

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Zack Thompson, Juli Hayes, Abigail Guzman, Barbara Brooks, Jon Elliott
VACANT POSITION: Ward 1
STAFF PRESENT: Bryan Lackey, Angela Sheppard, Abb Hayes, Alisa Grayson

Mayor-Elect Zack Thompson called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM and served as the presiding officer.

Mayor-Elect Zack Thompson provided the invocation after which the Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

OATH OF OFFICE:

The Honorable Judge John Breakfield administered the Oath of Office as follows:

Mayor Zack Thompson

“I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully perform the duties of Mayor for the City of Gainesville and that I will support and defend the Charter thereof as well as the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia and of the United States of America; that I am not the holder of any unaccounted for public money due this State or any political subdivision or authority thereof; that I am not the holder of any office of trust under the government of the United States, any other state, or any foreign state which I by the laws of the State of Georgia am prohibited from holding; that I am otherwise qualified to hold said office according to the Constitution and laws of Georgia; that I have been a resident of Ward 2 and the City of Gainesville for the time required by the Constitution and laws of this State and by the Municipal Charter; and that I will perform the duties of my office in the best interest of the City of Gainesville to the best of my ability without fear, favor, affection, reward, or expectation thereof.”

Council Member Abigail Guzman, Ward 4

“I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully perform the duties of Council Member of the City of Gainesville and that I will support and defend the Charter thereof as well as the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia and of the United States of America; that I am not the holder of any unaccounted for public money due this State or any political subdivision or authority thereof; that I am not the holder of any office of trust under the government of the United States, any other state, or any foreign state which I by the laws of the State of Georgia am prohibited from holding; that I am otherwise qualified to hold said office according to the Constitution and laws of Georgia; that I have been a resident of Ward 4 and the City of Gainesville for the time required by the Constitution and laws of this State and by the Municipal Charter; and that I will perform the duties of my office in the best interest of the City of Gainesville to the best of my ability without fear, favor, affection, reward, or expectation thereof.”

Mayor Thompson extended appreciation to his family and friends for their support. He also took a moment to extend a special thank you to the city’s previous mayor Sam Couvillon.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING:

A. Business Resolution 2026-01 Emergency Interim Successors

Motion to adopt resolution BR-2026-01 as presented naming the order of succession as Zack Thompson, Juli Hayes, Abigail Guzman, Barbara Brooks, and Jon Elliott.

Motion made by Council Member Hayes
Motion seconded by Council Member Guzman
Votes favoring the motion: Hayes, Guzman, Brooks, Elliott
Vacant: Ward 1

B. Appointment: Administrative Hearing Officer

Motion to reappoint G. Hammond Law, III as Administrative Hearing Officer for another one-year term.

Motion made by Council Member Hayes
Motion seconded by Council Member Brooks
Votes favoring the motion: Hayes, Guzman, Brooks, Elliott
Vacant: Ward 1

C. Appointment: Legal Organ

Motion to reappoint The Times as the legal organ for another one-year term.

Motion made by Council Member Elliott
Motion seconded by Council Member Guzman
Votes favoring the motion: Hayes, Guzman, Brooks, Elliott
Vacant: Ward 1

D. Appointment: Municipal Court Solicitor

Motion to reappoint James Farnan as Municipal Court Solicitor for a two-year term.

Motion made by Council Member Hayes
Motion seconded by Council Member Elliott
Votes favoring the motion: Hayes, Guzman, Brooks, Elliott
Vacant: Ward 1

E. Appointments: Board/Committee Ex-Officio Members

Motion to appoint the 2026 Ex-Officio Members as presented.

Airport Advisory Committee	Council Members Brooks & Hayes
American Red Cross	Mayor Thompson
Board of Health	Council Member Brooks
Chattahoochee Golf Course Advisory Committee	Mayor Thompson
Chicopee Woods Area Park Commission	Council Member Hayes
Economic Development Council	Mayor Thompson
Gainesville-Hall County Development Authority	Mayor Thompson
Gainesville-Hall County Land Bank Board	Council Member Brooks
Gainesville Non-Profit Development Authority	Council Member Brooks

Gainesville Redevelopment Authority	Mayor Thompson
Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors	Mayor Thompson
HALLmark Initiative	Mayor Thompson
Historic Preservation Commission	Council Member Elliott
Housing Authority	Council Member Guzman
Keep Hall Beautiful/Hall County Green Alliance	Council Member Hayes
Main Street Gainesville Advisory Board	Council Member Guzman
Parks & Recreation Board	Council Member Hayes
Parks & Recreation Foundation	Council Member Guzman
Planning and Appeals Board	Council Member Elliott

Motion made by Council Member Hayes
Motion seconded by Council Member Guzman
Votes favoring the motion: Hayes, Guzman, Brooks, Elliott
Vacant: Ward 1

F. Appointment: Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

Motion to appoint Jon Elliott to serve a one-year term.

Motion made by Council Member Guzman
Motion seconded by Council Member Hayes
Votes favoring the motion: Hayes, Guzman, Brooks, Elliott
Vacant: Ward 1

G. Appointment: Lake Lanier Olympic Park Foundation

Motion to appoint Juli Hayes to fill the unexpired term.

Motion made by Council Member Guzman
Motion seconded by Council Member Brooks
Votes favoring the motion: Hayes, Guzman, Brooks, Elliott
Vacant: Ward 1

H. Appointment: Tax Allocation District Advisory Committee

Motion to appoint Mayor Thompson to serve on the Tax Allocation District Advisory Committee.

Motion made by Council Member Brooks
Motion seconded by Council Member Hayes
Votes favoring the motion: Hayes, Guzman, Brooks, Elliott
Vacant: Ward 1

APPOINTMENT:

Planning and Appeals Board

City Attorney Hayes reminded Mayor Thompson of the nomination to reappoint Ryan Thompson to serve on the Planning and Appeals Board.

Motion to appoint Ryan Thompson to the Planning and Appeals Board as presented.

Motion made by Council Member Hayes
Motion seconded by Council Member Brooks
Votes favoring the motion: Hayes, Guzman, Brooks, Elliott
Vacant: Ward 1

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Council Member Brooks

Wished everyone a Happy New Year and thanked everyone for being here.

Council Member Elliott

Congratulated Mayor Thompson and Council Member Guzman.

Council Member Hayes

Congratulated Mayor Thompson and Council Member Guzman. She wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Council Member Guzman

Expressed appreciation to Gainesville for trusting her and noted she looked forward to continuing to serve. She also wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Mayor Thompson

Wished all a Happy New Year.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Minutes

- A. December 11, 2025 Work Session
- B. December 16, 2025 Mayor/Council Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes accepting edits as presented.

Motion made by Council Member Brooks
Motion seconded by Council Member Guzman
Votes favoring the motion: Hayes, Guzman, Brooks, Elliott
Vacant: Ward 1

PUBLIC HEARING:

Request from Jesus Carrillo to annex a 0.42± acre tract located on the north side of Dorothy Drive, east of Washington Avenue (a/k/a 1450 Dorothy Drive, SW), with a zoning of Residential-II (R-II). Ward Number: Five. Tax Parcel Number(s): 01-118-004-014 (Part). Request: Duplex apartment.

- ***Proposed Annexation Ordinance 2026-01***
- ***Proposed Zoning Ordinance 2026-02***

City Attorney Abb Hayes opened the public hearing, confirmed the public notice was properly advertised and outlined the public hearing process.

Planning Manager Heather Deweese summarized the request. The Planning and Appeals Board and staff recommended approval with the following seven conditions:

1. The development standards within the applicant's narrative, site plans, and architectural renderings shall be made part of the zoning ordinance, and shall be subject to the Community and Economic Development Director approval. Any zoning conditions adopted as part of this zoning ordinance that conflict with the applicant's narrative, concept plan and architectural renderings shall take precedence over the applicant's development standards.
2. An updated as-built boundary survey/plat of the subject property, indicating new property boundaries, shall be recorded prior to obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy.
3. All access point design for the subject property shall be submitted for review and approval by the Gainesville Public Works Director.
4. The front yard of each lot shall be sodded and planted with at least one 3" caliper in size hardwood tree.
5. The front, rear, and sides of each townhome unit shall be constructed with a minimum 3-foot-high architectural watermark of brick or stone materials.
6. The individual garbage containers shall be stored behind each residential unit and screened by a privacy fence in a manner so as not to be visible from the proposed residential units, adjoining properties, roads and parking areas subject to the approval of the Community and Economic Development Director.
7. The property owner or a property manager shall be responsible for the regular maintenance of the entire property.

Attorney Hayes opened the floor for public comments. There being none, the hearing was closed and the matter returned to the governing body for consideration.

Motion to approve Ordinance 2026-01, AN ORDINANCE ANNEXING A 0.42± ACRE TRACT LOCATED ON THE NORTH SIDE OF DOROTHY DRIVE, EAST OF WASHINGTON AVENUE (A/K/A 1450 DOROTHY DRIVE, SW), WITH A ZONING OF RESIDENTIAL-II, WITH CONDITIONS (R-II-c); TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; TO PROVIDE FOR SEVERABILITY; TO PROVIDE FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES as presented.

Motion made by Council Member Guzman

Motion seconded by Council Member Hayes

Votes favoring the motion: Hayes, Guzman, Brooks, Elliott

Vacant: Ward 1

Motion to approve Ordinance 2026-02, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA BY ESTABLISHING THE ZONING ON A 0.42± ACRE TRACT LOCATED ON THE NORTH SIDE OF DOROTHY DRIVE, EAST OF WASHINGTON AVENUE (A/K/A 1450 DOROTHY DRIVE, SW), WITH A ZONING OF RESIDENTIAL-II, WITH CONDITIONS (R-II-c); TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; TO PROVIDE FOR SEVERABILITY; TO PROVIDE FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES with conditions as presented.

Motion made by Council Member Hayes

Motion seconded by Council Member Guzman

Votes favoring the motion: Hayes, Guzman, Brooks, Elliott

Vacant: Ward 1

Request from Candler Development Services to rezone an 8.33± acres tract located on the northeast side of Old Athens Road, between Harrison Square and Harrison Drive (a/k/a 815 Harrison Drive, SE) from Residential-II (R-II) to Planned Unit Development (P-U-D). Ward Number: Three. Tax Parcel Number(s): 01-142-003-001. Request: Multi-family, mixed-use.

- ***Proposed Rezoning Ordinance 2026-03***

City Attorney Abb Hayes stated Council Member Elliott wished to be recused from this matter after which time Mr. Elliott left the meeting room.

Mr. Hayes opened the public hearing and confirmed the public notice was properly advertised.

Community and Economic Development Director Rusty Ligon summarized the request. The Planning and Appeals Board and staff recommended approval with the following five conditions:

1. The development standards within the narrative, site plan, architectural renderings and pictures submitted with the applicant's rezoning application shall be made part of the zoning ordinance and shall be subject to the approval of the Director of the Community and Economic Development Department.
2. Any proposed dumpster shall be enclosed and screened from view from the adjoining properties, roads and parking areas.
3. Any individual garbage containers shall be stored behind each residential unit and screened by a privacy fence in a manner so as not to be visible from the proposed residential units, adjoining properties, roads and parking areas subject to the approval of the Community and Economic Development.
4. All access point design for the subject property shall require review and approval by the Gainesville Public Works Department Director. All required access/traffic/sidewalk improvements associated with the proposed development shall be at the full expense of the developer/property owner.
5. An updated as-built survey/plat of the subject property, indicating all improvements shall be recorded prior to obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy for the use.

Attorney Hayes opened the floor for public comments.

David Griffin, 1304 Springdale Road, represented the Gainesville Housing Authority. He stated they were proud of the project and felt it will benefit the neighborhood. He commented on the overall density being less than 9 units per acre and noted the existing phase units for this project were currently vacant with no displacements of residents.

There being no further comments, the hearing was closed and returned to the governing body for consideration.

Mayor Thompson reported receiving a complimentary letter about the Housing Authority. He commented on the great efforts made towards affordable housing and expressed appreciation for staff, Council and the Housing Authority. He felt this project is a great and much needed addition to the area and will enhance what is already a significant improvement.

Motion to approve Ordinance 2026-03, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA, BY CHANGING THE ZONING ON A 8.33±

ACRES TRACT LOCATED ON THE NORTHEAST SIDE OF OLD ATHENS ROAD, BETWEEN HARRISON SQUARE AND HARRISON DRIVE (A/K/A 815 HARRISON DRIVE, SE) FROM RESIDENTIAL-II (R-II) TO PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT WITH CONDITIONS (P-U-D-c); TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; TO PROVIDE FOR SEVERABILITY; TO PROVIDE FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES **with conditions as presented.**

Motion made by Council Member Guzman

Motion seconded by Council Member Hayes

Votes favoring the motion: Thompson, Hayes, Guzman, Brooks

Recused: Elliott

Vacant: Ward 1

Motion passed with affirmative vote of majority of members present in accordance with the Charter Section 2.22(c).

Council Member Hayes commented on the development and noted it is a great and much needed improvement. She thanked everyone for their efforts.

Mayor Thompson stated all of the redevelopment over the past ten years have been extremely successful and transformative.

Council Member Brooks expressed appreciation for the Housing Authority's and other businesses/entities efforts towards improving the area.

CITY MANAGER ISSUES:

City Manager Bryan Lackey commented as follows:

1. Reminded Council of the streetscaping project to begin soon in that area.
2. Congratulated Mayor Thompson and noted he looked forward to what the coming year will bring.

ADJOURNMENT: 6:00 PM

/ag

Zack Thompson, Mayor

Alisa Grayson, City Clerk