CITY OF LAVONIA COUNCIL

PLANNING & ZONING – MINUTES

November 24, 2025
5:30 PM

Present: **Ben White, Chairman**, **Laurie Whitworth, Pam Stone, Morris Rivers**

Media: Charlie Evanson, Franklin County Citizen

Staff: Assistant City Manager – Robert Ogburn
Assistant City Clerk – Barbara Busby

Item 1. **Call to Order**
Ben White called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

Item 2. **Invocation/Pledge**
Morris Rivers led the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item 3. **Approval of Minutes – September 29, 2025**
Pam Stone made a motion to accept the minutes. Morris Rivers seconded. All were in favor.

Item 4. **Old Business - New Business**

An Ordinance Amending the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Lavonia, Georgia, Codified as Chapter 102 of the Code of Ordinances, To Repeal Article V, "Zoning Districts;" To Repeal Article VI, "Zoning District Requirements;" To Repeal Article VII, "Permitted and Prohibited Uses;" To Amend Article III, "Use And Design Regulations Generally," Section 102-81, "Use;" To Adopt a New Article V, "Zoning Districts And Official Zoning Map;" To Repeal Multiple Sections of Article XI, "Medical Campus District;" To Adopt a New Article XII "Definitions;" To Repeal Conflicting Ordinances; To Provide for Severability; To Provide for an Effective Date; To Provide for Codification; and for Other Purposes.
Chair White introduced the proposed ordinance to amend the zoning ordinance of the City of Lavonia, which would repeal and replace several articles, including zoning districts, district requirements, and permitted and prohibited uses.

Robert Ogburn, Assistant City Manager, provided a detailed explanation of the proposed changes. He noted that upon reviewing the city ordinances, he found conflicts and outdated information that needed updating. The primary goals of the amendment were to:

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Update and modernize the language and definitions to current standards;
Add light industrial zoning to accommodate businesses like Jared Foods, which are less intrusive than heavy industrial;
Add a government zoning district for city buildings and schools;
Improve organization and readability of the ordinance;
Convert lot size requirements from acreage to square footage for easier reference; and
Create clear charts showing allowed and prohibited uses in each zoning district.

Board members expressed appreciation for the improved organization and readability of the ordinance. Chair White specifically praised the charts showing allowed uses, suggesting that laminated copies would make excellent quick references for the board.

The discussion briefly touched on mobile homes within city limits. Chair White asked about replacing mobile homes in existing parks in case of disasters. Ogburn confirmed that Georgia state law requires allowing replacement with new homes of the same footprint in established locations.

Laurie Whitworth made a motion to approve the ordinance. Pam Stone seconded. All were in favor.

Item 5. **Closing Comments**

Morris Rivers spoke about community pride in his neighborhood and the improvements to the local park, including a new gym. Chair White offered to help organize a community day for further improvements, suggesting that involving local youth would help them take pride in their community.

Item 6. **Adjourn**

Meeting was adjourned.

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Ben White, Chairman Barbara Busby, Assistant City Clerk