REGULAR MEETING, MAYOR AND COUNCIL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, 6:30 PM.

Mayor Fleeta Baggett presided with Council Members: Anthony Henderson, Travis Moore, Charika Davis, and Susie Keck, Deputy City Manager John King, Clerk Audra M. Gutierrez, and City Attorney Frank Turner, Jr. Mayor Pro-tem Kimberly Johnson and Council Member Jared Rutberg attended via teleconference. City Manager Tres Thomas was absent.

Reverend Dr. Royeese Stowe 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 Officers Austin Swint and Randy Downs.

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1. Motion made by Council Member Keck, seconded by Council Member Davis to approve the minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on September 2, 2025.

   Motion carried unanimously.

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2. Motion made by Council Member Moore, seconded by Council Member Keck to approve the **final** 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 5 OF THE SAID CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE PURPOSE OF **AMENDING SECTION 5.04.040 (OCCUPATION TAX LEVIED) AND SECTION 5.04.080 (PAYMENT OF OCCUPATION TAX – EFFECT OF DELINQUENCY) OF CHAPTER 5.04 (BUSINESS LICENSES AND OCCUPATION TAXES GENERALLY)** THEREOF, TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

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

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3. Motion made by Council Member Henderson, seconded by Council Member Davis to amend the agenda to add:

 -Discussion of Change Order adding a separate water service to the Utilities Facility.

 Motion carried unanimously.

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4. Motion made by Council Member Henderson, seconded by Council Member Moore to approve the low bid from Anderson Grading and Pipeline in the amount of $179,320.00, for the Haynes Court Water Main Replacement project.

Helix Grading & Utility	$203,142.00
Anderson Grading & Pipeline	$179,320.00
Fortis Siteworks	$272,408.30
S.H Creel	$226,332.00
Site Engineering	$245,646.00
Georgia Sewer & Storm	$949,545.50

 Motion carried unanimously.

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5. Motion made by Council Member Henderson, seconded by Council Member Moore to approve the best RFP from Lewis Contracting Services in the amount of $134,498.56, to rehabilitate a culvert at the LAS.

Lewis Contracting Services	$134,498.56
Helix Grading and Utility	$156,691.00
Peach State Construction	$189,391.00
Anderson Gradine & Pipe	$199,742.00
Coggins Construction Co.	$201,541.87

 Motion carried unanimously.

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 A public hearing was held at 6:47 PM concerning a request to amend the Future Land Use Map from RES to COM and rezone from NR-2 to CM, for properties located on Gold Street and Briscoe Street.

 Attorney for the applicant, John Nix and applicant Josh Hart spoke in favor of the application.

 Diane Gaither, Roger Starr, and Thelma Starr-Nolley spoke against the application.

6. Motion made by Council Member Henderson, seconded by Council Member Davis to deny the request.

Council members Davis and Henderson voting in favor. Motion **failed** with Council members Keck, Johnson, Moore, and Rutberg voting against.

7. Motion made by Council Member Keck, seconded by Council Member Moore to amend the Future Land Use from RES to COM for case # PR25-0001.

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

8. Motion made by Council Member Keck, seconded by Council Member Moore to rezone from NR-2 to CM, for properties located at 4110, 4141, 4101 & 4127 Gold Street and 4171 Briscoe Street, with condition:

   A landscaped buffer shall be installed and maintained along any property line where a parcel subject to this rezoning abuts a residentially zoned or residentially used property. The buffer shall comply with the City's landscape buffer requirements (Section 16.40.020) of 20-feet and shall be designed to minimize visual and noise impacts between differing land uses.

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

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A public hearing was held at 7:37 PM concerning a SUP to allow a Personal Care Home to be located in Sterling Lakes subdivision.

Owner/applicant Carla Hillyer and Shannelle McBride were in attendance to speak in favor of the SUP.

Tammy Fields, Alicia Key, Alice Kelly, Phyllis Wright, and Linda Coleman spoke against the SUP.

9. Motion made by Council Member Henderson, seconded by Council Member Davis to **deny** a request for a Special Use Permit to allow for a Personal Care Home at 8140 Sterling Lakes Court, case # PSU25-0007.

   Motion carried unanimously.

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Mr. Charles Tuller was in attendance on behalf of RRF Sub Investments LLC to appeal the disapproval of a building permit based on a local fire requirement for a building located at 2185 Washington Street.

10. Motion made by Council Member Keck to approve the appeal.

Motion died for the lack of a second.

After a lengthy discussion,

11. Motion made by Council Member Keck, seconded by Council Member Henderson to **deny** the appeal of the disapproval of a building permit for 2185 Washington Street.

Motion carried with Council members Keck, Johnson, Moore, Davis, and Henderson. Council member Rutberg abstained.

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12. Motion made by Council Member Henderson, seconded by Council Member Moore to approve an RFP from Carter & Sloope in the amount of $98,400.00, to produce plans for the rehabilitation of the Spillers Lift Station.

Carter & Sloope	$98,400.00
GWES	$92,200.00
Thomas & Hutton	$89,700.00
Keck & Wood	$124,050.00
Garver	$148,700.00
Ardurra	$178,600.00

Motion carried unanimously.

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13. Motion made by Council Member Moore, seconded by Council Member Davis to approve agreements/contracts for ServerFarm, contingent upon evaluation by Transco of the City Gate Meter and any associated upgrades.

Motion carried unanimously.

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14. Motion made by Council Member Davis, seconded by Council Member Rutberg to approve the **first** reading of an ordinance to amend Section 2.09 - Officers; election; bonds; duties; oaths of the City Charter:

"AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND **SECTION 2.09** OF THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON; TO REPEAL ALL OTHER ACTS AND ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

Motion carried unanimously.

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15. Motion made by Council Member Davis, seconded by Council Member Moore to approve a Change Order in the amount of $320,575.00, to add a separate water service to the Utilities Facility located at 11651 & 11652 Highway 142.

Motion carried unanimously.

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Floyd Street resident Maurice Carter expressed concerns regarding the bike lane changes during the recent upgrades to Floyd Street.

Floyd Street resident John Braden also expressed his concerns regarding the bike lanes and the newly installed islands on Floyd Street.

Oxford resident Florian Pohl asked the Council to reconsider the changes to the bike lanes on Floyd Street and invited everyone to the community bike ride the first Sunday of every month.

Ramsey Drive resident Shawn Johnson stated he also has concerns and asked the Council to not do the same thing on Newton Drive.

C Town Bikes business owner Al Smith stated the Cricket Frog Trail is the biggest asset in Covington and invited the Council to come ride the trail.

Oxford resident Jackie Smith asked the Council for help with the lease of Legion Field, which is around $5,000.00, for the annual Fall Festival.

Hicks Avenue resident Jean Cartledge asked the Council to look into safety issues at the bridge between the YMCA and Legion Field.

Rosie Crawford asked for an update on the Citizen Review Board and asked when a meeting will be scheduled.

Roger Starr stated he has an issue with the “blue line flag” further citing the American Flag should be above all others.

Planning & Development Director Judy Thagard informed the council that the City of Covington has been designated as a 2026 PlanFirst Community by the DCA and was chosen to participate in the program for three years until December 2028.

Council member Henderson asked the Deputy City Manager to check into the Legion Field rates regarding the Fall Festival. Council member Henderson stated he is disappointed with the vote on item #6.

Council member Davis stated applicant Mr. Hart needs to meet with the residents affected. Council member Davis congratulated the City for the PlanFirst designation. Council member Davis stated she would like to make a donation to the Annual Fall Festival.

Council member Moore asked the City to look into the rate for the Fall Festival as it may be the deposit.

Council member Keck thanked Mr. Starr for his service and explained what the blue line flag meant. Council member Keck stated the plans for Ohco are an improvement near the trail.

Comments from the Mayor:

-Another officer involved wreck
-Saturday's Fuzz Run was the largest crowd
-Recent concert was the largest attended
-will ask Facilities Maintenance about railing on the bridge @ Legion
-Mission Statement installed in Council room
-homeless issues rising, can't seem to get ahead of it
-will look into Legion's rates for the Fall Festival
-will set up meeting soon with the CRB
-Spent millions on the Floyd Street Improvements project and millions on the trail and are doing the best we can – will conduct more studies

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Being no further business meeting, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

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Fleeta S. Baggett, Mayor

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Audra M. Gutierrez, City Clerk