



CITY OF PORT WENTWORTH

CITY COUNCIL

JUNE 26, 2025

Council Meeting Room

Regular Session

9:00 AM

**7224 GA HIGHWAY 21
PORT WENTWORTH, GA 31407**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Gary Norton called the meeting to order.

2. PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman Rufus Bright Led the Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL - CLERK OF COUNCIL

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Gary Norton	Mayor	Present
Gabrielle Nelson	Mayor Pro Tem	Present
Thomas Barbee	Council Member	Present
Rufus Bright	Council Member	Present
Shawn Randerwala	Council Member	Present
ArtLise Alston-Cone	Council Member	Absent
Mark Stephens	Council Member	Absent

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilman Thomas Barbee made a motion to approve the agenda with the deletion 13A under New Business.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
SECONDER:	Rufus Bright, Council Member
AYES:	Gabrielle Nelson, Thomas Barbee, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

5. RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS - REGISTERED SPEAKERS

7. ELECTIONS & APPOINTMENTS

8. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

9. COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

11. CONSENT AGENDA

12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Adoption of FY26 Budget
- Public Hearing

City Manager Steve Davis states that the budget holds the millage rate at 5.216. He states that the general fund budget is \$18.7 million, maintaining the fund balance policy of twenty-five percent. He states that it adds eleven new positions, provides two point five percent COLA increase for employees, and enhances other areas including Parks and Recreation and Public Works. He states that a new department is being created by splitting Parks and Recreation to have a parks-only maintenance team which will happen along with the opening of Anchor Park but will maintain all city parks. He states that the budget will also include funding for the engineering of the new police and courtroom building, finishing funding for the back of City Hall, the fire station, Anchor Park, the Ice Cove, and the Amphitheater.

Assistant City Manager and Chief Financial Officer, Thomas Kilmartin, states that economic conditions remain challenging with inflation, recession concerns, and a thirty-six percent population growth over five years. He states that new housing, industrial, and commercial construction continue, and the Hyundai plant impacts housing and support businesses. He states that limited water supply remains an issue for construction, and traffic is a problem that the city is working on with state and federal partners, including widening twenty-one, thirty, and Benton Boulevard through SPLOST. He states that building the budget requires conservative estimates, but construction costs keep increasing. He states that despite this, the plan to complete parks, roads, and downtown sewer and water projects is believed to be achievable within five years. Councilman Thomas Barbee states that after researching and studying all of the pages throughout the operating budget, he complimented Thomas Kilmartin on the book, especially pages sixty-two, sixty-three, and sixty, which he states were the best pages noting all of the accomplishments that the city has achieved in one year. He complimented the city staff, council, and everyone involved in preparing the detailed budget books recognizing the attention to detail and the effort that goes into keeping citizens informed. He encouraged citizens to download and read the budget books and reminded everyone that they can contact any City Manager, City Attorney, or Council Member, with their contact information listed on the city's website and the new app.

- B. Adoption of Millage Rate
- Public Hearing

City Manager Steve Davis states that the millage rate was 5.216 last year and it will be 5.216 this year with no increase.

13. NEW BUSINESS

14. RESOLUTIONS/ORDINANCES/PROCLAMATIONS

15. EXECUTIVE SESSION

16. ADJOURNMENT

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Gabrielle Nelson, Mayor Pro Tem
SECONDER:	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
AYES:	None

Mayor Gary Norton

The foregoing minutes are true and correct and approved by me on this _____ day of _____, 2025.

ATTEST:

Zahnay Smoak, Clerk of Council