

City of Plains

Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

Date: August 20, 2026

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: Plains City Hall – Council Chamber

I. Call to Order

Mayor Recker called the regular meeting of the Plains City Council to order at 7:00 p.m.

- **Invocation:** Councilor Terry Westbury
 - **Pledge of Allegiance:** Mayor Recker
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II. Roll Call

City Clerk Cindy Bagwell conducted roll call.

Present:

- Mayor Joey Recker
 - Mayor Pro Tem Ellen Harris
 - Councilor A.B. Jackson
 - Councilor Amy Wise
 - Councilor Andrea Oates
 - Councilor Terry Westbury
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III. Approval of Minutes

Councilor Jackson made a motion to approve the July 16, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting Minutes. Mayor Pro Tem Harris seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a motion to approve the August 4, 2026, Called Council Meeting Minutes. Councilor Westbury seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).

IV. Briefings

Two residents of N. M. L. Hudson Street, Victoria Herron and Tonya Visage, reported that their water had an orange discoloration and stated that the issue had been occurring for some time. Mayor Recker advised them that the City would flush the fire hydrants in the area the following morning, August 21, 2026. The residents expressed their appreciation for the City's efforts to address the issue.

V. Committee Reports

Public Safety (Councilor Westbury)

Chief Johnson presented the Police Department report:

- 2 Traffic Citations
- 6 Traffic Warnings
- 6 Agency Assists
- 4 Alarm Calls
- 2 Animal Complaints
- 3 Miscellaneous Investigations
- 2 Noise Complaints
- 1 Theft Investigation

Additional discussion included:

- Local youth are racing near Paschal and Moon Streets. This occurs when officers are not present.
- Residents request nighttime coverage near Methodist Church parking lot; enforcement limited by officers' schedules.
- Motorcycles reported traveling at excessive speeds on Thomas Street. The riders were reportedly not wearing protective gear. This is a nuisance to the residents.

Councilor Westbury had no additional comments

Subdivision & Streets (Councilor Wise)

- Councilor Wise reported that she met with Southern Striping and bids have been submitted to FOJC for parking lot. He has turned in his bid for the parking lot at FOJC.
- Mayor Recker proposed some new equipment to improve safety. 1.) Portable radar speed sign (mobile, data-logging) to collect speed data before installing speed bumps. 2.) flashing stop sign/LED warning at railroad crossing to improve visibility and reduce accidents.

Water & Sewerage (Councilors Oates & Westbury)

- Councilor Westbury reported water pressure increase observed by county; flow test with two hydrants planned to measure residual pressures.
- Fire suppression team requested to assess system; awaiting the result
- Councilor Oates reported on the lead and copper rule compliance shown on the table provided on page 13 of the council packet (copy included in minutes)
- Approximately 372 borderline service connections; connectors not yet identified
- H2O consultant (Bob Pafford) is assisting with system maps and locating valves.
- Grants investigated: GEFA and EPA had loan options; GEFA grant not applicable; CDBG responses pending
- Mayor tasked staff to continue researching funding sources (including USDA not yet contacted)

Personnel (Councilors Wise & Harris)

No report. An Executive Session was scheduled later in the meeting.

Hospitality & Public Relations (Councilors Oates & Wise)

- Councilor Oates reported that the website and newsletter updates are maintained; the Comprehensive Plan Survey popup is on the website: www.plainsgeorgia.gov
- Public Survey is ongoing and the next planning meeting is August 25th at SGTC Pope Center at 6:00. All Council and citizens are encouraged to attend.
- Retirement Reception for former Councilor Eugene Edge will be held on August 27th from 5:00-7:00 pm at the Plains Community Center. Everyone invited.

Industry, Trade & Tourism (Councilors Jackson & Harris)

- Councilor Jackson reported that the Boys & Girls Club has an after-school pickup program available. Numbers are continuing to increase.
- Councilor Jackson will know more after the September meeting.
- Events planned: Carter Country documentary premiere, trolley tours (Oct. 1) for President Carter's birthday among other events that day
- September 26th is Peanut Festival – asking all Veterans that will to participate in the parade. There are various other community events planned that will be discussed closer to time

Finance (Councilors Jackson & Wise)

- Council reviewed the Cash Balance Report.
- Mayor Recker pointed out that cash is tight in the General Fund. He urged caution in spending especially from General Fund.
- Waiting on a draw from GEFA for approximately \$27,000 soon to replenish operating cash
- Two estimates were received for cleanup of the strip of park located between the railroad and the street. The estimates were \$6,500 and \$9,800. The Friends of Jimmy Carter

(FOJC) and the City would split the cost. No motion was made to accept either estimate; therefore, no action was taken.

VI. Other Business

Vote Item #1 – Friends of Jimmy Carter \$1000 Sponsorship for Peanut Festival

Councilor Jackson made a motion to approve \$1000 sponsorship for the FOJC. Councilor Wise seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Vote Item #2 – Friends of Jimmy Carter Street Closures for Events

Councilor Westbury made a motion to approved the listed road closures for various events coming up through the end of the year. Councilor Oates seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Councilor Oates requested to be notified if any redirection of traffic was needed for any of the events.

Vote Item #3 – Cuilquense Restaurant Food Truck

- Before discussion, Mayor Recker noted that the City does not currently have an ordinance governing food trucks. He explained that, if the Council approved the request, the Council could establish specific stipulations for the food truck's operation
- Cuilquense Restaurant has submitted all required documentation from the Department of Health.
- Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a motion to allow the food truck to operate in front of the former Billy Carter Service Station two to three days per week. The proposed hours of operation would be 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. The food truck would not be permitted to operate during times when other vendors are in town unless the operator applies for and pays the applicable vendor fee. Councilor Jackson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Vote Item #4 – Downtown Development Authority

- Mayor Recker explained the DDA in detail. The Resolution would activate the Downtown Development Authority designating the entire incorporated City as the DDA area, and appoint seven initial directors.
- Proposed initial directors: Keaton Wynn and David Young (2-year terms); Kenneth Greene and Cathy Young (4-year terms); Boze Godwin, Phillip Kurland and Kelly Kight (6-year terms). The Authority will appoint their own officers.
- Councilor Westbury made a motion to approve the Downtown Development Authority. Mayor Pro Tem Harris seconded the motion. The motion passed (4-1). Councilors

voting in favor of the motion were Wise, Jackson, Harris, and Westbury. Councilor Oates voted against the motion.

VII. Mayor's Notes

The following items were included in the Mayor's Notes:

- **Legislative Policy Council:** Mayor Recker reported that he has been appointed to the Legislative Policy Council and looks forward to representing the interests of small cities. He will attend the GMA Legislative Policy Council meeting on September 16–17. Mayor Recker stated that he will personally cover the expenses associated with attending the meeting, at no cost to the City.
- **Upcoming Events:** Upcoming events were discussed at various points throughout the meeting.
- **457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan:** Mayor Recker reported that he and the City Clerk have met to begin implementation of a 457(b) deferred-compensation retirement plan for City employees. Implementation is progressing, and employees are expected to be able to enroll within approximately one to one and a half months.
- **HUD Grant Progress:** The HUD grant is currently in the initial administrative phase. UGA Rural Development Center Board has pledged \$35,000 toward engineering costs, which will help reduce the amount of grant funds needed for administrative expenses.
- **Labor Day:** City Hall will be closed on September 7, 2026, in observance of Labor Day.
- **Recognition of Charles Smith and Jimmy Skipper:** Council discussed recognizing Charles Smith at the end of September and City Attorney Jimmy Skipper at the end of the year for their service to the City. Council members were asked to consider appropriate ways to honor both individuals.
- **Special Election Qualifying:** Mayor Recker reminded Council that qualifying for the vacant Council seat will be held August 24–27, 2026, with qualifying closing at 12:00 noon on August 27.
- **Comprehensive Plan Update:** Mayor Recker encouraged residents to complete the Comprehensive Plan survey available on the City's website and to encourage others to participate. The next Comprehensive Plan meeting will be held August 25 at 6:00 p.m. at South Georgia Technical College.
- **TCS Tax and County Tax Digest Update:** Mayor Recker reported that property reevaluation notices were mailed August 14. Significant increases were reported for many properties. The reevaluation will be relevant in establishing the homestead property's base value for purposes of the floating homestead exemption. The baseline may affect future increases tied to inflation. The City's millage rate remains unchanged at 12 mills. The deadline for property owners to appeal their assessments is September 28. Council members were encouraged to be prepared to explain the difference between a property reevaluation and the resulting tax bill to residents.
- **Food Truck Ordinance:** Mayor Recker reported that the City currently has no ordinance governing food trucks. He will contact City Attorney Jimmy Skipper regarding the development of an ordinance for future use.

- **County Hazard Mitigation Plan:** Mayor Recker reported that he has responded to questions regarding the County Hazard Mitigation Plan that directly relate to the City of Plains.
- **Flashing Stop Sign and Traffic-Calming Device:** The need for a flashing stop sign and traffic-calming device was discussed earlier in the meeting. Mayor Recker and Councilor Wise will investigate the matter. TLOST funds may be used for the project.
- **Sewer Repair at Plains Baptist Church:** Mayor Recker reported that the sewer repair at Plains Baptist Church has increased water flow to Sumter Retirement Village. The City is awaiting the final test results. H2O will provide two estimates for relocation of the drain—one for the drain work and one for sidewalk and street repairs. The repair work may be funded with TLOST funds.
- **Logan Park Landscaping:** Council agreed to table the Logan Park landscaping project until a later date when funding is more readily available.
- **Electrical Work – Street Lights, Courtyard, and Maxine Reese Park:** Council discussed electrical work needed at several locations, including street lights, the courtyard, and Maxine Reese Park. Some lights are not functioning properly and are different shades of white. Mayor Recker reported that an electrician is preparing an estimate for the necessary work.
- **Bed and Breakfast/Short Term Rentals Zoning:** Council discussed the lack of formal zoning regulations governing bed-and-breakfast establishments and short-term rentals. Council requested that the City Attorney draft a zoning amendment establishing special-use conditions, including requirements related to parking, signage, and operating limitations. The proposed amendment will be referred to the Planning Commission and will be subject to a public hearing.

VIII. Executive Session

Councilor Westbury made a motion to enter Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Harris and carried unanimously, 5-0. Council entered Executive Session at 8:50 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Harris later made a motion to exit Executive Session and return to Regular Session. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wise and carried unanimously, 5-0. Council reconvened in Regular Session at 9:10 p.m.

Following Executive Session, Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a motion to hire Gregory Sims for the Utility Worker position at a rate of \$16.00 per hour. Councilor Jackson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

Councilor Westbury made a motion to increase Chris George's hourly wage by \$0.50, bringing his rate to \$17.00 per hour. Councilor Jackson seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-1. Councilors voting in favor of the motion were Wise, Westbury, Oates, and Jackson. Mayor Pro Tem Harris voted against the motion.

IX. Adjournment

Councilor Jackson made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wise and carried unanimously, 5-0. Mayor Recker adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Bagwell
City Clerk