

# City of Plains

## Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

**Date:** July 16, 2026

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Location:** Council Chambers, City Hall

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### I. Call to Order

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

- **Invocation:** Councilor Eugene Edge
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### II. Roll Call

City Clerk Cindy Bagwell conducted roll call.

**Present:**

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

Councilor Oates requested a clarification (no grant funding) to the minutes. Mayor Recker requested a correction (vote details on Vote Item 5). Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a motion to approve the June 18, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting Minutes with the corrections. Councilor Wise seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (6-0).

Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a motion to approve the Called Council Meeting Minutes for June 9, 2026. Councilor Wise seconded the motion. All approved (6-0). Motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a motion to approve the Called Council Meeting Minutes for June 23, 2026. Councilor Wise seconded the motion. All approved (6-0) Motion carried.

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## **GA-TCS- Mr. Danny Forsyth**

Mayor Recker introduced Mr. Forsyth from GA-TCS. Mr. Forsyth represents a company that has software to bill and collect property taxes. The system has daily accounting and payment tracking. They provide a 3-person customer support team. This company works with county assessors, handles bill printing and mailing via printer vendor. They also have online payment via credit card supported by Pay-Gov, which the city already uses.

- Start-up/conversion fee is \$8,500 (this includes first year \$4000 annual support)
- Annual support after first year is \$4000.
- 500 bill mailing included; overage is negotiable
- Works with 52 counties; currently a vendor for Sumter County
- Familiar with local collection agency (GTS) and county processes.
- Conversion/setup approximately 3 weeks
- Need vendor in place by October for December billing
- Council concerns were potential extra costs for greater than 500 mailings, migration contingencies, online portal functionality

## **Briefings from Concerned Citizens:**

There were no briefings from Concerned Citizens

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## **V. Committee Reports**

### **Public Safety (Councilors Westbury & Edge)**

Chief Johnson presented the Police Department report:

- 1 Criminal Trespass
- 1 Family Violence
- 6 Traffic Warnings
- 4 Traffic Citations
- 1 Damage to Property
- 4 Alarm Calls
- 7 Assist Agency Calls
- 1 Missing Person
- 1 Theft by Taking
- 4 Miscellaneous Investigations

Chief Johnson also reported that the “Back to School Give Away” will be held Saturday, June 25, 2026 from 10:00-12:00 at the Plains Police Department. All council members were encouraged to participate. Mayor and Mrs. Recker will be there to help with the event.

Councilor Edge had no additional report.

### **Subdivision & Streets (Councilors Edge & Wise)**

- Councilor Edge reported that Main Street maintenance has improved and is looking good.
- Councilor Wise reported that the LMIG projects are progressing. Priorities must be made.

### **Water & Sewerage (Councilors Oates & Westbury)**

**Councilor Westbury** reported that several mainline and valve issues are currently being addressed. The City has experienced some low-pressure water concerns, and efforts are underway to identify and correct the causes.

Councilor Westbury also provided an update regarding garbage billing. Several discrepancies are currently under review, and this will be an ongoing, multi-month monitoring project. Councilor Westbury will continue to provide updates as the review progresses.

The landfill monitoring fee was discussed and explained. The fee is \$2.00 per month for all customers within the City limits who receive garbage service. This fee is used to pay the County’s landfill service charge.

### **Lead and Copper Rule Inventory (LCRR/LCR) Update**

**Councilor Oates** provided an update regarding the Lead and Copper Rule Inventory requirements. The City currently has approximately 372–375 water service lines. Based on previous inventory efforts and potholing investigations, the City’s current inventory indicates that 12 service lines have been identified, with no lead lines, galvanized lines requiring replacement, or unknown service line materials currently documented.

The immediate focus will be to identify and reduce any remaining unknown connectors or goosenecks and ensure all findings are properly documented within the official inventory system.

The consultant’s recommended timeline was reviewed:

1. **Phase 1 (Current – December 2026):** Continue documentation efforts, reduce unknown service line materials, and prioritize older homes and critical facilities.
2. **Phase 2 (January 2027 – Mid-2027):** Continue potholing efforts and further classify service line materials.
3. **Phase 3 (July 2027 – November 2027):** Update the inventory, prepare for compliance requirements, and pursue available funding opportunities.

4. **Phase 4 (2028 and Beyond):** Complete any required replacements based on final inventory findings and regulatory requirements.

Councilor Oates noted potential resource concerns, including the need for additional equipment and labor to complete service line identification efforts. Limited City staff capacity may also impact the timeline.

Regarding funding, the City will prioritize pursuing grants and forgivable loan opportunities. The Lead and Copper Rule requirements were noted as a federal unfunded mandate. Representative Sanford Bishop's office has been contacted to request assistance in identifying potential funding support.

#### **Personnel (Councilors Wise & Harris)**

Readvertise for the city worker position. Application deadline is set for August 7, 2026. Interviews proposed for the regular council meeting on August 20<sup>th</sup>.

The Personnel Committee made a recommendation to extend application deadline and schedule interviews for August 20<sup>th</sup>. No second was required. All approved (6-0) motion carried.

#### **Hospitality & Public Relations (Councilors Oates & Wise)**

- Councilor Wise and Councilor Oates had no reports
- Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a report regarding upcoming events sponsored by the Friends of Jimmy Carter
- Mayor Recker had requested that City Hall help with advertising. Promotion channels such as Southwest Georgia Living Magazine, Explore Georgia, local radio/TV have been identified. City Clerk has reached out to Explore Georgia and will follow up on the others.
- The Inn should be promoted in the advertising to boost local lodging
- Councilor Oates asked that any advertising be sent to her as well.

#### **Industry, Trade & Tourism (Councilors Jackson & Harris)**

- Councilor Jackson had no report
- Mayor Pro Tem Harris reported that the Friends sponsored a Customer Service training
- On October 1<sup>st</sup> there will be a celebration of President Carter's birthday. The trolley will be in town for tours. David Osborne will be performing downtown from (10:00-12:00). The Carter Country Documentary will be shown at the high school at 2:30, birthday cake on Main Street at 4:30 music and vendors. Coordination is an ongoing.

#### **Finance (Councilors Jackson & Wise)**

- Council reviewed the Cash Balance Report.

- Mayor urged council to verify line-item funding before authorizing expenditures
  - Monthly receipts add to SPLOST 2020 balance.
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## **VI. Other Business**

### **Vote Item #1: Plains Mini Walk for Alzheimer in Maxine Reese Park**

Councilor Jackson made the motion to approve the Alzheimer Walk in Maxine Reese Park on August 8<sup>th</sup>. Councilor Oates seconded the motion. All approved (6-0) motion carried.

### **Vote Item #2: Purchase 3 new Trimmers for the Street Department**

Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a motion to purchase three trimmers for the Street department. Councilor Wise seconded the motion. All approved (6-0) motion carried. Funds can come from 2020 SPLOST.

### **Vote Item #3: Purchase a new Jetter**

There was discussion of replacing the old motor instead of purchasing a new jetter. The rationale behind this was that the existing jetter is a dual-purpose unit (jetter and pressure washer). It is cheaper to repair than replace with two separate units. The cost is approximately \$3100 to \$3200 after installation.

Councilor Westbury made a motion to purchase and replace the motor in the old jetter. Councilor Jackson seconded the motion. All approved (6-0) motion carried. The funding source is sanitation repairs/equipment line in the budget.

### **Vote Item #4: Close 2015 SPLOST account; transfer funds to 2020 SPLOST account on recommendation of accountant**

Councilor Jackson made a motion to close the 2015 SPLOST account and transfer remaining funds to the 2020 SPLOST account. Councilor Wise seconded the motion. All approved (6-0) motion carried.

### **Vote Item #5: Contract with GA-TSC for property tax billing**

Councilor Oates made a motion to table consideration of contracting with GA-TSC for property tax billing services until the next regular Council meeting to allow additional time to review other vendor options. Councilor Jackson seconded the motion.

The motion to table resulted in a 3-3 tie vote. Voting in favor of the motion were Councilor Oates, Councilor Edge, and Councilor Jackson. Voting against the motion were Councilor Wise,

Councilor Westbury, and Mayor Pro Tem Harris. Mayor Recker cast the tie-breaking vote against tabling the matter; therefore, the motion to table failed.

Following the failed motion to table, Councilor Wise made a motion to approve entering into a contract with GA-TSC for property tax billing services. Mayor Pro Tem Harris seconded the motion.

The motion passed by a vote of 4-2. Voting in favor were Councilor Wise, Councilor Westbury, Mayor Pro Tem Harris, and Councilor Edge. Voting against were Councilor Jackson and Councilor Oates. The motion carried, and the Council approved contracting with GA-TSC for property tax billing services.

## **VII. Mayor's Notes**

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

- Yard Sale June 18th
- Recreation of Election Night – November 2nd
- Wreaths Across America - December 19<sup>th</sup>
- Trunk or Treat- October 31
- Christmas in Plains- November 28<sup>th</sup>
- Butterfly Daze- August 15-16
- Sales Tax- the city receives 4% of all sales tax paid to the merchants in town. City encourages council participation in community events to support tourism and local business. The sales tax revenue benefits city finances indirectly.
- Overtime/Comp Time- Federal guidance cited; employees must voluntarily agree to comp time in lieu of cash; cannot mandate comp time; use-or-lose restrictions not permitted for current employees. Overtime must be approved by supervisory or be an emergency; emergency overtime to be paid in pay period rather than tracked as comp leave. Reconnection of water cut off will be next day if it is after workers have gone for the day. Exception of cut off for elderly/medically vulnerable customers – handled case by case. If something can be completed the next day, then overtime is not needed.
- Downtown Development Authority- DDA is a city-authorized entity (private authority with government oversight). It allows the ability to buy/sell/lease property, apply for grants limited to DDAs operate loan funds for downtown businesses and facilitate redevelopment without the city holding long-term private property. The Resolution has been drafted but requires naming seven appointees to activate DDA. Mayor will propose names in coming month; council asked for nominations and to study the concept. The council will consider activation/resolution at the next meeting once appointees identified.

## **Personnel Note:**

Councilor Edge submitted his resignation from the council effective July 31, 2026. Mayor proposed a retirement celebration for Councilor Edge to recognize his longtime serve. Committee volunteers were asked to help organize. Mayor Pro Tem Harris will head the committee. Councilor Wise volunteered to help.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Councilor Wise made a motion to enter Executive Session. Mayor Pro Tem Harris seconded the motion. All approved (6-0) motion carried. Entered Executive Session at 9:23 pm.

Councilor Westbury made a motion to resume Regular Council Session. Councilor Wise seconded the motion. All approve (6-0) motion carried. Resumed Regular Council Session at 9:36 pm

After resuming regular council meeting, Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a motion to contract with Robert Moore for water/wastewater services upon Charles Smith's retirement. Councilor Westbury seconded the motion. All approved (6-0) motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a motion to retain Tommy Coleman as the City Attorney upon the retirement of current City Attorney Jimmy Skipper at the end of December 2026. Councilor Jackson seconded the motion.

The motion passed by a vote of 5-1. Voting in favor were Councilor Edge, Councilor Wise, Councilor Westbury, Councilor Jackson, and Mayor Pro Tem Harris. Voting against was Councilor Oates.

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## **IX. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Mayor Recker adjourned the meeting at 9:45 p.m.

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**Respectfully submitted,**

Cindy Bagwell  
City Clerk