

City of Maxeys Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 10, 2026
Call to order – 7:00pm
Minutes taken by Jenny Yearwood-Parker, City Clerk

Present:

Edward Toledano, Mayor
Danny Gorman, Mayor Pro-Tem and Council Member
Shirley Callahan, Council Member
Carrie Hayes, Council Member
Carrie Hyatt, Council Member
Doug Miller, Council Member

Guests

Barbara Cabaniss, Anne Garner, Warren Gilson, Merre Price, Mickey Price, Wyatt Price, John Stephens, Mark Whiting, and Sarah Whiting

All items below are recorded from the agenda

- (Item 1) Mayor Toledano called the meeting to order at 7:00pm reminding everyone that we will try our best to keep this meeting to one hour.
Invocation was said by Doug Miller; All attending recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
- (Item 2) Approval of Agenda for March Meeting and adoption of the minutes from the February 2026 meeting.
Results: approved (unanimous); Mover: Shirley Callahan, Council Member; Seconder: Carrie Hyatt, Council Member;
Ayes: Callahan, Gorman, Hayes, Hyatt, and Miller.
- (Item 3) Announcement of next meeting date of April 14, 2026 at 7pm.
- (Item 4) Citizen Input
 - None
- (Item 5) City Communication updates
 - Monday April 13, GMA District 5 Listening Session, Lyndon House Athens 5:30-7:30pm, dinner and chance to learn about Georgia Municipal Association advocacy efforts and ongoing initiatives. This is an opportunity to connect with our peers from across the state. If anyone with like to go with the Mayor please reach out to him.
 - At this time, the City has received a public information (open records) request, which is currently being processed. While a policy does exist, it applies only to City Ordinances and was established prior to those ordinances being made available online. The policy being presented to the Council tonight expands to cover all open records requests. Under the proposed policy, copies of requested documents would be provided at a rate of \$0.15 per page. In addition, an administrative fee may be applied for staff time exceeding 15 minutes, calculated at \$15.75 per hour. The Mayor has brought this proposal forward due to the absence of a clear, comprehensive process for handling open records requests. This policy is intended to establish consistent procedures for responding to such requests moving forward. Council members were given time to review the proposed policy prior to consideration. It was noted that there is no fee for simply viewing records; however, fees will apply if copies are requested. A motion was made to approve the policy as presented.

Results: approved (unanimous); Mover: Carrie Hyatt, Council Member; Seconder: Shirley Callahan, Council Member;
Ayes: Callahan, Gorman, Hayes, Hyatt, and Miller.

- (Item 6) Permit Applications–
 - Mr. Wyatt Price submitted a request for a permit to construct a building on his grandparents' property located at 138 Oak Street. The proposed structure is a 30' x 40' storage building, which he intends to use as a residence for at least five years. His long-term goal is to build a larger home on the property. All required documentation for the permit application has been provided, including a plat, building plans, and septic tank approval. A motion was made to approve the permit application.

Results: approved (unanimous); Mover: Danny Gorman, Council Member; Seconder: Doug Miller, Council Member;
Ayes: Callahan, Gorman, Hayes, Hyatt, and Miller.

- The Mayor stated that the City previously charged an application fee for permits. Upon taking office, he consulted with the County and was advised that the City should not charge a permit fee since it is not involved in the inspection process. As a result, the fee was removed. The Mayor recently revisited the matter with the County to determine whether the City could charge a fee to cover administrative time associated with processing permit

applications. The County confirmed that such a fee is permissible. Based on this guidance, the Mayor requested that the Council consider implementing a \$20 fee for residential permit applications and a \$40 fee for commercial permit applications. A motion was made to add these fees to the permit applications.

Results: approved (unanimous); Mover: Danny Gorman, Council Member; Seconder: Shirley Callahan, Council Member; Ayes: Callahan, Gorman, Hayes, Hyatt, and Miller.

- (Item 7) Reports from Mayor

- The City was not awarded the GEFA loan/grant for the water tower project. With Council approval, the City plans to reapply in the future. Despite this, the water tower and pump are functioning properly, with no reported overflows, and operations have remained consistent.
- The Mayor informed the Council of two items related to pending Georgia legislation. The first, HB 244 (Local Government Audits), would reduce reporting requirements for small cities with revenues under \$2.5 million. The second, HB 295 (Nuisance Properties), would require cities to address nuisance properties or risk legal action from citizens for reduced property values due to inaction. Both bills have advanced to the Senate for consideration. The City's current ordinance already defines nuisance properties, consistent with county standards.
- The City has moved its phone and internet services to Spectrum, resulting in a monthly savings of \$96 and improved internet speed.
- The Mayor also presented the idea of establishing two volunteer teams to support City maintenance efforts. The first, the "Maxeys Garden Club," would be responsible for maintaining the Peace Garden, Brightwell Park, and City Hall grounds. The second, the "Firefly Trail Crew," would conduct monthly checks of the Firefly Trail, addressing items such as ant hills, cracks, debris removal, vegetation trimming, trash collection, restocking dog waste bags, and overall monitoring of the City's section of the trail. Ms. Linda Bullock has expressed interest in organizing the "Maxeys Garden Club". Citizens interested in participating are encouraged to contact the Mayor.
- Carrie Hyatt and the Mayor met with the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (NEGRC) to begin work on the City's Comprehensive Plan. The next phase of the process will involve reviewing and prioritizing future goals and projects for the 2027–2031 planning period. The Mayor provided the Council with a detailed list of proposed items to take home and review. He noted that a working session will need to be scheduled so the Council can collaboratively discuss and refine the list. For reference, the Mayor also shared the previous Comprehensive Plan covering 2021–2026, along with additional items for consideration. The Mayor explained to those in attendance that several projects from the current plan have already been completed. He also outlined the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan, noting that it serves as a roadmap for the City's future by identifying priorities and potential projects, as well as anticipated funding sources. This allows the State to better plan for grant opportunities and resource allocation. He emphasized that the Comprehensive Plan is an important tool for guiding the continued growth and improvement of the City.
- The Mayor met with Jason Lewis, County Administrator, on Monday the 9th to review the City's Service Delivery Strategy. This meeting focused on evaluating the current agreement between the City and the County, including the services provided by each entity. This review aligns with the Comprehensive Plan process, ensuring that the County is providing the services the City needs, and that the City is meeting its obligations under the agreement.
- The Mayor is attending the District 5 Mayors' Meeting tomorrow in Bogart.
- Ticket to Ride event is March 28. The Mayor confirmed with Barbara Cabaniss that she is the point of contact for the Maxeys Woman's Club for this event.
- The Mayor reported that the City has established a feral cat program. Council Member Carrie Hayes is leading with Cynzia Sanchez the initiative, titled "Maxey's Catitude Adjustment." She reported that over 15 cats have been successfully trapped, taken to a veterinarian for sterilization, and returned. Council Member Hayes and Ms. Sanchez are working with an individual who travels over an hour to assist with these efforts. They are also exploring options to establish a donation system to help support this work in coordination with the neighboring Humane Society. Plans are underway to better organize the initiative, including providing notice to residents when trapping will occur in specific neighborhoods. Council Member Hayes also requested assistance from citizens in identifying areas with feral cat populations.

- (Item 8) Committee Reports

- Finance & Budget
 - City Finance Report for February
 - Now that we have the accounts divided out into separate accounts, it is much easier to see where we stand. The Mayor asked the Council was there a need to review the accounts. The Council members indicated they had reviewed the reports before the meeting and we could move on. The Clerk did tell the Council that the online payments are working great and this saves her time.

- Parks & Recreation

○ Brightwell Park and the Community Center

- Power is back on. But with the cold weather, the Mayor found when he went to turn the water back on that we have a busted pipe. The plumbing has been corrected. The Mayor brought to the attention of the Council that we need a new compressor for the HVAC. There was discussion as to if we replace the entire unit and not just the compressor. The Mayor said he would discuss this with Ben Adkins tomorrow. The Mayor did report to the Council that when the electrical inspection was done, we found that the electrical panel was not properly grounded which has now been corrected. A motion was made to approve the AC unit be repaired at the Community Center for \$2000. If that price increases, the Mayor will go back to the Council.

Results: approved (unanimous); Mover: Doug Miller, Council Member; Seconder: Carrie Hayes, Council Member; Ayes: Callahan, Gorman, Hayes, Hyatt, and Miller.

- Building and Park grant application

- Council member Hayes said that she will download all the forms for the application and get them to the Mayor. The main thing she needs from the Mayor now is the budget breakdown. The Mayor explained to the Council that this is a grant for updating the Community Center, windows, bathrooms, doors, parking, etc. The application is due by the end of this month. A motion was made to submit the application to the T-Mobile grant.

Results: approved (unanimous); Mover: Danny Gorman, Council Member; Seconder: Shirley Callahan, Council Member; Ayes: Callahan, Gorman, Hayes, Hyatt, and Miller.

- Sensory Garden proposal

- Council member Hayes brought the idea of creating a sensory garden in memory of Josie Shaver. She simply wants to put that idea out there. She is not requesting funds from the City as she will be seeking donations. It would be a very simple garden that would add to the area where the Brightwell sign is located. The Mayor responding saying that anything we could do to that area to improve it is an addition to the overall Park. We can get some designs and an overall plan before turning to the community for donations. There was a motion to approve the exploration of a sensory garden at the Community Center property.

Results: approved (unanimous); Mover: Carrie Hyatt, Council Member; Seconder: Doug Miller, Council Member; Ayes: Callahan, Gorman, Hayes, Hyatt, and Miller.

There was further discussion of the retaining wall at the Brightwell Park needing repair.

○ Firefly Trail

- The Mayor reported that a financial meeting is scheduled for March 17 with John Kissane and Jason Lewis. The County will take the lead on this process, as they oversee the grant. At this meeting, all necessary documents will be signed, and the process of soliciting bids for the project will begin. The Mayor noted that he has already met with two contractors who have visited the site and walked the trail, helping to ensure there will be no delays in moving the project forward. He reiterated the need for a FireFly Trail Crew.

○ Maxeys 5K

- Sarah Whiting addressed the need for volunteers to respond to emails that have been sent out. Discussion followed regarding whether to post a reminder on the City's Facebook page to encourage volunteers to check and respond to their emails.

○ Veterans Park

- John Stephens addressed the Council regarding the brick program, noting that the committee currently has 11 bricks ready to be ordered. He stated that the committee is in the process of selecting a company to fulfill the order. He also reported that there are currently 116 bricks in the park, including the new additions. Mr. Stephens requested that a form be made available on the City's website to allow individuals to order bricks, complete the form, and submit it to the City. Council Member Hayes asked that Mr. Stephens provide her with the form so it can be uploaded to the City's website. Mr. Stephens also requested that the City help promote the park and the brick program, particularly to reach new residents and inform them of this opportunity. Council Member Hyatt inquired about replacing the state flag in the park. Council Member Miller stated that this task is on his to-do list and that he will work to have it completed this week.

○ Rotary Club Peace Garden

- The Mayor reported that he is currently working with Jean Westmacott to assign responsibilities for the future care and maintenance of the Peace Garden, including scheduling ongoing upkeep. He reiterated the idea of forming a "Maxeys Gardening Club" to assist with these efforts collaboratively. The Mayor noted that the primary delay at this time is the ordering of the bronze plaque, which has an estimated production timeline of six to eight weeks. He also mentioned that he planned to provide an additional update to the

Council before the conclusion of the meeting. The Council was asked to consider approval for the installation of a water tap and frost-proof spigot for the Peace Garden, with an estimated cost of \$700 to \$850. The plan includes burying the meter. Funding for this project will come from the existing \$1,700 balance in the Peace Garden account. A motion was made to proceed with submitting a work order to install a new meter and water spigot at the Peace Garden.

Results: approved (unanimous); Mover: Doug Miller, Council Member; Seconder: Shirley Callahan, Council Member; Ayes: Callahan, Gorman, Hayes, Hyatt, and Miller.

- Utilities

o Solar Panel at the water tower

- The Mayor reported that we are needing to order two new solar panels that keep the power going so that the tower and the pump can communicate with each other. The team is still investigating the leak in the tank. There was a motion made to purchase the two solar panels needed.

Results: approved (unanimous); Mover: Danny Gorman, Council Member; Seconder: Carrie Hyatt, Council Member; Ayes: Callahan, Gorman, Hayes, Hyatt, and Miller.

o Water Accounts

- The Mayor asked the Clerk about the number of past-due accounts. Mrs. Parker reported that there are currently four accounts that are three months past due. She also noted that one new water account has been added at the end of the City's line in Crawford. Discussion followed regarding the process for new water service applications. Currently, customers pay an application fee, after which Mr. Adam Boswell is sent to assess whether a meter can be installed. In cases where installation is not feasible, the City issues a refund to the customer. The Council discussed whether a no-refund policy should be considered, given that the City incurs costs for Mr. Boswell's time to perform the assessment. The Mayor suggested establishing a separate assessment fee for evaluating new meter installations and we would discuss this at a later meeting.

- Public Works & Infrastructure

o GDOT - LIMRA & LRA projects

- The Mayor explained that he had requested grant funding from GDOT and had compiled a list of priority projects throughout the City. These items had been identified previously and included repairs such as replacing the culvert in front of City Hall and the pipe under the crossover at the Dairy. He stated that this list was provided to a paving company when requesting the City's first quote. The Mayor then distributed the quote to the Council, which totaled \$71,000. The Mayor noted that the City currently has \$11,000 available from GDOT funds, along with over \$100,000 in the TSPLOST account. The quote includes culvert replacement at the Dairy, Forest Circle, and Cherry Street; corner expansions at Maple and Cherry Street, as well as Oak and Laurel; improvements at the entrances to Willow and Poplar Creek; installation of speed bumps; and mobilization costs. The Mayor shared this information to keep the Council informed and stated that he is continuing to seek additional quotes from other paving companies. He asked that any Council members who are aware of other paving companies forward that information to him.

o Septic Service

- The company has been contacted and hopefully the cleaned out will happen within this month or first part of next month. The same company will address the sink hole.

o Nuisance Properties – Nuisance Buildings

- Letters have been mailed asking them to clean up their property.

o City Property Clean Up Plan – March 14

- Please plan on attending the Coffee with the Council from 9:30-10:30am which will be held here at the Fire Hall and the clean up day to follow. Then the Mayor went over a detail list of clean up items to be achieved.

- Administration

o Policy Review

- The Mayor stated this would be on going process through the year. He plans to bring the entire list of policies to the Council for review before the end of the summer.

o Building Permit Annual Review with County

- Annual review with the county on building permits submitted to the city and determination of those that are no longer valid or did not apply to the county has been completed. Applicants will be notified if further action is required.

o Animal Control - County Ordinance

- The Mayor informed the Council that Oglethorpe County has recently adopted an animal control ordinance and that the Sheriff's Office has constructed holding pens for nuisance animals. He explained that the City

may need to consider adopting the County's ordinance so that the Sheriff can enforce its provisions within the City limits. The Mayor stated that he will confirm the proper process for adopting the ordinance and will place the matter on the April meeting agenda. The Mayor then provided each Council member with a copy of the Oglethorpe County Animal Ordinance. He further noted that he will work to determine the appropriate procedure for the City to adopt the ordinance without having to rewrite its own animal control regulations. Council members discussed how the County is currently addressing nuisance animal.

- Sheriff & Municipal Judge Agreements
 - Sheriff wants us to adopt the county ordinances as to dogs for them to enforce our ordinances (especially dangerous animals) .
 - Judge has it with their attorney for review – we will have a fee to the court for administrative services if we ever used the magistrate court.
- (Item 9) Adjourn. Having no other business, a motion was made to Adjourn.

Motion to Adjourn at 8:02pm

Results: approved (unanimous); Mover: Carrie Hyatt, Council Member; Seconder: Carrie Hayes, Council Member; Ayes: Callahan, Gorman, Hayes, Hyatt, Miller.