

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 Thompson called the meeting to order and served as the presiding officer.

DEPARTMENT ISSUES:

Tourism Update for the 4th Quarter 2025

Tourism Director Robyn Lynch introduced new Greater Gainesville Sports Alliance Manager Erica Wilson. She presented the quarterly update supplemented with a power point. Notable information from the report was as follows:

- The Hotel/Motel tax was at its normal rate of 50% year to date.
- A Hotel/Motel tax comparison report showed the amount of growth over the past 10 years with new hotels coming soon.
- Community engagement/outreach highlighted the Detroit Tigers starting pitcher Reese Olson's wedding at the Boathouse which provided outside exposure.
- The CVB economic impact for the quarter was \$724,000 which was mainly corporate events.
- The sports economic impact for the quarter was \$10M with the Petit Le Mans being the largest event.
- There was a new chicken for the Lighting of the Chicken at Jingle Mingle.
- Council Member Guzman shared information about the Mexican Posada event that occurred during the Jingle Mingle.
- The Christmas on Green Street Santa Run was well received and expected to grow.
- The Movie Night on the Greenway was a fun-filled event.
- Upcoming events included NCAA Rowing Championship events with volunteers needed, the Art Walk, First Fridays, Food Truck Friday and Mutts on Main.

Mayor Thompson expressed appreciation for the Tourism staff and the progress they continue to make year after year. Council Member Guzman shared the positive feedback she has received about all the fun and exciting things going on in Gainesville.

NOTE: Council Member Brooks joined the meeting at 9:03 AM

Resolution: Declaration of Surplus Property

Budget and Purchasing Manager Brenda Carpio stated the proposed resolution designates the list of property assets as surplus and noted all paperwork has been completed and approved.

Placed on the February 3, 2026 Council Meeting Consent Agenda

Ordinance: Amend Chapter 3-4 As it Pertains to Parking

Police Chief Jay Parrish stated a parking ordinance amendment to address outdated information and paid parking was presented to Council last year. With the feedback received from Council and the community, they were able to work with the vendor to develop a two-hour free parking solution. He commented on the technology-based solution and noted this will create surface street parking and improve downtown parking turnover. The parking decks will remain free.

City Manager Bryan Lackey summarized the solution details and referenced handouts related to the paid parking plan to include parking zones and rate structures. The anticipated roll out of the paid parking plan is April 6 and will be a four-week start up period with no violations. Upon inquiry, he noted users must engage the system upon parking to start the free two-hour period. Council Member Hayes expressed appreciation to staff for all their hard work and suggested outreach efforts to the businesses. Mayor Thompson also expressed appreciation to staff for all their hard work with providing a solution and stressed the purpose of it is to address the downtown parking turnover and not revenue generation.

Placed on the February 3, 2026 Council Meeting Agenda

Winter Storm

Mayor Thompson expressed appreciation to City Departments for all their hard work and efforts with the winter storm.

City Manager Bryan Lackey commended Public Relations Manager Christina Santee-Moss for her communication efforts. He noted there was a possibility of another storm coming through.

MAYOR/COUNCIL ISSUES:

Council Member Hayes

Reported the Vision 2030 and Public Art event will be held at the Boathouse from 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM today.

Council Member Brooks

Commented on being impressed with all the activities going on in Gainesville.

Mayor Thompson

1. Nominated Jon Elliott to serve as Ex-Officio on the Keep Hall Beautiful/Hall County Green Alliance Board to replace Juli Hayes.
2. Nominated Juli Hayes to serve as Ex-Officio on the Habitat for Humanity of Hall County Board.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION:

City Attorney Abb Hayes requested an Executive Session to discuss real estate matters.

Motion to close the meeting to enter an Executive Session to discuss real estate matters at 9:43 AM.

Motion made by Council Member Hayes

Motion seconded by Council Member Brooks

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

Vacant: Ward 1

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Motion to close the Executive Session at 10:29 AM.

Motion made by Council Member Hayes

Motion seconded by Council Member Elliott

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

Vacant: Ward 1

OTHER BUSINESS:

Smoke-Free Ordinance

Deputy City Manager Angela Sheppard shared the proposed updates to the smoking ordinance based on previous discussions. There was consensus for staff to proceed with preparing the proposed ordinance to present at an upcoming meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: 10:37 AM

/ag

Zack Thompson, Mayor

Alisa Grayson, City Clerk