



CITY OF TOCCOA
CITY COMMISSION
MINUTES • JUNE 8, 2026

Regular Meeting

City Commission/Court Room

5:00 PM

92 North Alexander, Toccoa, GA 30577

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Hellenga called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and welcomed those present.

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Reverend Paul Garrison.

PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Evan Hellenga	Mayor	Present	
Michelle Jamieson	Vice-Mayor	Present	
Ron Matheson	Commissioner	Present	
Terry Carter	Commissioner	Present	
Gail Fry	Commissioner	Present	
Fredda O. Wheeler	City Manager	Present	
Beth Rider	City Clerk	Present	
Greg Sowell	Attorney	Present	

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Jamieson, seconded by Commissioner Matheson to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Michelle Jamieson, Vice-Mayor
SECONDER:	Ron Matheson, Commissioner
AYES:	Hellenga, Jamieson, Matheson, Carter, Fry

I. CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Jamieson, seconded by Commissioner Matheson to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Michelle Jamieson, Vice-Mayor
SECONDER:	Ron Matheson, Commissioner
AYES:	Hellenga, Jamieson, Matheson, Carter, Fry

A. Request for Approval of Minutes of May 18, 2026 Commission Meeting

REPORTS

Mayor Hellenga introduced City Attorney Greg Sowell, and read the Bio of Mr. Sowell. Mr. Sowell stated he is honored to be associated with the City, he was overwhelmed by the friendliness the first time he visited City Hall. He was impressed by the City and its leadership.

Mr. Sowell spoke of his childhood in Vidalia and spoke about Paul Anderson and the Youth Home and had always known about Toccoa; his wife visited the music camp at Georgia Baptist. Mr. Sowell stated this is Government at it's finest, this is where Government happens. Mr. Sowell stated all of you are to be commended for giving of your time, effort and energy for serving your neighbors and that is what this is all about. Mr. Sowell stated he is pleased to be part of an outstanding organization; he also stated, the legal services you have received for many, many years he paid tribute to as well.

Commissioner Matheson reported attended the GMRC Meeting in Dawsonville on May 28, we had an excellent speaker she was the Regional Tourism Manager for Georgia Department of Economic Development. She presented some very impressive figures on North East Georgia Tourism and the dollars spent. Commissioner Matheson attended the first Ida Cox of 2026.

Mayor Hellenga reported he attended the Memorial Day Service at Camp Toccoa Currahee, it was well represented. Police Chief Carlisle gave the key note address. Mayor Hellenga stated there was a good crowd downtown Saturday night.

II. OLD BUSINESS

III. NEW BUSINESS

- B. Consideration of Resolution Adopting the Update to the Stephens County Joint Hazard Mitigation Plan
Adam Hazell, Planning Director for Georgia Mountain Commission gave an overview of the Hazardous Mitigation Plan update.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Jamieson, seconded by Commissioner Fry to adopt the Resolution to update the Stephens County Joint Hazardous Mitigation Plan. Motion carried unanimously.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Michelle Jamieson, Vice-Mayor
SECONDER:	Gail Fry, Commissioner
AYES:	Hellenga, Jamieson, Matheson, Carter, Fry

- C. Consideration of Proclamation for Toccoa-Stephens County Chamber of Commerce President Julie Paysen

A motion was made by Commissioner Matheson, seconded by Commissioner Carter to approve the Proclamation to honor Julie Paysen. Motion carried unanimously.

Proclamation will be presented on Thursday evening.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Ron Matheson, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Terry Carter, Commissioner
AYES:	Hellenga, Jamieson, Matheson, Carter, Fry

- D. Consideration of Participating in LHOST (Local Homestead Option Sales Tax) with Stephens County

City Manager Wheeler gave an overview of the LHOST (Local Homestead Option Sales Tax) stating this will provide property tax relief to homeowners by reducing the taxable value of owner occupied residential property within the City of Toccoa. The exemption will be funded through revenues generated through local sales tax. The exemption will apply only to homestead properties as defined by State Law and local ordinances.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Jamieson, seconded by Commissioner Fry to approve participating in LHOST.

City Attorney Greg Sowell commented, this request for local legislation will be carried to the Special Called Session of the General Assembly next week, if adopted there it will be on the ballot in November in conjunction with a companion call for local legislation that Stephens County will consider at their meeting this week. Mr. Sowell stated if it passes in November, the 1% sales tax will begin being collected in January 1, 2028. It is a credit or roll back on the homestead for taxpayers in the City of Toccoa. It is a net no revenue loss to the City, the revenue lost on the property tax is made up on the sales tax.

After further discussion regarding advertisement, Attorney Sowell recommended the Board vote on the legal advertisement placed in the Toccoa Record.

A motion was made by Commissioner Carter, seconded by Commissioner Fry to amend the original motion to include publicizing notice in the Toccoa Record this week. Motion carried unanimously.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Terry Carter, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Gail Fry, Commissioner
AYES:	Hellenga, Jamieson, Matheson, Carter, Fry

E. Consideration of Braswell Street Gate Replacement

A motion was made by Commissioner Carter, seconded by Vice Mayor Jamieson to accept staff recommendation of A & T Fence in the amount of \$12,090 to replace Braswell Street Security Gate. Motion carried unanimously.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Terry Carter, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Michelle Jamieson, Vice-Mayor
AYES:	Hellenga, Jamieson, Matheson, Carter, Fry

F. Consideration to Declare Surplus Police Vehicles

A motion was made by Commissioner Fry, seconded by Vice Mayor Jamieson to approve declaring Police vehicles as surplus. Motion carried unanimously.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Gail Fry, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Michelle Jamieson, Vice-Mayor
AYES:	Hellenga, Jamieson, Matheson, Carter, Fry

G. Monthly Financial Report

Finance Director Becky Bohannon gave the Financial Report.

RESULT:	PRESENTATION
----------------	---------------------

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Recognition of Visitors Wishing to Speak on General Items. **(Limit 3 Minutes)**

V. ADJOURN

Mayor Hellenga adjourned the meeting at p.m.



Evan J. Hellenga

Mayor
Beth Kuder

City Clerk