Purchase Order; submit receipt after purchase.	Department Director
\$100.01 - \$2,499.99	Purchase Order required.	Department Director
\$2,500 - \$9,999.99	Obtain minimum of three verbal quotes; Purchase Order required.	Department Director and City Manager
\$10,000 - \$25,000	Obtain minimum of three written bids/proposals.	City Council approval if not in annual budget
\$25,000 and above	Competitive Bid Process; Contract approved by City Council.	City Council

- Projects or purchases must not be divided to avoid higher approval levels.
- Amendments increasing costs by more than 5% or \$2,500 require additional approval.

Petty Cash Requisitions

- Used for small obligations not exceeding \$50.
- Requires departmental supervisor approval.
- Sales receipts must be provided within two business days.
- Sales tax will not be reimbursed; use the City's tax-exempt number.

Purchase Orders

- Required for all purchases unless exempt.
- Departments must ensure budget availability and obtain necessary approvals.
- Exempt items include council-approved service contracts, debt service, grants, insurance, land acquisition, payroll, professional services, and utilities.

Bidding Procedures

- **Informal Bids/Quotes/Proposals (Under \$50,000):**
 - **\$2,500 - \$9,999.99:** Obtain at least three verbal quotes.
 - **\$10,000 - \$25,000:** Obtain at least three written quotes.
- **Competitive Bids (Over \$25,000):**
 - Requires public advertisement and formal bid documents. ◦ Includes Invitations to Bid, RFPs, and RFQs.
 - Steps include developing specifications, public notices, bid openings, evaluations, and City Council approvals.

Bonding and Insurance Requirements

- **Bid Bonds:** Typically 5-10% of bid amount; ensures bid maintenance.
- **Performance Bonds:** 100% of contract price for projects over \$50,000.
- **Payment Bonds:** 100% of contract price for projects over \$50,000.
- **Insurance:** Contractors must provide certificates covering general liability, automobile liability, workers' compensation, and professional liability.

Sole Source Purchases

- Allowed when only one vendor can meet the specific needs.

- For purchases of \$10,000 or more, City Council must approve waiving bidding procedures.

Local Vendor Preference

- Preference given to local vendors if within 5% or \$1,000 (whichever is less) of the lowest bid.
- Applies to vendors with a valid business registration or sales tax license on file with the City.

Ethics in City Contracting

- City officials and employees must disclose any interest in contracts and recuse themselves from related decisions.
- They may not influence decisions if they have a personal interest.

Emergency Purchasing

- Normal procedures may be waived during emergencies.
- **Approval authorities during emergencies:**
 - **Department Director:** Up to \$50,000. ◦ **City Clerk:** Up to \$50,000. ◦ **City Manager:** Over \$50,000.
- A summary of emergency purchases must be submitted to the City Council.

Receiving Procedures and Check Requests

- Departments must verify receipt and condition of goods.
- Damaged goods must be reported immediately.
- Invoices should be sent directly to Accounts Payable.
- All receiving documents must be submitted with check requests for payment processing.

3.2 Proposed Vehicle/Equipment Replacement Policy (Moving to Consent Agenda)

The city plans to adopt a policy for vehicle and equipment replacement based on American Public Works Association guidelines. A team will assess the condition of all city equipment annually to determine necessary replacements. The policy will be added to the consent agenda for the next meeting.

The City of Brooklet's Fleet Replacement Policy aims to ensure that city staff have the necessary tools—such as vehicles and equipment—to perform their duties safely and efficiently. The policy emphasizes cost control, maintenance, and the strategic replacement of vehicles to maximize their lifespan and value.

Objectives: The city seeks to control operating and maintenance costs, manage the fleet's size, standardize the vehicles, and accurately budget for replacements.

Maintenance: Regular preventive maintenance is essential to keep vehicles in good working condition and reduce repair costs. Escalating maintenance expenses and downtime are key indicators of when vehicles should be replaced.

Replacement: The City follows industry guidelines for vehicle replacement and maintains an updated schedule tracking age, usage, reliability, and costs. Replacement occurs when vehicles reach the end of their economic life or are no longer safe or reliable.

Disposal: Vehicles are reassigned or disposed of according to the City's asset disposal policy.

3.3 Select Comprehensive Plan Stakeholders

The city is preparing to develop a comprehensive plan and discussed selecting a team of community stakeholders to assist in the process.

- **Stakeholder Composition:**

The plan requires the involvement of 12-15 stakeholders, including two citizens, two local business representatives, one or two education representatives, one minority representative, two local developers, two members of the city planning board, and two local ministers (one of whom should be a minority).

- **Council Discussion:**

Council members were tasked with submitting names of potential candidates. Bradley Anderson emphasized the importance of selecting stakeholders who reside in Brooklet, arguing that local residents and business owners have a vested interest in the town's future. Sheila Wentz suggested including younger people to ensure generational diversity. The council agreed that the composition should reflect a mix of perspectives.

- **Next Steps:**

Council members were asked to submit their lists to the city clerk, and the final selections would be discussed at the next work session.

3.4 SPLOST 2024:

The council discussed various funding scenarios for the \$135 million Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) for 2024.

- **Funding Breakdown:**

The first scenario allocates \$60 million for a new jail, with \$11.8 million set aside for judicial projects. Other funds would be distributed between the county and cities, including Brooklet, Statesboro, Portal, and Register.

- **Second Scenario:**

An alternative scenario reduces jail funding to \$42 million, freeing up more money for county-wide projects like indoor recreation facilities and sewer upgrades in Brooklet.

- **Public Engagement:**

Mayor Gwinnett stressed the need to secure public support for the SPLOST referendum, emphasizing that failure to pass it could result in higher taxes. Anderson noted that the public often misunderstands the benefits of SPLOST, which largely helps fund projects with contributions from visitors and non-residents.

- **March Referendum:**

The council remains on track for a March 2024 referendum, with the goal of finalizing decisions by November before county commissioners change hands. The referendum may stand alone, which could impact voter turnout.

3.5 State of Georgia Investment Pool:

The council is considering participating in the Georgia Fund 1 investment pool, a state-managed investment option for local governments.

- **Investment Strategy:**

The pool allows local governments to invest surplus funds and withdraw them on short notice, offering more flexibility than traditional CDs. Current interest rates are at 5%, which is appealing to the council.

- **Next Steps:**

Further details will be presented at a future meeting, but the council was generally supportive of the idea.

3.6 Application of Sheila Wentz for Water Committee:

Sheila Wentz's application for the Water Utility Board was approved. The board handles utility adjustments and meets monthly to discuss issues such as payment plans and billing adjustments.

- **Outcome:**
Moved to the consent agenda.
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3.7 All Green Services Invoice:

There was confusion over a past-due amount on an invoice from All Green Services. The issue appeared to be a clerical error, as the city had already made a payment that had crossed in the mail with the invoice.

- **Resolution:**
The council agreed to wait for further clarification from All Green Services, with the issue expected to be resolved by the next meeting.
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3.8 South 301 Auto Body Service Invoice:

The council reviewed an invoice for repairs to a police vehicle. The repairs, totaling \$6,441.31, had been covered by insurance, and the council agreed to add this item to the consent agenda.

3.9 Roadwork Orders Software:

The city is considering a cloud-based software system to manage work orders more efficiently.

- **Benefits:**
The system would allow citizens to submit work orders online and track their progress. It also integrates with the city's water mapping system and provides detailed reporting on work order status, labor hours, and materials used.
- **Council Discussion:**
While the system would streamline processes and reduce paper use, some council members suggested waiting until January to implement it, aligning with the city's budget cycle.

3.10 Georgia Technologies Quote for Laptops:

The council discussed quotes for new laptops or iPads to be used during meetings, aiming to reduce paper consumption.

- **Cost:**

The quote for seven laptops was \$6,265, while the quote for seven iPads was \$5,250. The council debated whether this expense was justified, considering they only meet twice a month.

- **Alternative Solutions:**

Some council members proposed looking into Chromebooks or monitors connected to a central server to save costs. The decision was delayed until January to allow more time to explore options.

3.11 Core & Main Bid Proposal:

This item, related to purchasing water meters for a new subdivision, had been deferred from a previous meeting. The council agreed to add it to the consent agenda.

3.12 Christmas Party and Employee Recognition:

The council debated whether to hold a city-funded Christmas party or to focus on employee bonuses and community service projects.

- **Mayor's Proposal:**

Mayor Gwinnett advocated for a Christmas party as a way to thank employees and build camaraderie. However, council members expressed concerns about the cost, which could range from \$3,000 to \$5,000.

- **Alternative Ideas:**

Bradley Anderson suggested redirecting those funds to employee bonuses and proposed organizing a community service project, such as supporting local food banks or shelters. The council leaned toward providing bonuses rather than hosting a party, though no final decision was made.

3.13 Tree Removal on City Right-of-Ways:

Council members discussed the need to remove aging and potentially dangerous trees along city right-of-ways.

- **Assessment Plan:**

A list of trees needing removal will be compiled, focusing on those posing the greatest risk to property and public safety. The council acknowledged that many trees have been neglected for years and need to be addressed before future storms cause further damage.

- **Next Steps:**

The list of trees will be presented at a future meeting, and funding for tree removal will be discussed.

3.14 Protocol Discussion:

Councilwoman Kelly raised concerns about discrepancies in the city's public comment protocol.

- **Issue:**

The current protocol states that public comments are limited to topics related to city business and must be submitted one week in advance, even though the public only receives the agenda 48 hours before the meeting. This has caused confusion, as the form allows comments on topics not listed on the agenda, contradicting the protocol.

- **Council's Response:**

The council agreed that citizens should be allowed to speak on any topic, not just agenda items, and that the form submission timeline should be adjusted. Kelly was tasked with reaching out to the city attorney to clarify and update the protocol.

4. Motion to adjourn