

**CITY OF METTER
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2025
5:30 P.M.**

A regular meeting of the city council was held on Monday, January 13, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the council chambers at City Hall.

Attending the meeting were the following officials:

Mayor Edwin O. Boyd
Councilwoman Victoria Gaitten
Councilwoman Rashida Taylor
Councilman James McKie
Councilwoman Chyrileen Kilcrease
Councilman Gregg Stewart
Interim City Manager Scott Wood
City Clerk Angie Conner
Police Chief Robert Shore
Public Works Director Cliff Hendrix
Planning Director Teresa Concannon
Fire Chief Jason Douglas

Attending the meeting were the following guests:

Brad Jones, Chairman, Board of Commissioners of Candler County
Kameron Mitchell, US Small Business Administration
Taliyah Henderson, PHD Student at Mercer University
Dean Stone, IHS Pharmacy
Juan Taylor – Metter Fire Department

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Mayor Boyd called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilwoman Gaitten led the Pledge of Allegiance.

INVOCATION

Interim City Manager Scott Wood gave the invocation.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Regular Meeting, January 13, 2025

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilwoman Kilcrease made a motion to approve the following minutes:

- a) Public Hearing, Monday, December 9, 2024, 5:15 p.m.
- b) Regular Meeting, Monday, December 9, 2024, 5:30 p.m.

Councilman McKie seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

PRESENTATIONS

Disaster Recovery and Resilience

Mr. Kameron Mitchell representing the US Small Business Administration gave a presentation regarding disaster recovery and resilience loans for victims of Hurricane Helene. He introduced three types of loans that are available:

- Business Physical Disaster Loans
- Economic Injury Disaster Loans
- Home Disaster Loans

The application filing deadlines are:

- Physical Damage: November 29, 2024
- Economic Injury: June 30, 2025

Medication Delivery by Drones

Ms. Taliyah Henderson and Mr. Dean Stone were present at the meeting to give a presentation on a project that was conducted in Metter regarding the delivery of prescriptions via drones. Ms. Taliyah is a PHD student at Mercer University who teamed up with Mr. Dean Stone, owner of IHS Pharmacy, to test this project. The drone deliveries used simulated medication for this project. Ms. Henderson said that the project is going well. She ran over fifty trials and only one was not successful. She said that the project focuses on independent pharmacies.

Guest Comments

There were no comments from the guests.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 2025-01 – Mayor Pro tem

Councilman McKie made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-01 by the Mayor and Council Members of the City of Metter, Georgia, to appoint Councilwoman Chyrileen Kilcrease as Mayor Pro-tem for 2025. Councilwoman Taylor seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Resolution 2025-02 – Metter Municipal Court Judge

Councilwoman Kilcrease made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-02 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 2025. Councilwoman Taylor seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Resolution 2025-03 – Metter Indigent Defense Attorney

Councilman McKie made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-03 by the Mayor and Council Members of the City of Metter, Georgia to appoint Mr. Duff B. Ayers as the City of Metter Indigent Defense Attorney for 2025. Councilwoman Kilcrease seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Resolution 2025-04 – Metter Municipal Court Prosecutor

Councilwoman Kilcrease made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-04 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 2025. Councilman Stewart seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Resolution 2025-05 – Metter City Attorney

Councilwoman Kilcrease made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-05 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 2025. Councilman Stewart seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Resolution 2025-06 – Qualifying Fees

Councilwoman Kilcrease made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-06 to fix and publish qualifying fees for the City of Metter, November 4, 2025 General Election as follows:

Mayor	\$310.50
Council Seat 2 District 1 and Seat 4 District 2	\$135.00

Councilman McKie seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Resolution 2025-07 – GMA Lease

Councilwoman Kilcrease made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-07 to enter into a GMA Lease in the amount of \$103,412.64 and for Mayor Edwin O. Boyd to execute all necessary documents for the purchase of the following vehicles:

1. 2024 Ford F250 for the Sanitation Department
2. 2024 Ford F350 for the Wastewater Department

Councilman McKie seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

HB 581 Homestead Exemption

Councilman McKie made a motion to enter a discussion regarding House Bill 581 Homestead Exemption Rollback. Councilwoman Kilcrease seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Mr. Wood explained that the constitutional amendment regarding this matter was approved by the voters in the November election. He said that the government body is not required to act on this issue unless you choose to “opt out” of the homestead exemption restriction. No action by the City Council will result in the establishment of the exemption for the City. Also, in order for us to participate in any future sales tax referendum both the City and the County must have the exemption in effect (i.e., not “opt out”). On Monday evening the Candler County Board of Commissioners voted to NOT “opt out.” At this point we cannot provide you with a dollar impact on the city if we do not opt out, but we have reached out to the Tax Commissioner to see if that information can be obtained. However, in any event any property tax effect on the City would probably be negligible for the next few years, while at the same time enabling us to participate in a FLOST (sales tax).

It was the consensus of the city council not to opt out at this time, so no vote was needed.

Public Hearing

Councilwoman Taylor made a motion to set a public hearing on Monday, February 10, 2024, at 5:15 p.m. for public input on a conditional use and variance request for apartments in the Central Business District. Councilman McKie seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

OTHER BUSINESS FROM CITY COUNCIL

Councilwoman Gaitten asked if we know a completion date on central park yet? Mr. Wood said that we are hoping by the end of March.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

The departmental reports were included in the agenda packet for the council's review.

Chief Shore reported that he is at full staff with one in school and one that just graduated. The police department received a grant from the Governor's Office of Highway Safety in the amount of \$17,000.00. This grant will be used for laptops and printers in the patrol units.

Mr. Hendrix reported that the contractors are about 99% done with picking up storm debris. Streets and Lanes will begin with work orders for limbs and leaves next week. We will make a punch list for the contractors once they are done.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Wood included a management letter in the agenda packet.

Councilman McKie asked in regard to the management letter, how quickly can we get the health insurance issues corrected? Will this be a legal battle? Mr. Wood said that he did not know the answer to that question. He said that he asked the HR Director to compose a report of specific incidents where employees have had problems and what those problems entailed. Once we have all the information, we will let Brent Carter decide if he needs to take some action. We are also looking at GMA insurance as an alternative. We also have a meeting with another guy tomorrow that may give us some other options. We are working on it, but it may not be an overnight fix. Councilman McKie said that he just wants to make sure that our people are taken care of.

Councilman McKie also had a question about the rent for Better Fresh Farms. He wanted to know what is their problem that they are not paying the rent. Mr. Wood said that he had received a lengthy email from them and would share it with the council. He said that basically, some of it was necessitated by loss of crops because they did not have any power backup. They have pledged to us in writing that they are going to bring the rent current. We do not want to lose them.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Boyd said that he hoped everyone had a great holiday season.

Mayor Boyd said that there will be a meeting on January 29th, 8:00 a.m. at the Pineland Telephone Board Room. Chairman Jones has called this meeting for the city, county, and other entities to get together and collaborate. We will be meeting on a quarterly basis and will need a council member to volunteer to attend the first meeting and we can rotate out each time. Councilwoman Taylor was the first to volunteer. Councilman Stewart said that he could go also. Councilwoman Gaitten said that if one of them could not go then she could go.

Regular Meeting, January 13, 2025

Mayor Boyd reminded the council that the GMA Cities United Summit is at the Atlanta Omni on January 25th – 27th.

ADJOURNMENT

After no further discussion, Councilwoman Kilcrease made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:13 p.m. Councilman McKie seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

Angie Conner, City Clerk