



CITY OF PORT WENTWORTH

CITY COUNCIL

JULY 16, 2026

Council Meeting Room

Regular Session

7:00 PM

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

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Tracy Saunders called the meeting to order.

2. ROLL CALL - CLERK OF COUNCIL

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

3. PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman Rufus Bright led the prayer and pledge of allegiance.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Rufus Bright, Council Member
SECONDER:	Gabrielle Nelson, Mayor Pro Tem
AYES:	Gabrielle Nelson, Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

5. RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GUESTS & ELECTIONS & APPOINTMENTS

6. COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS

A. National Civility Month Proclamation

B. Youth Leadership Month Proclamation

C. Parks and Recreation Month Proclamation
D. Disability Pride Month Proclamation
E. Summer Reading Challenge Month Proclamation
F. Port Wentworth Fire Department Recognition
G. Port Wentworth Police Department Recognition
H. City Manager Update

Mayor Pro-Tem presented the National Civility Month Proclamation, the Youth Leadership Month Proclamation, Parks and Recreation Month Proclamation, Disability Pride Month Proclamation, and Summer Reading Challenge Month Proclamation

Parks and Recreation Month

Assistant Recreation Director Trisha Crump and Parks Maintenance Supervisor Malcolm Brown provided an update on Parks and Recreation activities. They announced that registration and preparations are underway for fall sports, including cheer, soccer, football, and volleyball, and encouraged community members to volunteer as coaches. They stated that the Back-to-School Luau Skate Night is on July 24 and a free volleyball clinic for boys and girls ages 6-14 is on August 22.

Summer Reading Challenge Month

Lola DeWitt, Executive Director of Live Oak Public Libraries, provided an update on library programs and services. She stated that the library system's Summer Reading Program had registered more than 6,000 participants and exceeded its community goal of reading 3 million minutes. She stated that the library's partnership with America's Second Harvest to provide free summer lunches. She stated the September is Library Card Sign-Up Month and encouraged residents to obtain a library card.

Assistant Fire Chief Michael Morilla recognized the promotions of Lieutenant Daniel Hardy and Lieutenant Isac Haney. He stated that promotions within the fire department reflect hard work, leadership, and a commitment to serving the community. He highlighted lieutenant Hardy's service with the department since 2021 and recognized Lieutenant Haney who joined the department in 2024 with more than 9 years of prior service experience.

City manager Steve Davis shared several upcoming community events and announcements:

07/20/26 - Meet the Mayor - Abraso Common Room -7pm- 9pm
07/23/26 - Savannah Steel Habitat for Humanity Game
07/24/26- Skate Night - Gym
07/29/26 - Neighborhood Meeting - Daycare Site Plan in Rice Hope
08/01/26 - Jazz Fest -Anchor Park - Vystar Pavilion Opening Day
08/01/26 - Fall Sports Registration Ends
08/03/26 Planning & Zoning Meeting - City Hall 3:30pm
08/04/26 - National Night Out - Festival Site - 6pm-8pm
08/07/26 - Billy Currington - Anchor Park - Vystar Pavilion
08/07/26 - PWFire Red Cross Blood Drive - Fire Station Headquarters 100 Anchor Park Blvd - 10am-2pm
08/08/26 - Bronco's Back-to-School Car Show - Festival Site 12pm 3pm
08/14/26 - Skate Night - Gym
08/22/26 - Free Volleyball Clinic - 11am - 2pm - Gym
July Sports Clinics Begin: July 20th-23rd - Soccer Conditioning - 6pm-8pm -FREE
Road Closure - July 20-22 -Gulfstream Road Closed

City Manager Steve Davis highlighted the anticipated economic impact of upcoming hockey tournaments at the Ice Cove, noting that each event could generate approximately 500-700 hotel room stays and increased business for local restaurants and retailers. He stated that the venue is also attracting regional attention, with the Savannah Regional Music Commission scheduled to meet at the Ice Cove in September and the Savannah Regional Sports Council in October.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS - REGISTERED SPEAKERS

A. Spencer Gake

Discussed the following topic:

- City Mural

B. Virginia Hines

Discussed the following topic:

- Data Center Concerns

C. Isaac Wright

Discussed the following topic:

- CAT

D. Adam Alday

Discussed the following topic:

Thanked First Responders and Public Works

8. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

A. Regular Council Meeting Minutes- June 18, 2026

B. Regular Council Meeting Minutes- June 25, 2026

C. Regular Council Meeting Minutes- June 25, 2026

RESULT:

APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER:

Mark Stephens, Council Member

SECONDER:

Rufus Bright, Council Member

AYES:

Gabrielle Nelson, Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

9. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Annual Renewal of Disaster Debris Monitoring and Related Services

Approval of the annual renewal of the emergency debris monitoring and related services contract, effective September 8, 2026, to ensure continuous preparedness and compliance with disaster response and recovery standards.

City Manager Steve Davis explained that the debris removal and monitoring contracts are required and that the item was an annual renewal with the same company. He recommended renewal based on the City's satisfaction with the company's services.

Councilwoman ArtLise Alston-Cone asked if this contract extends until December?

EMS Director Morgan Holloran explained that the contract renewal would extend through December to cover the remainder of hurricane season. She stated that the city plans to issue an RFP for debris monitoring services and determine whether to continue with the current company or select a new provider.

Councilwoman Cone asked whether debris removal resulting from severe thunderstorms and other storm events outside of hurricane season would be covered under the contract or require an extension.

EMS Director Holloran stated that the contract runs through November 30, covering the full hurricane season. She stated that the City can perform emergency debris removal following a storm and that the contract is necessary to support FEMA reimbursement for federally declared disasters.

Councilwoman Cone asked whether the debris monitoring company would meet the updated FEMA requirements and keep the City aligned with county procedures to ensure eligibility for reimbursement.

City Manager Steve Davis stated that the debris monitoring company has assisted the City with previous FEMA reimbursements and has software and tracking systems to document debris removal activities. He explained that the monitoring company maintains detailed records and documentation during storm events and debris removal to ensure the City meets FEMA requirements and can receive reimbursement.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Gabrielle Nelson, Mayor Pro Tem
SECONDER:	Rufus Bright, Council Member
AYES:	Gabrielle Nelson, Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

11. NEW BUSINESS

- A. A request for approval of a Concept Site Plan has been submitted by Massa Gaelle Fokou, for "Massa Center". PIN # 70013 05019, located in the 4th Council District at 205 S Coastal Hwy, zoned C-1.
- B. City Manager Steve Davis presented the site plan for the Masa Center, the first project in downtown Main Street redevelopment. He stated that the property is already zoned appropriately and has received a setback variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals. He stated that the development will include ground-floor retail and upper-level residential apartments. He noted that the former Chhina House will be renovated to include a restaurant, two additional retail spaces, and rooftop seating with a bar and grill.

Councilman Shawn Randerwala stated that if cars are parked on both sides of the street, the dumpster truck may not have enough room to access and service the dumpster.

City Manager Davis stated that the dumpster at the location will be on wheels, allowing it to be moved out of the way on scheduled collection days. This is a common practice in areas with limited space. He stated that the waste provider has plenty of dumpsters designed for this type of setup and will be able to move the dumpster as needed for collection.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
SECONDER:	Mark Stephens, Council Member

AYES:	Gabrielle Nelson, Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala
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B.

Resolution Extending the Moratorium on Acceptance of Application or Approving a Corrective, Detention, Penal Institution, or related Agency or Facility

City Attorney Scott Robichaux stated there is a request for an extension of the existing moratorium on detention center-type facilities through October 31st to allow additional time to complete ordinance updates. He stated that the extension would coincide with the existing mobile home moratorium.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Thomas Barbee, Council Member
SECONDER:	Gabrielle Nelson, Mayor Pro Tem
AYES:	Gabrielle Nelson, Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Litigation

B. Personnel

C. Real Estate

Councilman Mark Stephens made a motion to adjourn to executive session, seconded by Councilman Rufus Bright.

Councilwoman ArtLise Alston-Cone made a motion to reconvene, seconded by Mark Stephens.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Mark Stephens, Council Member
SECONDER:	Rufus Bright, Council Member
AYES:	Gabrielle Nelson, Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	ArtLise Alston-Cone, Council Member
SECONDER:	Mark Stephens, Council Member
AYES:	Gabrielle Nelson, Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

13. ADJOURNMENT

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Mark Stephens, Council Member
SECONDER:	Rufus Bright, Council Member
AYES:	Gabrielle Nelson, Thomas Barbee, ArtLise Alston-Cone, Mark Stephens, Rufus Bright, Shawn Randerwala

Mayor Tracy Saunders

The foregoing minutes are true and correct and approved by me on this _____ day of _____, 2026.

ATTEST:

Zahnay Smoak, Clerk of Council