



City Council Work Session September 9, 2025 Pendergrass City Hall

I. Motion to Call to Order- Bob Carter; seconded by Sylvia Basak

<u>Attendee Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Basak, Sylvia	Councilmember	X	
Bonner, Tara	Councilmember		Resigned
Gomez, Gabriel	Councilmember/ Mayor Pro Tem	X	
Bill Ellis	Mayor	X	
Michael Jones	Councilmember	X	
Bob Carter	Councilmember	X	
Laura Bigley	Councilmember	X	

II. Current Business

- **Park events (Fall Festival, Car Show)-** As of September 25, 2025, the City has received vendor applications from approximately 35 participants for the upcoming Fall Festival. A variety of vendors are confirmed, representing food, crafts, local businesses, and community organizations. Additional applications continue to be submitted, and staff are actively reviewing new inquiries. There is still ample space available, and the City encourages further vendor participation to ensure a vibrant and well-rounded event. The following weekend, on Saturday, October 18, 2025, from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM, the City will host a Car Show presented by American Street Rodders. The event will feature a selection of classic and custom vehicles. The City will have a limited number of food vendors onsite, and The Revival Taproom will be present with a beer truck to serve attendees.

III. New Business

- **Proposed New Police Car-** The Police Department requested the purchase of two new vehicles. At this time, they have been advised that only one vehicle may be approved for this year. The estimated cost per vehicle is approximately \$38,000. Funding would initially come from the General Fund, with reimbursement from SPLOST once approval is received from Jackson County. Police vehicles are an eligible expense under the SPLOST account.

Additionally, the City will be receiving a refund check from Motorola in the amount of \$32,000. This refund is due to an error by the former Finance Clerk, who mistakenly paid credits issued to the City as invoices, resulting in a large credit balance.

It was noted that newly purchased police vehicles do not come equipped with lights, radios, or computers. These items must be purchased separately. However, when possible, equipment from vehicles that are no longer in service may be repurposed for use in new vehicles.

- **Jackson County Schools use of Park St-** Mayor Ellis reported that Jackson County Schools sent an email regarding Park Street. The school system requested to use Park Street as an alternative route to avoid crossing the railroad tracks at the Walnut Grove subdivision. Currently, approximately 6–8 school buses travel through the area each morning and 6–7 in the afternoon.

The buses have experienced difficulties with vehicles stopping at the railroad tracks, causing traffic delays. Council discussed the option of assigning a police officer to the entrance of the subdivision each morning to assist with traffic flow. It was noted that, as needed, an officer is occasionally stationed at the gate to help guide traffic.

- **Graffiti response-** The individual responsible for graffiti in the Seasons of Pendergrass and Brooks Village subdivisions has been apprehended. Officer Davis worked with the Gwinnett County Sheriff's Office and utilized facial recognition technology to assist in the investigation. In addition, with the cooperation of residents and the use of home security cameras in Brooks Village, the Police Department was able to identify the suspect.
- **Police Chief-** Police Chief Billy McDaniel is currently on suspension with pay following the failure of an evidence room audit, during which several items were found to be missing. Under the recommendation of the Council and in accordance with the City's Code of Ethics, Chief McDaniel was placed on suspension pending the outcome of the investigation. The Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) is currently conducting an inquiry. Further action will be determined upon conclusion of the investigation.

During Chief McDaniel's absence, Captain Poole will serve as Acting Chief. The City has implemented corrective measures to address storage issues in the evidence room, including providing additional lockers and equipment to properly secure all evidence. SPLOST funds will be used to install doors inside the room, a purchase that has been approved by Jackson County.

Mayor Ellis provided a brief overview of the proper procedures for handling evidence, noting that these procedures were not consistently followed in the past.

Cameras have been installed in the new building. The missing evidence pertains to items from previous years and is not a recent issue.

- **Codifying ordinances-** The City will soon begin the process of reintroducing ordinances to the Council for approval. Signatures are needed on several older ordinances that were not previously filed at City Hall. The City is currently working on ensuring all necessary documentation is complete and properly recorded.
- **Eviction rubble fee-** The City is considering implementing a policy to charge homeowners for the cleanup of trash from evictions when city workers remove debris from city streets.

IV. **Open Discussion-** Donald Roberts inquired whether the cost of eviction cleanup would be charged to the evicted individual or the homeowner. Mayor Ellis clarified that the homeowner would be responsible for the cost.

Mr. Roberts also suggested that only certified flaggers should be assigned to direct traffic for school buses and other traffic.

Laura Bigley asked about the timeline for cleanup of debris from a recent house fire, noting that it is creating a rodent issue. Mayor Ellis stated that the City has contacted the property owner and discussed the matter.

Motion to adjourn made by Bob Carter; seconded by Laura Bigley. All in favor. Meeting adjourned

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Renee Martinez". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Renee Martinez
City Clerk
City of Pendergrass
September 10, 2025