

**CITY OF METTER
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 2026
5:30 P.M.**

A regular meeting of city council was held on Monday, January 12, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Attending the meeting were the following officials:

Mayor Rashida Taylor
Councilwoman Chyrileen Kilcrease
Councilman Gregory Thomas
Councilwoman Tara Tremblay Jeffers
Councilwoman Victoria Gaitten
Councilman James McKie
City Manager Scott Wood
City Attorney Brent Carter
City Clerk Angie Conner
Police Chief McKinley Lewis
Police Captain Kris Storey
Planning Director Teresa Concannon
Public Works Director James McCray
Taylor Crosby – Metter Advertiser

GUESTS

John Jones, Jr. – Metter Airport Authority
Laura Hoover
Shelly Strange
Kirk Simmons
Blake Hicks
Darell Waters
Marcus McCray – Chamber of Commerce
Anne Childs
Tyne Love
Michael Love
Various members of the public

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

INVOCATION

Councilman Thomas gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman McKie led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Taylor requested approval of the agenda with the following changes:

- Removal and table Item A under New Business – Consideration of a motion to approve a Resolution updating the City of Metter Procedures for Public Comments at City Council meetings.

All other items will move up a letter on the agenda.

Councilwoman Kilcrease made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Councilman Thomas seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilwoman Kilcrease made a motion to approve the following minutes:

- a) Called Meeting, December 2, 2025, 9:00 a.m.
- b) Called Meeting, December 3, 2025, 9:30 a.m.
- c) Regular Meeting, December 8, 2025, 5:30 p.m.
- d) Called Meeting, December 16, 2025, 9:30 a.m.
- e) Called Meeting, December 22, 2025, 10:30 a.m.
- f) Called Meeting, Inauguration, December 30, 2025, 1:00 p.m.

Councilwoman Gaitten seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilwoman Kilcrease made a motion to go into executive session for personnel pursuant to O.C.G.A. 50-14-2(1). Councilman McKie seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

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No votes were taken in executive session.

After the executive session was complete, Councilman Thomas made a motion to go back in open session. Councilwoman Kilcrease seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution Appointing Mayor Pro-tem

Councilman McKie made a motion to approve a Resolution by the Mayor and Council Members of the City of Metter, Georgia, to appoint Chyrileen Kilcrease as Mayor Pro-tem of the City of Metter for 2026. Councilwoman Kilcrease seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Resolution Appointing Metter Municipal Court Judge

Councilwoman Kilcrease made a motion to approve a Resolution by the Mayor and Council Members of the City of Metter, Georgia, to appoint Mr. J. Kendall Gross as City of Metter Municipal Court Judge for 2026. Councilman McKie seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Resolution Appointing City of Metter Indigent Defense Attorney

Councilman Thomas made a motion to approve a Resolution by the Mayor and Council Members of the City of Metter, Georgia to appoint Ms. Sarah White as the City of Metter Indigent Defense Attorney for 2026. Councilwoman Kilcrease seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Resolution Appointing City of Metter Municipal Court Prosecutor

Councilwoman Kilcrease made a motion to approve a Resolution by the Mayor and Council Members of the City of Metter, Georgia to appoint Mr. Brent Carter as the City of Metter Municipal Court Prosecutor for 2026. Councilman McKie seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Resolution Appointing City of Metter City Attorney

Councilman Thomas made a motion to approve a Resolution by the Mayor and Council Members of the City of Metter, Georgia to appoint Mr. Brent Carter as the City of Metter City Attorney for 2026. Councilwoman Kilcrease seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Homestead Exemption

Councilwoman Gaitten made a motion to increase the homestead exemption for all homeowners' personal residences in Metter to \$2,000 per year and an additional \$4,000

exemption for all homeowners' personal residences for sixty-five and older that have a federal taxable income of \$10,000 or less. Councilman Thomas seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Appointment to Airport Authority

Councilwoman Kilcrease made a motion to approve a Resolution appointing Mr. Blake Hicks to the Airport Authority for a three-year term ending on December 31, 2028, to replace Mr. Bobby Jones. The following people have applied for the position: Mr. Blake Hicks, Mr. Kirk Simmons, and Mr. Johnny Darell Waters. The Airport Authority is recommending Mr. Blake Hicks. Councilman Thomas seconded the motion, and the vote was two in favor (Councilwoman Kilcrease and Councilman Thomas) and three opposed (Councilwoman Gaitten, Councilman McKie, and Councilwoman Jeffers). The motion failed.

Councilwoman Gaitten offered a motion to approve a Resolution appointing Mr. Kirk Simmons to the Airport Authority for a three-year term ending on December 31, 2028, to replace Mr. Bobby Jones. Councilman McKie seconded the motion, and the vote was three in favor (Councilwoman Gaitten, Councilman McKie, and Councilwoman Jeffers) and two opposed (Councilwoman Kilcrease and Councilman Thomas). The motion passed. It was the opinion of the majority of the council members that Mr. Kirk Simmons was the most qualified to hold the position according to his resume.

Resolution Adding the Mayor and Mayor Pro-tem to all City Bank Accounts

Councilman Thomas made a motion to approve a Resolution adding Mayor Rashida Taylor and Mayor Pro-tem Chyrileen Kilcrease to the signature cards for all City of Metter bank accounts. Councilman McKie seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Ordinance Amending the City of Metter's Alcohol Ordinance

Councilman McKie made a motion for the first reading of an ordinance amending the City of Metter's Alcohol Ordinance adding a new section, Article XI. "5.08.930 Sale of Mixed Drinks for Off-Premises Consumption." Councilwoman Gaitten seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Presentation of New Fire Station Project Financing

City Manager Scott Wood led the presentation outlining the financing option for the new fire station project.

**Sources and Uses of Funds
City of Metter
Candler County Public Building Authority Revenue Bond**

Regular Meeting, January 12, 2026

Dated Date 3/10/2026
Delivery Date 3/10/2026

Sources:

Total Project Cost:	\$4,531,063.00
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Source of Funds:

2018 SPLOST	1,227,964.75
2024 SPLOST	103,098.25
Bond Proceeds	3,200,000.00

Uses:

Project Fund Deposits:	
Project Fund	4,398,043.00
Delivery Date Expenses:	
Cost of Insurance	133,020.00

Total Uses of funds	\$4,521,063.00
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Financing Summary - \$3.2 Million Bond

15 YEARS

Reducing Borrowing W/SPLOST on Hand

Bond Principal	\$ 3,200,000
Bond Interest	\$ 1,202,928
Average Life of Debt	8.8451
Final Maturity	5/1/2040
Interest Rate (est.)	4.25%

2024 SPLOST

2024 SPLOST Allocated for Fire Station	\$1,000,000.00
Used for Project	<u>(103,098.25)</u>
Available for Debt Service	\$ 806,901.75

Payable from 2024 SPLOST	\$ 896,339
Payable from 2030 SPLOST	\$2,103,932
Payable from 2036 SPLOST	\$1,402,656

Preliminary Schedule to Closing

<u>Date</u>	<u>Task</u>	<u>Party/Parties</u>
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Regular Meeting, January 12, 2026

Dec 8	City Council to adopt Reimbursement Resolution	City
Dec 9-31	Hold Groundbreaking	
Week of Jan 5	Circulate draft Request for Offers to working group	Stifel
Jan 12	Distribute Request for Offers to potential investors	Stifel
Feb 4	Receive Proposals from potential investors	Stifel
Feb 9	City Council to award bond and Authorize execution of all Documents/PBA meets to adopt bond resolution and sign IGA	All Parties
Feb 12	File Bond Validation Pleadings/Submit Ad to Metter Advertiser	Gray Pannell/ Local Counsel
Feb 18	Run 1 st bond Validation Hearing Ad	Gray Pannell/ Local Counsel
Feb 25	Run 2 nd bond Validation Hearing Ad	Gray Pannell/ Local Counsel
Week of Mar 2	Hold Bond Validation Hearing	Gray Pannell/ Local Counsel
Mar 10	Close and deliver funds	All Parties

City Manager Scott Wood informed the council that this information will not require any formal action by City Council, but we are anxious to keep that important issue moving.

OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL

Councilwoman Gaitten informed city council that there are appointments to be made to the Tree Board. She asked the clerk to advertise for these positions.

Councilwoman Gaitten gave an update on the refurbishing of the historical signs on Kennedy, Lewis, and Rountree Streets. She said that the community is interested in adopting the area around the signs to plant flowers. Mayor Taylor suggested talking to Public Works Director James McCray.

Councilwoman Gaitten expressed the need for a social media policy. Mayor Taylor said that some of the governmental sites have been hacked. She suggested getting a tech to look at it.

Councilwoman Gaitten expressed her appreciation to Public Works Director James McCray. She said that she had a couple of problems with drainage at her house and public works came and helped her get it straightened out.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Written reports were placed in the agenda packets for council to review.

CITY MANGER'S REPORT

Mr. Wood explained that by July of this year the city must submit to the State an updated inventory of our water and sewer customers who have galvanized or lead service pipes. To comply with that requirement our Water and Sewer staff will be conducting inspections to obtain as much of that information as possible. The city inspection will be limited to accessing the customer's line at the point where it is connected to the water meter. Staff has been reminded of the confusion generated late last year by the letter which was mailed to City customers. We are working to avoid repeating that problem. Information will be placed on the city website, notices will be placed in the Metter Advertiser, and we will include an informational flyer in upcoming water bills. Homes built in 1991 or later are presumed to have been constructed with compliant water lines, so the lines servicing those homes will be exempt from inspection. Because the areas south of downtown seem to include the greater concentration of older homes we will begin working in those areas. Mayor Taylor suggested compiling a list of plumbers in the area to give to the citizens.

Teresa Concannon has scheduled a Planning Commission meeting for the evening of Tuesday, January 13th, to familiarize that commission with the draft provisions of the new Comprehensive Zoning Plan and to invite any suggestions they may have. Our goal is to submit the new plan for review by City Council before the end of January.

We have heard nothing further over the past several months from the developers of any of the housing projects about which the city has been approached.... the "Joey Burke" project (which would have involved the State housing grant), the Central Avenue project, or the East Hiawatha project). Teresa will inform us of any significant new developments regarding any of those projects.

Additionally, earlier last year we were advised to expect a groundbreaking on the new hotel project. Obviously, that did not take place, and I have heard nothing further on the status of that project, although we have no reason to think it is still not alive.

Mayor Taylor has emphasized her interest in developing a better process for how and when DRIs are initiated, and in understanding the scope and dimensions of project inquiries and proposals as early as possible. She and I had lengthy and informative discussion on Tuesday with the Planning Director for the City of Statesboro. We will incorporate some of their practices and methods into our process and continue to work to improve the manner in which DRIs and other development issues are handled by the city in the future.

Mayor Taylor and I met with representatives of Georgia Southern University on Wednesday afternoon to discuss their continued utilization of the Georgia Grown facility. Clearly the City of Metter enjoys a great relationship with Georgia Southern, and the

meeting was helpful in identifying areas of common concern about their use and our overall management of the building.

Additionally, we are working with an electrical engineer in the hopes of determining the amounts of electricity usage attributable to the various occupants of the GGIC building, so that those costs can then be accurately charged to the individual users. Age and construction of the building are making that identification project “easier said than done,” and perhaps even cost prohibitive, but we will inform you when and if it can be accomplished.

Our fire station groundbreaking last month was a brief and informal event, but one which enabled us to officially and publicly affirm that the project is now a reality. The event was well attended and supported by our firefighters, who were particularly happy to see a tangible confirmation of the project take place. The project manager, John Lavender, has been given formal notice to proceed. Going ahead with the project has enabled him to order materials and confirm schedule obligations with subcontractors. Additionally, one source of information I reviewed recently stated that construction costs in the state of Georgia increased by 20 % last year, so being able to keep the project moving along is beneficial to the city in managing construction costs. Obviously, everyone could not attend the ceremony, but the weather was cooperative and we are grateful to those who were able to make it as well as for the support of those who could not.

Police Chief McKinley Lewis compiled a comprehensive report of the activities of his department during 2025. That report will be available for review.

The 2.5% COLA which you authorized in this year’s operating budget for general employees has now been implemented. On behalf of City employees, thank you for making that happen.

We held a genuinely nice retirement reception for former Mayor Ed Boyd last month. The event was well attended, giving many citizens the opportunity to personally convey their appreciation for his leadership and service to the community.

An inauguration was held on December 30, 2025, for Mayor Rashida Taylor. Mayor Taylor, Councilwoman Tara Jeffers, and Councilman Gregory Thomas were sworn in by Judge Tony Thompson at that ceremony.

MAYOR’S REPORT

Mayor Taylor explained an innovative new program from Georgia City solutions which encourages mayors to get out into the community and read to children, promoting literacy and community engagement. Literacy is not just an education issue. It is an economic, workforce, and quality of life issue. In Georgia, 68% of fourth graders do not read proficiently. * Research shows that children who cannot read proficiently by the end of third grade are more likely to experience poor health, have discipline problems, and drop

out of high school. As adults, they are more likely to spend time in prison, struggle with unemployment, live in poverty, and experience poor health outcomes. Mayor Taylor said that she has set February 26 as a date to begin working with this issue.

Mayor Taylor informed the city council that she would be meeting with city staff to produce a calendar that will include everything happening for the year so it can be posted and pushed out ahead of time.

ADJOURNMENT

After no further discussion, Councilman McKie made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:52 p.m. Councilwoman Gaitten seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Angie Conner, City Clerk