



**REGULAR MEETING, MAYOR AND COUNCIL, CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA,
APRIL 7, 2025, 6:30 PM.**

Mayor Fleeta Baggett presided with Mayor Pro-tem Kimberly Johnson, Council Members: Anthony Henderson, Travis Moore, Charika Davis, and Jared Rutberg, City Manager Tres Thomas, Deputy City Manager John King, City Clerk Audra M. Gutierrez. City Attorney Frank Turner, Jr., attended via teleconference and Council Member Susie Keck was not in attendance.

Covington Chief of Police Philip Bradford gave the invocation.

Mayor Baggett led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Mayor Baggett administered the Oath of Office to new Covington Police Officer Sidney Champagne.

1. A motion was made by Council Member Johnson and seconded by Council Member Henderson to approve minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on March 17, 2025.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Baggett informed everyone that Council Member Keck is at Vanderbilt with her husband.

2. A motion was made by Council Member Henderson and seconded by Council Member Davis to approve the **final** reading of an ordinance for the City of Covington with the removal of the smoking prohibition.

The motion **failed** with Council Members Johnson, Moore, and Rutberg voting against. Council Members Davis and Henderson voted in favor.

3. The motion was made by Council Member Rutberg, seconded by Council member Johnson to approve the **final** reading of an ordinance of the City of Covington, as presented:

“AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, TO AMEND THE COVINGTON MUNICIPAL CODE, ENACTED AND ADOPTED ON THE 16TH DAY OF OCTOBER 2001, AS AMENDED BY PREVIOUS AMENDMENTS, TO ALTER CERTAIN PROVISION OF TITLE 5 OF THE SAID CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE PURPOSE OF **AMENDING CHAPTER 5.12 (ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES)** THEREOF, TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

The motion carried with Council Members Johnson, Moore, Rutberg, and Henderson voting in favor.

Council Member Davis voted against it.

4. A motion was made by Council Member Rutberg and seconded by Council Member Moore to amend the agenda:

-Remove # 10
-Add AA1 Discussion of disbanding the Citizen Review Board (CRB).

The motion carried with Council Members Johnson, Moore, and Rutberg voting in favor. Council Members Davis and Henderson voting against it.

5. A motion was made by Council Member Davis and seconded by Council Member Henderson to approve the best bid from Custom Creations in the amount of \$122,650.00, to build-out of the Williams Street building for the Water Resources Department.

1) Paramount Contracting	\$149,000.00	
2) A2Z Build	\$130,300.00	
3) Miller Farm Services	\$127,500.00	
4) Custom Creations	\$122,650.00	Best and Complete Quote
5) Nelly & J's Crew	\$115,700.00	

The motion carried unanimously.

6. A motion was made by Council Member Rutberg and seconded by Council Member Davis to appoint Dwayne Turner to the Parking Authority.

The motion carried unanimously.

7. A motion was made by Council Member Rutberg and seconded by Council Member Moore to appoint Ashley Smith and Morgan Franklin to the Tree Preservation Board.

The motion carried unanimously.

8. A motion was made by Council Member Moore and seconded by Council Member Johnson to approve easement dedications with the City of Oxford and with the Newton County Industrial Development Authority (NCIDA) for the Archer Aviation facility.

The motion carried unanimously.

9. A motion was made by Council Member Johnson and seconded by Council Member Moore to authorize the Water Resources Department to expend up to the budgeted amount of \$3,700,000.00, for the Floyd Street Improvement Project.

The motion carried unanimously.

10. A motion was made by Council Member Johnson and seconded by Council Member Rutberg to approve the **first** reading of an ordinance for the City of Covington:

“AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, TO AMEND THE COVINGTON MUNICIPAL CODE, ENACTED AND ADOPTED ON THE 16TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2001, AS AMENDED BY PREVIOUS AMENDMENTS, TO ALTER CERTAIN PROVISION OF TITLE 13 OF THE SAID CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE PURPOSE OF **AMENDING SECTION 13.12.090 (FEES AND RATES) OF CHAPTER 13.12 (WATER SYSTEM)** THEREOF, TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

Motion carried with Council Members Moore, Rutberg, and Johnson voting in favor.
Council Members Davis and Henderson voted against it.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding disbanding the Citizen Review Board (CRB).

Ms. Rosie Crawford spoke against disbanding the CRB. She stated Police Chief Bradford has been cutting the bodycam tapes.

Chief Bradford informed the Council that the video footage is from several officers' body cams and the matter is still under active investigation.

Ms. Crawford stated the board has not had the opportunity to run as an operating board.

It was the consensus of the council to do additional research and discuss further at a later date.

Public Comments.

Ms. Thelma Nolley informed the Council of the garbage problem on West Street. Ms. Nolley thanked Anderson Baily, John King, Council Members Henderson and Davis for assisting with the furniture issues on the sidewalk.

Jeremy Edmondson stated he owns a business in Morgan Plaza and asked Council to look into creating an ordinance addressing pop-up yard sales in parking lots around Covington.

Planning and Development Director Judy Thagard stated there may be language already in the ordinance to regulate the issue.

Comments from the City Manager:

- Congratulated the Covington Fire Department for receiving its 5th accreditation
- Budget Work Sessions scheduled for 5/13, 5/14, and 5/15 at the airport from 5-8 PM

Deputy City Manager:

- Commended the Community Development Department for its efforts in working with the recent Epic Conference

Council Member Rutberg:

- Praised John King for his responsiveness.

Mayor Baggett:

- Floyd Street Project is moving along and commended the Water Department for all of their hard work
- Update on Council Member Keck's husband, John Keck, who had a double lung transplant; he had complications but made some improvements.

-Will be out of town for the 4/21 meeting; Mayor Pro-tem Johnson will be presiding

-Congratulations to Covington Fire for receiving reaccreditation

11. A motion was made by Council Member Johnson, seconded by Council Member Moore to enter into Executive Session at 7:41 PM for the purpose of discussing land opportunities.

The motion carried unanimously.

12. A motion was made by Council Member Davis and seconded by Council Member Moore to enter back into the Regular Session.

The motion carried unanimously.

Being no further business meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Fleeta S. Baggett, Mayor

Audra M. Gutierrez, City Clerk