



CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

300 Martin Luther King Blvd.

February 4, 2025

TIME: 6:00 PM

1. A CALL TO ORDER

President Smith called the council meeting to order at 06:00 pm and asked Mr. Jones to call the roll.

2. ROLL CALL

The Mayor and all City Council members were present.

1. George Allen, Erica Norris, Tim Aja, Todd Rauch, Eddie Smith

3. INVOCATION

Mr. Nolan provided the invocation.

1. Terrance Nolan from The Bridge Church of Alabama.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Basketball Teams led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. 7/8th Grade Boys and Girls Basketball Teams from Opelika Middle School.

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

1. Minutes from the 01-23-25 council meeting.

President Smith stated that a copy of the minutes had been previously received by the council and asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Rauch made a motion to approve. Mr. Allen seconded the motion. President Smith then asked if there were any additions, deletions, or corrections to the minutes. President Smith stated having no corrections, the minutes stand approved.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7. MAYOR COMMENTS AND RECOGNITIONS

1. Appoint Carolyn Pruitt to the Opelika Housing Authority. Existing Term expires 10-18-2028.

Mayor Fuller announced he was appointing Carolyn Pruitt to the Opelika Housing Authority to fill the existing term of her late husband John T. Pruitt.

2. Recognize Character Council Citizen of Excellent Character.

Mayor Fuller then asked Ward 2 Councilwoman President Pro-Tem Erica Norris, members of the Character Council, and Lisa Ditchkoff up front to be recognized as the February 2024 Citizen of Excellent Character. Ms. Norris spoke about why she chose Ms. Ditchkoff for the award and how she exemplified the character trait of the month: Compassion. Mayor Fuller then read the certificate and presented it to her.

3. Proclamation for Community Liaisons.

Mayor Fuller then invited Ward 1 Councilman George Allen, Police Captain Tony Amerson, and members of the Community Liaisons up front to be recognized. Mayor Fuller first read the proclamation, and then Mr. Allen read a letter from Police Chief Shane Healey commending the work of the Community Liaisons in the community.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Limit comments to 3 minutes or less)

President Smith asked Mr. Jones to present the public hearings.

1. Public Hearing - Amend Master Plan for Knollwood PUD, 17.6 Acres, 816 Crawford Road.

Mr. Jones presented the public hearing. President Smith opened the public hearing and asked if anyone present would like to speak for or against said amendment. No one came forward to speak. President Smith closed the public hearing.

2. Public Hearing - Demolition Cost Assessment - 110 Jeter Avenue.

Mr. Jones presented the public hearing. President Smith opened the public hearing and asked if anyone present would like to speak for or against said cost assessment. No one came forward to speak. President Smith closed the public hearing.

3. Public Hearing - Amend Text of Zoning Ordinance: Subsections 5.1B and 8.17C(1) - Amendment and Application Procedures for Conditional Use Permits.

Mr. Jones presented the public hearing. President Smith opened the public hearing and asked if anyone present would like to speak for or against said amendment. No one came forward to speak. President Smith closed the public hearing.

9. AGENDA-RELATED PUBLIC COMMENTS (Limit comments to 3 minutes or less)

None.

10. GENERAL BUSINESS

11. AWARDING OF BIDS

President Smith asked Ms. Finley to present the bids.

1. Uniform Cleaning - OFD.

RESOLUTION NO. 029-25

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilman Ward 3 Tim Aja
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President
 Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 -
 President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

2. Uniform Cleaning - OPD.

RESOLUTION NO. 030-25

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 3 Tim Aja
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President
 Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 -
 President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

3. Pickleball Courts Phase III - Base, Grading, Drainage and Site Work - ENG.

RESOLUTION NO. 031-25

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 3 Tim Aja
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President
 Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 -
 President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

12. RESOLUTIONS

President Smith asked Mr. Gunter to present the resolutions.

1. Purchase - Zscaler Safe Security Subscription - IT.

RESOLUTION NO. 032-25

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 3 Tim Aja
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President
 Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 -
 President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

2. Purchase - CrowdStrike Endpoint Protection Subscription - IT.

RESOLUTION NO. 033-25

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President
 Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 -
 President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

3. Purchase - Office Furniture for New Public Works Building - PW.

RESOLUTION NO. 034-25

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President
 Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 -
 President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

4. Approve Certain Tax Abatements and Exemptions for AGS America, Inc. - ED.

RESOLUTION NO. 035-25

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President
 Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 -
 President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

5. Approve Workers Compensation Proposal with Marsh & McLennan Agency.

RESOLUTION NO. 036-25

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 3 Tim Aja
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President
 Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 -
 President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

6. Demolition Cost Assessment - 110 Jeter Avenue.

During discussion, Mr. Allen asked if this had already been resolved by the property owner. Ms. Finley answered not yet but the owner had communicated that he would be sending a check.

RESOLUTION NO. 037-25

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

7. Special Appropriation to the Chamber Commerce - 20 Under Forty.
During discussion, Ms. Norris thanked the 20 Under Forty class for allowing her to participate and that their group project involved helping The Curtis House upgrade their greenhouse in the Ward 2 community.

RESOLUTION NO. 038-25

MOTION TO APPROVE: 4 TO 0

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 3 Tim Aja
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch

8. Special Appropriation to Southern Union State Community College Foundation.

RESOLUTION NO. 039-25

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

9. Approve Grant Application to ALDOT for a Rebuild Alabama Grant - ENG.

RESOLUTION NO. 040-25

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

13. **ORDINANCES**

President Smith asked Mr. Gunter to present the ordinances.

1. Amend Section 14-27 of the City Code of Ordinances: Reduction of Occupational License Fees from One and One-Half Percent (1 1/2%) to One Percent (1%) - 1st Reading.

FIRST READING: INTRODUCED

President Smith asked for a member of the council to introduce the ordinance. Mr. Aja introduced the ordinance.

President Smith then asked for a motion to suspend the rules to have a second reading. Ms. Norris made a motion to suspend the rules. Mr. Rauch seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the following vote was recorded:

MOTION TO SUSPEND THE RULES: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris

SECONDER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch

AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

President Smith asked if there was a motion to approve the ordinance at second reading. Ms. Norris made a motion to approve. Mr. Rauch seconded the motion. During discussion, Ms. Norris thanked Mayor Fuller, President Smith, and everyone that worked on getting this done for the citizens and employees of the City of Opelika. Mayor Fuller also commended and thanked the City Council for passing this, and especially thanked President Smith for his leadership. There was no further discussion and the following vote was recorded:

ORDINANCE NO. 003-25

SECOND READING AND APPROVED

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris

SECONDER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch

AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

2. Amend Text of Zoning Ordinance: Subsections 5.1B and 8.17C(1) - Amendment and Application Procedures for Conditional Use Permits - 1st Reading.

FIRST READING: INTRODUCED

President Smith asked for a member of the council to introduce the ordinance. Mr. Allen introduced the ordinance.

3. Set the Municipal Election of Officers and Voting Locations for August 26, 2025 - 1st Reading.

FIRST READING: INTRODUCED

President Smith asked for a member of the council to introduce the ordinance. Mr. Rauch introduced the ordinance.

President Smith presented the appointments.

1. Appoint John Oliver to the Lee Russell Council of Governments MPO Citizen Advisory Committee. New Term expires 01-01-2027.

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**

MOVER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch

SECONDER: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris

AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

2. Reappoint Brandon Hilyer to the Board of Zoning Adjustments (BZA). New Term expires 02-11-2028.

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**

MOVER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch

SECONDER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen

AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

3. Reappoint Micah Melnick to the Board of Zoning Adjustments (BZA). New Term expires 02-11-2028.

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**

MOVER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch

SECONDER: Councilman Ward 3 Tim Aja

AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

4. Reappoint Tipi Miller to the Board of Zoning Adjustments (BZA). New Term expires 02-11-2028.

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**

MOVER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch

SECONDER: Councilman Ward 3 Tim Aja

AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

15. SECOND ROSTER OF PUBLIC COMMENTS (Limit comments to 3 minutes or less)

Evelyn Mickle of 1003 Glenn Street spoke first. Ms. Mickle expressed concerns about not having any specific places for working women and their children to live in our community, and also the program the city has that sends local homeless people out of town instead of trying to help them here. Ms. Mickle closed by asking the council to help with these things and to let her know what she could do to help as well.

Tiffany Gibson of 903 East Towne Lake Circle spoke next. Ms. Gibson, on behalf of Girls' STEPS, Inc., thanked the Mayor and Council for continuing to support them with funding from the city's budget each year, and gave an update on the school age girls they serve and programs they provide. Ms. Gibson also stated they have been able to hold meetings at Covington Rec Center and that gives them the opportunity to hold meetings with the parents of the girls as well. Ms. Gibson closed by giving an update on upcoming events they are holding for the community, and again thanked the city for its support.

16. ADJOURN

The City Council meeting minutes of February 4, 2025, are hereby adopted and approved this the 18th day of February, 2025.

/s/ Eddie Smith

President of City Council
City of Opelika, Alabama

ATTEST:

/s/ Russell A. Jones, MMC

City Clerk

1. Character Trait of the Month - Compassion, a sympathetic consciousness of others' distress with a desire to alleviate it.
President Smith read the character trait of the month and asked for a motion to adjourn.
2. Motion to Adjourn.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch

SECONDER: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris

AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

The council meeting ended at 06:43 pm.