



## *Minutes*

City Council Meeting

March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025

6:30 pm

Baldwin Municipal Courtroom, 155 Willingham Avenue, Baldwin, GA 30511

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Mayor Stephanie Almagno, Councilmember Erik Keith, Councilmember Nancy Lehman, Councilmember Kerri Davis, Councilmember Maarten Venter, and Councilmember Alice Venter were all in attendance.

### *Call Meeting to Order*

*Mayor Almagno called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.*

### *Invocation and Pledge*

### *Consent Agenda*

- a. Approval of Minutes: Council Meeting 3/10/25.

**Action:** A motion was made by Alice Venter to approve the consent agenda as presented with a second by Kerri Davis. Motion Carried 5-0.

### *Public Comments*

*No one came forward.*

### *Public Hearings*

### *Reports*

Public Works – Public Works Director Scott Barnhart

Public Works Director Scott Barnhart presented a summary of the last six months for the Public Works Department, including completed projects, upcoming projects, and special recognition to the Public Works staff for their hard work and dedication during the recent waterline breaks.

### *Old Business*

### *New Business*

1. Consideration/Approval of Soque River Watershed Association Fundraiser – Brad Coppedge

Brad Coppedge, Board President of the Soque River Watershed Association, addressed the Council, providing background information on the SRWA and the importance of maintaining and preserving the Soque and other natural watersheds through various methods of community engagement. Council was in consensus to review the provided information and to table the vote regarding the fundraiser.

**Action:** A motion was made by Maarten Venter to table Consideration/Approval of Soque River Watershed Association Fundraiser with a second by Nancy Lehman. Motion Carried 5-0.

2. Consideration/Approval of Public Works Vac Truck

Barnhart presented a request to the Council for a non-CDL vac truck, which would eliminate the burden of ensuring a staff member maintains a CDL license. This truck is dual purpose, working both as a sewer cleanout and as a hydro-excavator. The truck has additional applications for stormwater drains, cleaning catch basins, and more. The current truck, which Barnhart estimated to be almost 30 years old, would be surplus. The anticipated lifespan on the new truck is conservatively 15-20 years.

CAO Emily Woodmaster presented the lease agreement options for the vac truck through Georgia Municipal Association as a continuation of the master contract the City already has through GMA. The cost of the vac truck \$405,697.00 with a five-year and a seven-year option.

<i>Term</i>	<i>Interest Rate</i>	<i>Annual Payment</i>	<i>Total</i>
5 Years	4.69%	\$92,904.23	\$464,521.15
7 Years	4.64%	\$69,200.53	\$484,403.71

City staff's recommendation is for the seven-year term, and the first payment will not be due until one year after receiving the vehicle, so the first payment is anticipated to be in the FY2027 budget. Woodmaster stated that the agreement would need to be adopted by April 21<sup>st</sup> and that Council could table the item if they wanted more time to review the information.

**Action: A motion was made by Alice Venter to table Consideration/Approval of Public Works Vac Truck with a second by Erik Keith. Motion Carried 5-0.**

3. Consideration/Approval of Banks Ridge Paving Project

Barnhart presented a project proposal to pave Banks Ridge, Banks Highland, Banks Terrace, Highland Pointe, and Dawn Place.

*Councilmember Alice Venter stepped out of the room at 7:28 pm and returned at 7:30 pm.*

Tonight's request is for Council to authorize putting each project out to bid, with the understanding that both projects have full funding already available. After the RFP is completed, both paving projects will be brought back before the Council to award the paving projects to the contractor(s).

**Action: A motion was made by Maarten Venter to authorize City staff to put the Banks Ridge Paving out to bid with a second by Erik Keith. Motion Carried 5-0.**

4. Consideration/Approval of Highland Pointe Subdivision Paving Project

**Action: A motion was made by Alice Venter to authorize City staff to put the Highland Pointe Subdivision Paving out to bid with a second by Kerri Davis. Motion Carried 5-0.**

5. Consideration/Approval of Backhoe Repairs

Woodmaster presented a request for funds to repair a Public Works backhoe. While this is a budgeted expense, the new estimate for the repairs is above City staff authorization levels. The new repair cost estimate is \$5,274.81.

**Action: A motion was made by Alice Venter to approve the Backhoe Repairs expense, not to exceed \$5,300 as presented with a second by Kerri Davis. Motion Carried 5-0.**

6. Consideration/Approval of Everbridge Contract

Woodmaster recapped the discussion from the previous council meeting about implementing Everbridge as a public/community notification system. The contract will be renegotiated each year. Council had no additional questions or comments.

**Action: A motion was made by Nancy Lehman to approve the Everbridge contract and to authorize the CAO to execute the contract as presented with a second by Alice Venter. Motion Carried 5-0.**

*Mayor Almagno read the announcements prior to the Council closing the regular meeting for Executive Session.*

***Executive Session***

Executive Session for Personnel

**Action: A motion was made by Alice Venter to close the regular session and move into executive session for personnel with a second by Erik Keith. Motion Carried 5-0 at 7:53 pm.**

**Action: A motion was made by Maarten Venter to reenter the regular session from executive session and to authorize the execution of the affidavit where personnel were discussed and no action was taken with a second by Kerri Davis. Motion Carried 4-0 at 9:37 pm (Councilmember Alice Venter was not present).**

***Announcements***

- a. Homestead Exemption Affidavits for 2025 property taxes are due April 1<sup>st</sup>. If you do not have a Homestead Exemption, stop by City Hall or call 706-778-6341 to find out the exemption for which you qualify. If you have a City exemption, but not a County exemption, contact the County Clerk.
- b. The April 8<sup>th</sup> Work Session will take place in the Baldwin Police Training Center located directly behind the Police Department at the usual time of 6:30 pm.
- c. The Baldwin Council Spring 2025 Retreat will be April 10 - 11 from 8:00 am - 5:00 pm at EMI's Habersham Office at 202 Luthi Road, Alto, GA 30510. Formal notice and agenda to follow.
- d. The 26<sup>th</sup> annual Baldwin Clean Up Day is April 19<sup>th</sup>! Join us at Mitchell Gailey Park from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm to clean up Baldwin roads and plant a tree. Public Works will be collecting items that normally must go to the landfill, including appliances, scrap metal,

and furniture. Tires, batteries, and paint cans will be accepted, but they must be separated from other items. All items must be placed out on the curb by 8:00 am on Monday April 14<sup>th</sup>. Sign up is required for pickup service. Call 706-778-6341 by April 11<sup>th</sup> to get your name on the list!


- e. Councilmember Alice Venter addressed an unsigned letter Mayor Alamagno received regarding Alice and Maarten Venter's attendance at Council Meetings. Both council members addressed their attendance due to ongoing illness.

*Adjournment*

Action: A motion was made by Maarten Venter to adjourn the meeting with a second by Nancy Lehman. Motion Carried 4-0 at 9:38 pm.

  
Stephanie Alamagno, Mayor

4/14/2025  
Date Approved by Council

  
Erin Gathercoal, City Clerk

