



**MINUTES OF THE
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
CITY OF DULUTH, GA
MAY 11, 2026**

PRESENT: Mayor Whitlock, Council members Park, Thomas, Doss, Graeder, and Cummings, City Manager, Asst. City Managers, Department Directors, City Attorney

A work session was held prior to the regular scheduled meeting to allow the elected officials to discuss this evening's agenda items. No other items were discussed, and no other action was taken.

Mayor Whitlock called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Alex Wiles, Scouts of America, Boy Scout Troop 420 and members of Cub Scout Pack 650: Fiona Meeham, Wade Abercrombie, Jason Thomas and Elsie Goins

I. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilmember Doss, seconded by Councilmember Thomas, to approve the May 11, 2026 Council Agenda as presented.

**Voted For: Council members Park, Thomas, Doss, Graeder, and Cummings
Motion carried.**

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilmember Cummings, seconded by Councilmember Graeder, to approve the April 13 and April 27, 2026 meeting minutes as presented.

**Voted For: Council members Park, Thomas, Doss, Graeder, and Cummings
Motion carried.**

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. UPCOMING EVENTS – www.duluthga.net/events

Duluth Live, April – October. Music Every Friday & Saturday, Parsons Alley. 6-9pm

Duluth Farmers & Artisan Market, March-May. 1st and 3rd Sundays each month
Town Green, 2-5pm

Duluth Spring Arts Festival, May 16 (10am-5pm), May 17 (11am-5pm). Town Green

Lantern Parade, May 29. Town Green. 6-9:30pm

Rock The Block: Live & Loud Fridays, (Every Friday) June 5 - August 28
Town Green, 6-9pm

Rotary Car Show, June 20. Downtown Duluth, 10am-2pm

Star-Spangled Laser Show, July 3. Downtown Duluth, 6-10pm

Viva Las Duluth, July 11. Town Green, 6-10pm

Red Clay Theatre events – www.eddieowenpresents.com

5/15- Adam Hood, 5/17-The Spirit of RUSH, 5/22-The Troubadour Project, 5/23- Wes Bayliss.

Community Clean up Day, Saturday, May 16th 8:00am – 3:00pm, Public Works Facility

IV. MATTERS FROM CITIZENS

1. OVERNIGHT PARKING ORDINANCE CONCERNS

Several public comment cards were received from those concerned about the City's Overnight Parking ordinance.

Bill Liss (special assignment editor, WXIA television news Atlanta) of 3596 Castlegate Dr NW, Atlanta. asked for reasonable amendments to the ordinance.

Mark Keller of 3778 Rogers Cove, Duluth requested modifications as well.

Attorney J. Thomas Salata of 2500 Northwinds Parkway, Suite 300 Atlanta suggested the use of residential parking permits such as those used in residential areas downtown.

Zamfira Cocian, 2752 Old Coach Road, Duluth requested revisions or exceptions, perhaps based on number of drivers in the home, street width, home repair work such as driveway paving, and asked that a more reasonable solution be implemented.

Peter Ward – 2796 Summercrest Lane, Duluth, suggested using a decal method.

Christine Gautreaux of 3611 Grizzly Lane, Duluth, supported exceptions perhaps using a decal idea and recognized the need to consider public safety and emergency vehicle access.

Melissa Binford of 4024 Chaderton Court, Duluth, supported all the prior comments but also feels that 10pm is too early if homeowners were entertaining, etc.

David Carnazzo, 3979 Keeneland Court, Duluth, Ga. requested enforcement modification such as issuing warnings prior to citation or offering a grace period.

Mayor Whitlock announced for the record, he had also received several e-mails in support of the ordinance, from Dee Ann Wilcox of 3632 Howell Wood Trail, Kathryn Goss of 3582 Howell Wood Trail, Ruth King of 3621 Howell Wood Trail, Jim Goss of 3582 Howell Wood Trail, and Sylvia Bates of 3631 Howell Wood Trail.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

1. CONTRACT RENEWAL – APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN SERVICES {A}

As previously discussed at the April 27th Mayor and Council work session, approval of this item authorizes the City to renew a contract with Appalachian Mountain Services (AMS) to ensure that properties delinquent for more than three years are brought into compliance with property tax obligations. If the City does not collect the tax, there are no fees paid out. Approval of this item authorizes the Mayor to sign the contract, which becomes effective May 11, 2026.

2. RESOLUTION – CHANG VS. MILTON AMICUS BRIEF {B}

As discussed at the April 27th work session of the Mayor and Council, the City of Milton is requesting approval of a resolution seeking the city to join the amicus brief associated with the ongoing Chang v. Milton case now being heard by the Georgia Court of Appeals. Approval of resolution R2026-05 authorizes the City to join the amicus brief.

3. APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT - PINE NEEDLE TRAIL PROJECT {C}

Approval of this item authorizes the Mayor to execute the Pine Needle Trail Project Framework Agreement with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) as approved by staff and the City Attorney, which moves the project forward into the next steps in the pre-design process for city project CD-73.

4. ORDINANCE TO AMEND CODE – STORMWATER {D}

As discussed at the April 27, 2026 work session, Mayor and Council to consider a revision to the current stormwater ordinance, allowing the City to write off uncollectible stormwater fees. Approval of this item approves ordinance O2026-20 as presented.

5. AD VALOREM/ BUSINESS PERSONAL PROPERTY INSOLVENT LIST {E}

Per Chapter 2, Article 1, Sec 2- 4 of the Duluth Code, approval of this item grants insolvency status to property tax accounts determined to be uncollectible for years up through 2025 in the base amount of \$16,034.98 plus penalties and interest for a total of \$20,148.59. Business personal property accounts are considered insolvent only after every effort to collect them has been exhausted, which includes processing late notices, returned mail investigation, cross checks with the Gwinnett County's Tax Assessors' real and personal property tax files, City and County Occupational Tax records, and also includes onsite visits by the Licensing Compliance inspector.

A motion was made by Councilmember Thomas, seconded by Councilmember Doss, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Voted For: Council members Park, Thomas, Doss, Graeder, and Cummings
Motion carried.

VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. ORDINANCE OF REZONING – CASE Z2026-001- N. BERKELEY LK RD {F}

Mayor Whitlock opened the public hearing to consider an ordinance to allow the rezoning of parcel R6261 130 located at 2641 North Berkeley Lake Road for case Z2026-001, and called forward Director of Community Development and Engineering Margie Pozin.

Ms. Pozin summarized the request. The owner, Duluth More Space, LLC and applicant, Duluth North Berkeley Industrial Owner, LLC are requesting a rezoning of this Planned Unit Development (PUD) to allow a change in the master plan. The current PUD includes facilities for indoor storage that were never constructed. The Owner and Applicant are requesting a change in the master plan to allow for demolition of the existing vacant seven story building and the construction and operation of roughly 198,000 square feet of flex office/warehouse.

Ms. Pozin showed the location and described the subject property, which is approximately 16 acres in the North Berkeley International Village. FORWARDuluth envisions this Character Area to continue to be a magnet for small and medium sized minority and internationally owned businesses targeting Duluth's diverse community. The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) envisions the uses to be Industrial.

Ms. Pozin gave a recent history of the area. The subject site contains a seven-story office building shell and associated parking that has remained partially constructed since 2008. In 2020 the building was deemed unsafe by the Building Official. The property was placed on the blighted property list in 2021. The property

went through a PUD amendment in 2021 and was granted an amendment from the original Master Plan to use the property for Self-Storage. In 2022 there was a variance granted for encroachment into 50' stream buffer (those conditions still hold).

Over the past five years alone there have been nine (9) code cases and 130 cases involving police ranging from trespassing and burglary to suspicious activity including squatters, drug use and indecent exposure. The owner installed an alarm system in 2024 and since then there have been 26 alarm calls. The property owner is currently in arrears of \$575 for their alarm fees.

Ms. Pozin showed the site plan and discussed an area labeled as 1.25 acres of Phase 2. It's considered a future truck parking area. The applicant does not yet know who will be renting the space and what their needs will be for truck parking, but this is very well conditioned. She showed a sample elevation of what the building may look like. She gave a brief synopsis of the conditions, and highlighted a few things such as underground utilities, security access gates, master signage and outdoor lighting approved prior to development.

The uses that will be underlying for this office and warehouse space will be those that are typically found in the M1 zoning, which is light industrial, with no outdoor storage. There will be an enhanced landscape buffer plan, and part of the reason is due to the trucking aspect and logistics for large vehicles. Ms. Pozin emphasized that there will be no overnight stays in the trucks and explained the other parking requirements.

Planning Commission recommended approval with revised conditions at their April 6, 2026 hearing.

Mayor Whitlock called for discussion from Council.

Councilmembers Thomas and Graeder asked about enforcement of parking conditions and landscaping, and Ms. Pozin said that it would be up to code enforcement and depend on the type of business as to what would be deemed reasonable.

Councilmember Doss asked about acceleration or deceleration lanes on North Berkeley. Ms. Pozin said the trucks have a different entrance than the typical single passenger vehicles.

Being no further questions, Mayor Whitlock called forward the applicant.

Melanie Glauton with Anderson, Tate and Carr, 1960 Satellite Boulevard in Duluth came forward representing the owner. She said they are not asking to change that zoning classification. The future land use map specifically identifies this area as an industrial area, and they feel this proposal is compatible. The plans are for construction of a very large warehouse facility, approximately almost 200,000

square feet with that associated surface parking, with a reserve of 1.25 acres of the site for that future parking area. She noted that they agree with staff recommended conditions, and felt staff has been very good to work with.

Ms. Glauton noted that there is currently a deceleration lane there on North Berkeley Lake, and they do think that the site would still be properly parked even with that requested variance of 224 spaces down to 183.

Being no further discussion, the Mayor called the Developer

Hunter Himes of Oakmont Industrial Group, 3520 Piedmont Road, Atlanta came forward to explain he is with the development group and happy to answer questions.

Mayor Whitlock called for questions/comments from the public.

There being no further comments or questions, Mayor Whitlock closed the public hearing and called for a motion.

A motion was made by Councilmember Park, seconded by Councilmember Cummings, to approve ordinance O2026-19 for case number Z2026-001 with conditions as presented.

Voted For: Council members Park, Thomas, Doss, Graeder, and Cummings
Motion carried.

2. FY2027 BUDGET PRESENTATION

Mayor Whitlock opened the public hearing to receive public comments on the FY2027 budget. Prior to this public hearing, council and staff reviewed the proposed FY 2027 budget at a budget workshop on May 4th. A second public hearing will be held on Monday, June 8, 2026 at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Mayor and Council. Following the second public hearing, an ordinance adopting the FY 2027 budget will be presented for consideration.

Assistant City Manager/Finance Ken Sakmar came forward to present an overview of the proposed FY 2027 Annual Operating and Capital Projects Budget of approximately \$43 million. On the revenue side, similar figures are presented but the budget does require some reserves used to balance the budget. He showed the capital projects as well, which are based on the life of the project, not the fiscal year.

Mr. Sakmar explained the conservative nature of budget philosophy, but noted that last year the proposal anticipated using about \$921,000 of reserves to balance the budget, but this year it's approximately \$120,000 in excess of that number to balance this year's budget. This is the season of review and some of those funds that are unobligated would be used to balance prior to tapping into reserves.

He discussed the largest revenues for the city (property taxes) and expenditures (salaries) and highlighted various changes between the FY26 and proposed FY27 budgets. Fortunately some of the approved legislation did not affect the property taxes as much as the proposals. The largest increase was a higher than normal increase in employee medical insurance. Some large single purchase items were included as well such as software, and the TAD transfer was highlighted separately.

Mr. Sakmar concluded by noting that the budget was prepared with the millage rate remaining the same, but that is up to Council's discretion and hasn't been set yet for the 2026 tax year. The millage rate has only risen $\frac{1}{4}$ mills over the last 21 years, and has remained the same for the last 10. He also noted there are no new full-time or permanent part-time positions in the budget except for potential stormwater interns which may affect summer 2027. Several items that were listed in the budget will be removed if the work can be accomplished prior to June 30 of this year, such as the duct cleaning.

Mayor Whitlock called for discussion from Council.

There being no questions, the Mayor called for questions/comments from the public.

Christine Gautreaux came forward and thanked the Council for including \$35,000 in public art money, but said that funds for duct cleaning shouldn't cost more than the allocation to the public art program.

Being no further comments, Mayor Whitlock closed the public hearing.
No motion necessary.

VII. MATTERS FROM MAYOR & COUNCIL

Councilmember Graeder noted that Community Clean-up day May 16th

Thanks to Parks & Recreation and Public Works for hosting the Student LEAD students.

VIII. MATTERS FROM CITY MANAGER

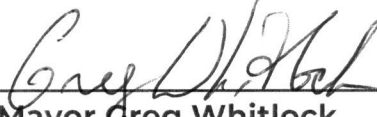
Red Clay Theater renovations are progressing and hopefully for completion by October.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

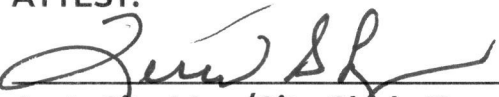
A motion was made by Councilmember Thomas, seconded by Councilmember Cummings, to adjourn at 7:07 pm.

Voting for: Council members Park, Thomas, Doss, Graeder, and Cummings
Motion carried.

Approved this 8 day of June, 2026.


Mayor Greg Whitlock

ATTEST:


Asst. City Mgr./City Clerk, Teresa Lynn