

MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING AND WORK SESSION
G.L. Gilleland Council Chambers on 2nd Floor
Monday, May 19, 2025
5:00 P.M.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor John Walden called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm.
2. **ROLL CALL:** Councilmember Willilam Illg, Councilmember Caleb Phillips, Councilmember Sandy Sawyer, Councilmember Mark French, City Attorney Kevin Tallant, City Manager Bob Bolz, City Clerk Beverly Banister, Assistant City Manager Jacob Evans, Utilities Director Jacob Barr, Finance Director Robin Gazaway and Zoning Administrative Assistant Stacy Harris.
3. **INVOCATION AND PLEDGE:** Invocation and pledge were led by Councilmember Phillips.
4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Mayor Walden announced the City received \$2 million in funding from GDOT for two roundabout projects within the City; one at Hwy 53 and Allen Street and another at Hwy 9 S and Perimeter Road. He also reminded citizens the funding for a roundabout on Hwy 9 North and Perimeter Road was included in TSPLOST and he looks forward to having these projects completed. Mayor Walden also continues to lobby for a bypass to re-route eighteen wheelers away from downtown.

He also announced the softball team he coaches won the Championship this year and Councilmember Illg said the 10U team is headed to All-Stars. Councilmember Sawyer reported that she and Amanda Edmondson just completed Leadership Dawson and graduated as the Class of 2025; she expressed how much they learned and enjoyed getting out into the community.
5. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Motion to approve the agenda as presented made by W. Illg; second by M. French. Vote carried unanimously in favor.
6. **PUBLIC INPUT:** None
7. **CONSENT AGENDA:** Motion to approve the consent agenda for the following items (a) made by M. French; second by S. Sawyer. Vote carried unanimously in favor.
 - a. Approve Minutes
 - Regular Meeting held May 5, 2025
8. **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:** The Mayor and Council recognized Caleb Reece as the April Employee of the Month; Seth Reece received a one year service award; Hayden Harris received a two year service award; Westin Lee received an eight year service award; and Beverly Banister received a ten year service award.
9. **PROCLAMATION: NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK, MAY 18 – 24, 2025:** Mayor Walden read the proclamation.

BUSINESS

10. **ORDINANCE NO. 02-2025:** An Ordinance To Amend The Alcohol Code Of The City Of Dawsonville So As To Provide For Consumption Of Alcoholic Beverages Around The Dawsonville Municipal Complex Building; To Provide For Severability; And For Other Purposes. First Reading: May 5, 2025; Second Reading and Consideration to Adopt: May 19, 2025.

City Attorney Tallant provided an overview of the amendment and read the second reading of Ordinance No. 02-2025.

Motion to approve Ordinance No. 02-2025 as presented made by M. French; second by C. Phillips. Vote carried unanimously in favor. (Exhibit "A")
11. **ORDINANCE NO. 03-2025:** An Ordinance To Amend The Ethics Code Of The City Of Dawsonville So As To Provide For The Qualification Of Members To The Ethics Board; To Provide For Severability; And For Other Purposes. First Reading: May 5, 2025; Second Reading and Consideration to Adopt: May 19, 2025.

City Attorney Tallant read the second reading of the ordinance. He explained two options have been provided; one for a five person board and one for a three person board. He received additional input

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from City Council and amended the ordinance for the five person board to include clarification on a quorum; members will be appointed from each district, however, any Councilmember can nominate a member from any district; a vacancy will be filled by the Councilmember who originally nominated the member who vacated the board; a unanimous vote is required for an appointment to the Board and the City Clerk will organize the meetings of the Ethics Board unless the complaint is against the City Clerk and in such case, the responsibility lies with the City Manager.

Motion to approve Ordinance No. 03-2025 for the five member board and the amendments as stated made by M. French; second by W. Illg. Vote carried unanimously in favor. (Exhibit "B")

- 12. GEORGIA MOUNTAIN REGIONAL COMMISSION COUNCIL PRIVATE SECTOR APPOINTMENT:** Motion to reappoint Kevin Herrit as the Private Sector member of the Georgia Mountain Regional Commission Council for the term of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 made by W. Illg; second by S. Sawyer. Both Councilmember Illg and French stated their confidence in Mr. Herrit and appreciate his willingness to serve. Vote carried unanimously in favor.

WORK SESSION

- 13. FY 2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET:** Finance Director Gazaway presented the City Council with the first draft of the FY 2025-2026 budget. She stated the public hearing and full presentation of the budget will be held at the June 2, 2025 Council meeting and consideration to adopt the budget will be held at the June 16, 2025 Council meeting. Councilmember Illg asked Ms. Gazaway what percentage the FY 2026 general fund budget went up versus last year; she did not have those figures available but will be presenting them at the next meeting.

STAFF REPORTS

- 14. BOB BOLZ, CITY MANAGER:** He reported there were no leak adjustments this month. He also reported BRAG (Bicycle Ride Across Georgia) will take place June 3 – 5, 2025 and they are coming into Dawsonville with trips planned to visit local attractions. They will be sleeping in and around Main Street Park and the Junior High School; the Chamber will be hosting a movie and a concert in the park for their benefit. Mayor Walden asked the public to be patient with all the bike riders who will be on the road during that time. He feels this is a great way to showcase the City for all who will be coming here.
- 15. ROBIN GAZAWAY, FINANCE DIRECTOR:** Financial reports were provided to represent fund balances and activity through April 30, 2025.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS:

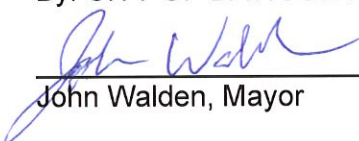
Councilmember Illg stated he is excited for BRAG coming to the City. Mayor Walden also congratulated the Dawson County High School seniors who graduated this year and wishes them the best.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5:25 p.m. a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by W. Illg; second by C. Phillips. Vote carried unanimously in favor.

Approved this 2nd day of June, 2025

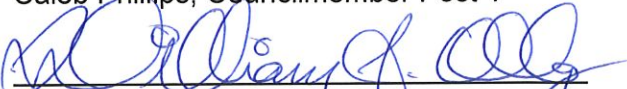
By: CITY OF DAWSONVILLE



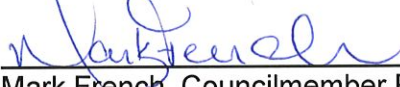
John Walden, Mayor

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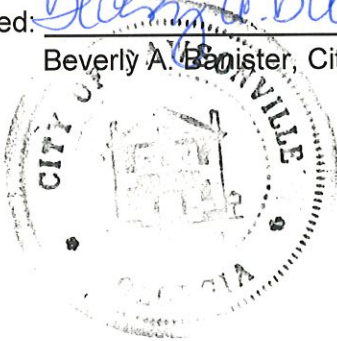

Caleb Phillips, Councilmember Post 1


William Illg, Councilmember Post 2


Sandra Sawyer, Councilmember Post 3


Mark French, Councilmember Post 4

Attested: 
Beverly A. Baister, City Clerk



Subject Matter: Alcohol – Municipal Complex

Date of First Reading: May 5, 2025

Date of Second Reading: May 19, 2025

Date of Adoption: May 19, 2025

Effective Date: May 19, 2025

ORDINANCE NO. 02-2025

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ALCOHOL CODE OF THE CITY OF DAWSONVILLE SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AROUND THE DAWSONVILLE MUNICIPAL COMPLEX BUILDING; TO PROVIDE FOR SEVERABILITY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the State of Georgia grants to local governments the ability to significantly regulate the purchase, sale, and consumption of alcoholic beverages within the jurisdictional limits of the local government's territory; and

WHEREAS, the City of Dawsonville has an interest in promoting the success of local businesses in such manners as may support the business while still promoting the general welfare of the City of Dawsonville; and

WHEREAS, at present, the code of the City of Dawsonville restricts the sale of alcoholic beverages in such a way that various enterprises which are all part of the same complex are not able to promote cross-customer traffic and commerce as effectively as possible;

WHEREAS, an amended ordinance may promote foot traffic and engagement between the museum, a business which manufactures and sells historically related alcohol, and a restaurant located in the Dawsonville Municipal Complex Building; and

WHEREAS, businesses located inside the Dawsonville Municipal Complex Building may enjoy greater sales without creating any harm to the general welfare of the City of Dawsonville; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to promote locally owned businesses, specifically those located in the Dawsonville Municipal Complex Building; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to update its Alcohol Code in a manner consistent with the City charter, state law, and other ordinances of the City of Dawsonville.

NOW THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DAWSONVILLE HEREBY ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1.

Section 3-111 of the Code of the City of Dawsonville is hereby deleted in its entirety, and is replaced by a new, Section 3-111, which shall now read as follows:

Subject: Ethics Board
Date of First Reading: May 5, 2025
Date of Second Reading: May 19, 2025
Date of Adoption: May 19, 2025
Effective Date: May 19, 2025

ORDINANCE NO. 03-2025

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ETHICS CODE OF THE CITY OF DAWSONVILLE SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR THE QUALIFICATION OF MEMBERS TO THE ETHICS BOARD; TO PROVIDE FOR SEVERABILITY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, an Ethics Board is a proper part of the ethics ordinance process, in that an Ethics Board provides for due process to make certain that ethics complaints against officials are well founded, and offers protection during the consideration of ethics complaints; and

WHEREAS, a diverse Ethics Board, in terms of geographical location within the City of Dawsonville, may promote a broader representation of views on matters which come before the Ethics Board; and

WHEREAS, a diverse Ethics Board, in terms of geographical location within the City, may reduce the circumstances in which members of the Ethics Board would have to recuse themselves in such numbers as to render the Board unable to fulfill its functions if called upon;

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to update its Code of Ethics in a manner consistent with the City charter, state law, and other ordinances of the City of Dawsonville.

NOW THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DAWSONVILLE HEREBY ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1.

Section 2-81 of the Code of the City of Dawsonville is hereby deleted in its entirety, and in its place is adopted the following, which shall be a new Section 2-81 of the Code of the City of Dawsonville upon its passage:

- (a) The ethics board shall consist of five persons. All members shall be residents of the City. One member shall be appointed by the Mayor, and each city council member shall appoint one person to fill out the remaining four spots. No two members appointed by the City Council shall reside in the same voting district of the City. All appointed members shall be subject to approval by the City Council, which approval shall be unanimous. In the event unanimity is not obtained for a particular appointee, the person who appointed the person not unanimously approved shall bring forth another name for the Council to consider.
- (b) Once per year the ethics board shall convene to select among its members a chairperson who shall preside at any meetings and who shall only vote in case of a tie among the remaining members on any particular issue. The members shall also select a vice-

chairperson to preside in the absence or conflict of the chairperson. When the vice-chairperson is presiding he or she is limited to voting only in case of a tie. The chairperson or vice-chairperson plus three members of the ethics board shall constitute a quorum.

- (c) Vacancies shall be filled by following the same process which led to the selection of the person vacating a position on the ethics board with a portion of an unexpired term remaining, including being nominated by the Council Member from the same post that originally nominated the vacated position.
- (d) All members shall serve two-year terms. The foregoing notwithstanding, the appointed members of the Mayor, City Council Post 1, and City Council Post 3, shall serve three-year terms starting in 2025 so as to stagger the terms of the members of the ethics board. Thereafter, with the succeeding appointments in calendar year 2028, all members shall serve two year terms.
- (e) Members of the ethics board with any permit or rezoning application pending before the City, or with any pending or potential litigation against the City or the city official charged in a complaint, shall recuse from serving on the ethics board for that complaint.
- (f) Members of the ethics board may be removed by majority vote of the City Council.
- (g) For the purpose of reviewing a complaint, conducting a hearing, and taking action under Section 2-84, the ethics board shall have the right to engage an attorney who is an active member of the Bar of the State of Georgia in good standing to assist the ethics board. However, no such attorney shall be a member of the ethics board at the time he or she is engaged, and they shall not be considered to be a member of the ethics board for the purpose of making any decisions. The role of the attorney for the ethics board shall be to conduct investigatory activities requested by the ethics board, make reports and recommendations to the ethics board, and to represent the ethics board in any actions commenced by the ethics board. The City shall be responsible for the fee charged by Ethics Board counsel.
- (h) Hearings of the ethics board shall be scheduled by the City Clerk, except in the case where a complaint is against the City Clerk, and in that situation the hearing shall be scheduled by the City Manager. All efforts shall be made to schedule a hearing at a time when all members of the ethics board are available, within the context of any time limits imposed for the holding of such hearings otherwise set forth in this ordinance.

SECTION 2.

All Ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

SECTION 3.

This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption, the public good demanding the same.


SO ADOPTED AND ORDAINED by the City Council of Dawsonville, Georgia, this 19th day of May, 2025.

(Signatures on following page)

**MAYOR AND DAWSONVILLE CITY
COUNCIL**

By: 
John Walden, Mayor


Caleb Phillips, Councilmember Post 1


William Illg, Councilmember Post 2


Sandy Sawyer, Councilmember Post 3


Mark French, Councilmember Post 4

ATTESTED TO BY:


Beverly A. Banister, City Clerk



(a) The city finds that its town center district is contemplated as the central commercial and entertainment center of the city where ample parking, infrastructure, an amphitheater, nearby residential uses, etc. are present to allow the sale and open container consumption of alcohol that may not be appropriate in other areas in the city. The city believes that this regulation will further the vitality of this area and attract additional businesses where the location in other areas may be harmful or detrimental. The city further finds that this advances a legitimate end of government and such regulations are reasonably related to these goals. To that end, the consumption of alcohol in the town center district shall be governed as follows:

- i. In event the city sponsors an event in the town center district and the city council specifically approves sale and open container consumption during the event, entities that are licensed/permitted for retail sales of alcohol for on-premises consumption within the town center district and/or permitted by the city for retail sales of alcohol at a city sponsored event in the town center district may sell alcoholic beverages that can be carried about and consumed within the town center district or such smaller area with the town center district as may be designated by the city council.
- ii. Notwithstanding the foregoing, and notwithstanding anything to the contrary in Section 3-112, at the Dawsonville Municipal Complex Building individuals may possess and consume alcoholic beverages purchased from a vendor authorized to make sales within the Dawsonville Municipal Complex Building within the permanently fenced in area and up to a distance of not more than 10 feet of the building itself.

SECTION 2.

All Ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

SECTION 3.

This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption, the public good demanding the same.

SO ADOPTED AND ORDAINED by the City Council of Dawsonville, Georgia, this 19th day of May, 2025.

(Signatures on following page)

MAYOR AND DAWSONVILLE CITY
COUNCIL

By: *John Walden*
John Walden, Mayor

Caleb Phillips
Caleb Phillips, Councilmember Post 1

William Illg
William Illg, Councilmember Post 2

Sandy Sawyer
Sandy Sawyer, Councilmember Post 3

Mark French
Mark French, Councilmember Post 4

ATTESTED TO BY:

Beverly A. Banister
Beverly A. Banister, City Clerk

