

Hahira City Council
March 3, 2026
Work Session
6:00 PM – Hahira Courthouse

Mayor Terry Davis called the Work Session of the Hahira City Council to order at 6:00 p.m. Also present were Mayor Pro Tem Klay Luke, Council Members Cindy Becton, Louise White, David Lindsey, and City Manager Jonathan Sumner. A quorum was present. The Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation will be given at the March 5th Council Meeting.

5. Review/Correction of Minutes

Mayor Davis asked if there were any comments on the February 3, 2026, Work Session minutes or the February 5, 2026, Council Meeting minutes. There were none.

6. Public Hearing

- A. Petition to Request Name Change for Two McNeal Estates Streets: Barry Field Circle to McNeal Heritage Circle and Rosy Lily Lane to Merle McNeal Lane was presented by City Manager Sumner. He stated that this process was started last summer by a previous partner in the development related to the McNeal family. The City Attorney checked ordinances from other cities and developed an ordinance that was similar to the City of Valdosta which has now been adopted by the City of Hahira. The petitioner will burden the cost of the name change. We have received a petition from Jerry Stoker for the name change of the two streets, which was advertised in the Valdosta Daily Times two days as required by the ordinance. Council will have the opportunity to vote at the March 5, 2026, Council Meeting. The bill can be presented to the petitioner for the cost incurred. Councilman Lindsey asked if there were any residents already living on the referenced streets. City Manager Sumner stated there were a few. No additional questions were presented.

7. Citizens to Be Heard will be held at the March 5th Council Meeting.

8. Review of Bills/Budget Overages. Mayor Davis asked if there were any comments on the Review of Bills/Budget Overages. There were none.

9. Discussions

- A. Health Insurance Renewal: City Manager Sumner presented Health Insurance Renewal and stated we have 2 quotes from Taylor Insurance and Partners Benefit. A 3rd quote was solicited but declined. Both presented at the February Retreat. Ronnie Blanton with Partners Benefit spoke regarding the quote presented. He went to market to see if he could find a better plan for the City, none were better or cheaper than what the City currently has. He stated that the small annual increase was very good, and he recommends the policy with Anthem which is the best policy he has to offer. Councilman Lindsey asked Mr.

Blanton what the annual premium is for the current plan. Mr. Blanton stated it is for 30 employees and costs the City \$443,424 annually with a \$1500 deductible and no co-insurance once the deductible is met and a maximum out of pocket cost of \$3,500. No further questions were asked of Mr. Blanton. Erica Castilla with Taylor Insurance spoke regarding the quote presented. Ms. Castilla stated we would not be sacrificing benefits and that she would be able to save the City \$40,000 per year. Her plan has a Pharmacy Benefit Manager for prescription savings. The plan proposed includes a GAP policy but explained that rather than having two separate cards for the insured, there is one card with one claim department. The GAP policy is handled on the back end which frees up the providers from cumbersome claims. The plan encourages being healthy and discourages the frivolous use of the ER for treatment through a higher ER deductible and encourages the use of urgent care instead. Ms. Castilla explained the deductibles and explained the use of the ER and how those claims are paid. Mayor Davis asked Ms. Castilla to explain what GAP is and stated that his wife has many years in the medical field claims department, stating she encourages the City to steer away from GAP plans. Ms. Castilla explained what a GAP policy is and how it works. Director Willie Jones asked what would happen if an insured presented to the ER with a physical injury that did not require hospitalization but was urgent enough for an ER visit. Ms. Castilla stated that deductible would be \$1000. Director Price asked where the prescription medication came from using the Pharmacy Benefit Manager. Ms. Castilla stated many came from Italy and Canada, but that insured can still get generic prescriptions from the local pharmacy. City Manager Sumner stated with respect to the budget, the City has budgeted for a 10-15% increase and that sufficient funds were available. Mayor Davis suggested we discuss this more at the March 5th council meeting and that he dislikes the GAP policy. Ms. Castilla stated she could get recommendations from other companies on this same policy. City Manager Sumner asked if there were any claim issues, to which Ms. Castilla stated that there were none. Director Price asked why a provider would not know about the GAP policy. Ms. Castilla explained that previously the claims process required two separate claims and that process is now streamlined into one claim so there was no confusion to the provider. No further questions were presented.

- B. Report on Well #3 Pilot Project and Recommendations was presented by Alex Wiseman of Carter & Sloope. He gave an update on Well #3 in great detail, including the pilot study to potentially remove the byproducts causing the violations. City Manager Sumner asked if we have received any comments from EPD from the Preliminary Action Plan. Mr. Wiseman stated not to date but further discussed issues and plans. He gave results of the Pilot Study. City Manager Sumner asked Director Jones what the output of Well #1 was; Director Jones gave an estimate. After more discussion, Director Jones stated that Well #3 would not be abandoned if Well #1 solved the problem once it came online. City Manager Sumner asked what the next steps are and Mr. Wiseman responded with details. No further questions were presented.
- C. Progress Report on Wastewater Treatment Facility Mechanical Plant was presented by Spencer Senerman with Carter & Sloope. He gave a financial

update and a construction update, stating the project is projected to be completed December 2026 or January 2027. Mayor Davis stated that the bank accounts for the City were hacked and new accounts were opened. We are hoping there are no issues with regard to the grant since the account hacked was tied to the grant funds. Mr. Senerman presented site progress. City Manager Sumner stated that the lack of rain has been rough on the farmers, but it has been very good for the progress of the project. No further questions were presented.

- D. Low Bid Report on East Coleman Resurfacing – LMIG & SPLOST VIII was presented by Steven Rakestraw with Carter & Sloope. He stated that he has two bids but did not have documentation with him since the bids were just a few hours ago. Scruggs came in with a bid of \$130,104 and Reames came in with a bid of \$155,603. City Manager Sumner discussed the budgeted funds. Councilman Lindsey asked how far up Coleman was the project planned for. Mr. Rakestraw stated it is currently from Fry to Lafayette. Councilman Lindsey asked if the 5-point intersection would be repaired, the answer was yes. Mayor Davis asked if vegetation would be removed during the work. Mr. Rakestraw stated roots would be removed in the problem area underneath the road and will also repair sewer dips and base work. City Manager Sumner stated that Scruggs is currently already working in the area for Woodbridge Phase 2 and is also local to us. No further questions were presented.
- E. Asset Management Contract – SPLOST VIII was presented by Steven Rakestraw with Carter & Sloope. City Manager Sumner stated the City Attorney recommended we give Carter & Sloope the EPA fact sheet. Eric Neese with Carter & Sloope is the consultant that has worked with Director Jones. He further discussed issues related to the contract. The cost of the contract is \$18,000. Staff recommends approval. No further questions were presented.
- F. Georgia Municipal Association Small Cities Conference and Training – Gainesville, GA – May 12-15 was presented by City Manager Sumner. He also stated that there were training opportunities available as well. The estimated cost per attendee would be \$1,100. City Manager Sumner asked if anyone wished to attend. Councilwoman White, Councilwoman Becton, Mayor Davis, and City Manager Sumner stated they wished to attend. Mayor Pro Tem Luke and Councilman Lindsey declined.
- G. Reappointment of Cathy Daniels as Chairperson of the Hahira Housing Authority was presented by City Manager Sumner. The Hahira Housing Authority is maintained by the Nashville Housing Authority, and they do a great job for us. Cathy Daniels is the Chairperson, and she has agreed to continue in her position.

10. Department Requests

- A. Public Works Truck – SPLOST VIII request was presented by Councilwoman White, stating that we approved this truck previously. She stated that Cass Burch came in with the lowest bid of \$59,917 for a 2026 RAM 2500. The other quotes were Carl Black Chevrolet of Orlando 2024 Silverado 2500 \$60,078; Ed Murdock of Livonia 2025 F250 \$72,233; Donahou Chevrolet of Ft. Payne 2026 Silverado 2500 \$73,713; Custom Trucks of Decatur 2025 Ram 2500 \$74,500; Akins of

Winder 2025 F250 \$81,660. Councilman Lindsey stated his opinion is we are cutting it close with SPLOST with the police cars as well out of this budget. City Manager Sumner stated that he just received an e-mail from GDOT who has requested to move the LET date on the sidewalk to February 2027 which frees up the funds from this year's budget. The truck was a budgeted expense within special revenue fund. Mayor Davis suggested this matter be discussed further at the March 5th Council meeting.

- B. 3% Increase for EMT Certification was presented by Chief Thompson. He stated that personnel who have obtained the EMT-B license have been at their own expense and on their own time. Having this certification is of great benefit since Hahira Fire Department responds to all medical calls within the city, which brings a higher level of care to citizens. Mayor Davis stated we always encourage higher education. It was recommended this be placed on the consent agenda.
- C. Demolition of 410 E Main Street Masonic Lodge – General Fund was presented by Chief Jones. He was happy to report that the property that is owned by the Nijem's have applied for a permit for demolition and for a permit from the EPA for asbestos remediation; demolition is expected to be done in 30 days. He also stated that 107 N Hall has also applied for their permit for demolition. There will be no expense to the City. Mayor Davis stated that the Al Chandler property on Park Street by the church will also be removed to provide more parking for the church. There are a few more properties that need demolition in town, but this is a great start.
- D. TAP '19 Authorization for \$291,000 Match – TSPLOST 1, SPLOST VIII & LMIG was presented by City Manager Sumner. He stated that while enroute to the Bird Supper a few weeks ago he and Councilwoman White received a call from Atlas who stated that 13 of the 15 owners have signed for acquisition. The remaining property owners are one located in California and Fancy Girl Farms who are still discussing the issue. The City has received a request asking if funds can be committed and we must indicate authorization to GDOT. Councilwoman White suggests we place this matter on the consent agenda. Councilman Lindsey asked since the sidewalk has been pushed to February 2027, will this mean no money will be spent in 2026 out of the budget. It was confirmed that is the case. Mayor Davis stated that he is certainly for safety but feels that the sidewalks have a much bigger need in the school area of Hagan Bridge Road and we have driveways sinking in town that need attention. He is against the project for what it is worth. City Manager Sumner stated that the plans to complete the sidewalks on Hagan Bridge have already quoted and he is working on a revised cost.

11. Set March Council Meeting Agenda – Mayor Davis

Discussion Items:

- 9A. Health Insurance Renewal
- 10A. Public Works Truck


Consent Agenda:

- 9D. Low Bid Report on East Coleman Resurfacing
- 9E. Asset Management Contract
- 9F. Georgia Municipal Association Small Cities Conference & Training
- 9G. Reappointment of Cathy Daniels as Chairperson of the Hahira Housing Authority
- 10B. 3% Increase for EMT Certification
- 10D. TAP '19 Authorization for \$291,000 Match

Removed:

- 9B. Report on Well #3 Pilot Project and Recommendations
- 9C. Progress Report on Wastewater Treatment Facility Mechanical Plant
- 10C. Demolition of 410 East Main Street Masonic Lodge CONTINUED TO APRIL

- 12. Reports will be held at the March 5th Council Meeting.
- 13. Executive Session – Not utilized.
- 14. Mayor Pro Tem made a Motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Councilman Lindsey. The meeting was adjourned at 7:19 pm.



Mayor Terry Davis



City Clerk Victoria Ingram