**Minutes**

**Forsyth City Council**

**June 2, 2025**

**Call to Order**

Mayor Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance, Invocation and Roll Call**

Mayor Wilson led the Pledge of Allegiance. The invocation was led by Ms. Marilyn Tucker. In attendance for the meeting was Mayor Eric Wilson, Councilmembers Josh Hill, Chris Hewett, Lois Allen, Greg Goolsby, Charles Wilder, and Mike Dodd. Also in attendance was City Manager, Craig Mims; Assistant City Manager, Regina Ivie; City Attorney, Brian Causey; and City Clerk, Shayla Furlow. Six members of the council were in attendance for the meeting; therefore, all unanimous votes will be six votes (Hill, Hewett, Allen, Goolsby, Wilder and Dodd).

**Approval of the agenda**

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of the minutes from the council meeting held on May 19, 2025**

Mr. Hill offered a motion to approve the minutes from the council meeting held on May 19, 2025 as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of an alcohol license for 283 North Lee Street, Forsyth Store, LLC**

Mr. Brian Causey, the City Attorney, stated that the ad was advertised in the Reporter on May 21, 2025 and May 28, 2025 and the applicant has met the requirements.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the alcohol license for 283 North Lee Street, Forsyth Store, LLC for beer and wine only. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

The owners are to be notified that they are only allowed to sale beer and wine.

**Approval of** **a temporary alcohol permit for Fox City Brewing Co. on June 7, 2025, July 5, 2025, and August 2, 2025**

Mr. offered a motion to approve a temporary alcohol permit for Fox City Brewing Co. on June 7, 2025, July 5, 2025, and August 2, 2025. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**Commissioner Lamarcus Davis- Senior Center Van**

Commissioner Lamarcus Davis stated that he was approached by the Senior Center for assistance in getting a passenger van. He stated that he came before the council to ask if the City of Forsyth would be willing to split the cost of the van with Monroe County. The cost of the van is $32,900.00 plus tax and fees. The County will cover the insurance and the maintenance of the van.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the request to split the cost of the van not to exceed the amount of $17,500.00. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**Public Hearing and first reading of the Text Amendment of Article 26 of the Zoning Ordinance**

Mr. Brain Causey, the City Attorney, stated that an ordinance of the Mayor and Council of the City of Forsyth to enact a text amendment to Article 26, the design review of the zoning ordinance of the City of Forsyth, providing effective date for other purposes, related thereto. This has to do with Section Article 26.4 of the zoning code, dispensing with the requirement of membership on the board, having to include either an architect or a landscape architect.

Mayor Wilson opened the public hearing for those in favor of or opposition to the text amendment of Article 26 of the Zoning Ordinance.

There being no public comments in favor of or opposition to the text amendment of Article 26 of the Zoning Ordinance, Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing.

**Public Hearing for** **the Rezoning of Parcel 053 048, Tyler Findley, Edgar Hughston Builders, LLC**

Mr. Dean Nelson stated that Tyler Findley, Edgar Hughston Builders, LLC, is requesting Parcel 053 048, located on Juliette Road, to be rezoned from a Planned Unit Development (PUD) to a Conservation Subdivision. The request is to allow the petitioner to construct 104 units while seeking to protect remaining land containing streams within a primary conservation area and adjacent trails within a secondary conservation area in the planned subdivision. A Conservation subdivision is a land planning technique that allows the clustering of uses to protect open spaces (Section 25.3 Definitions, Zoning Code). It requires at least 40% of the gross land area to be restricted as open space, with a primary conservation area set aside for permanent protection due to its inclusion of wetlands or other natural features and a secondary conservation area that should include areas for protection adjacent to the primary conservation area (Sec.25.10, Open Space Requirements, Zoning Code). The open spaces shall be protected in perpetuity by either a permanent conservation easement or a permanent restrictive covenant for conservation purposes that is recorded prior to any vesting deed for property or lots within the subdivision. The parcel was annexed in 2006 or 2007, and the initial zoning was Planned Unit Development (PUD); however, once annexed, it was never developed. The Utilities Director and Fire Chief determined the subdivision can connect to the city’s existing water and sewer system. The total average trips per day potentially increase traffic by 10% daily. School enrollment impact is unknown, but it is doubtful that each resident will have a child in the same age group simultaneously. The application met the following criteria required for determining rezoning as a conservation subdivision. Property, if rezoned as a single-family development, will generally be compatible with surrounding area parcels as parcels which are already single-family developments or agricultural, which is compatible with the conservation of land and the subject parcel. Additionally, the applicant will place conservation easements to prohibit any additional residential dwellings and would allow for things that would be beneficial to the neighborhood, such as natural woods, walking trails, and stormwater management. The subject property could be used in accordance with the existing plan. However, the existence of steep drops, streams, and wetlands could make it more conducive to a conservation subdivision. He stated that on May 27, 2025, the Planning and Zoning Commission met, and in so doing provided the public with the opportunity in favor of opposition to rezoning petition during a public hearing. The Board noted that eight lots required direct ingress and egress onto Juliette Road rather than one of the subdivision streets. At the close of the public hearing, and after discussion, the Board voted unanimously 4-0 to recommend denial of the rezoning request.

Mayor Wilson opened the public hearing for those in favor of or opposition to the proposed Rezoning of Parcel 053 048, Tyler Findley, Edgar Hughston Builders, LLC.

Mr. Tyler Findley with Houston Homes at 6053 Veterans Parkway, Columbus, Georgia. Stated that We're asking for this property off Juliette Road, be zoned from Planned Unit Development (PUD) to a conservation neighborhood. That would be one hundred and four home sites, with sixty-six of those home sites being seventy-five feet wide and thirty of those home sites being fifty-three feet wide. He stated that the intention is to put home sites on the ground on which they then build homes that are attainably priced. He understands that across the southeast, United States, and in all the markets in which we operate, there is a massive shortage of attainable housing. He stated that he knows that there's a lot of concern from neighbors across the street, down the road, and just from general residents in the community, that these home sites are too small. The goal here is to fit a product that offers the ability to get into a home. The quality of the homes will be the same. Mr. Findley addressed some concerns from homeowners in Juliette Crossing. He stated that there were several issues that Houston Homes was not aware of. They have an app, and they track every email, phone call, and text message that the customer care team receives or sends out. He stated that they want to build great homes, be great neighbors and stay in this community.

Ms. Andrea Goolsby at 920 Juliette Road stated she located directly beside the seventy-seven acres that's up for approval. Her home has been in her family for seventy years. It offers something increasingly rare, space, peace, and freedom from the restrictions of urban living. It's the best of both worlds, and that balance is now under threat. The resolving proposal would bring a subdivision right to her back door, which would irrevocably change everything for her day-to-day life. The traffic has already been mentioned, and that's a huge concern. There’s a lot of congestion there, with Juliette Crossing, the Monroe County EMS headquarters, the Tift College exits with essentially have no lighting at all at night, the construction of the new church off Benson Ham Road, and from KOA with the large RVs that causes a lot of congestion. The environmental concerns, also, with the wetlands. She stated that there's already a significant amount of water runoff with that particular property, to the extent that she can hardly keep gravel on her driveway. Ms. Goolsby expressed her concerns about the affordability of the homes. She stated that we need more affordable housing options rather than high-end developments. It caters to outside buyers and contributes nothing to the affordability crisis, affecting families, teachers, and first responders right here in our community. She also had concerns about the poor construction and densely packed homes that don't align with community standards. She stated that she’s not against progress, but against thoughtless development that forgets the people who've invested their lives in this place. She stated that reviewing the open records request there was no documentation that the public was properly notified of the annexation in 2006 and no records exist for signage posted to inform the public as required.

Mr. Chip Dunn at 164 Conifer Drive expressed his concerns about traffic on Juliette Road. He stated that he has a petition with at least two hundred and thirty-eight names, and he would appreciate the council’s consideration to deny the request.

Ms. Lyn Deleon at 57 Loblolly stated that the school system cannot take anymore. She stated that the schools are busting at the seams. Classes have doubled the size. She expressed her concerns about traffic. She questioned why we can’t have homes there, but on at least an acre. She asked the council to be smart about the request. Ms. Deleon stated that the police and sheriff don’t have the manpower.

Kerri Swearingen at 412 Reedy Creek Road. questioned about Planned Unit Development (PUD) designation that's already attached to this property and the density compared to what is being proposed.

Mr. Dean Nelson, the Community Development Director, stated that the original rezoning was never developed, so to essentially amend it, it would go through Section 8.8 amendments. Amendments to approve the plan shall be permitted and governed by the procedure and provisions for changing the official zoning map as specified in Article 30 of the zoning ordinance. In terms of what can be placed in the public based on the zoning ordinance, permitted uses, retail service, office, civic, and institutional residential uses shall not exceed twenty five percent of the total site area of the district. Industrial uses are not normally considered appropriate in a plan unit development, but if proposed and approved, they will not exceed ten percent of the total site area of the district, at least twenty percent of the total area of a plan unit development shall be conservation, open space, or landscaped area. At least seventy percent of the units proposed and approved as part of a plan community development shall be detached single-family units and thirty percent of those can be some other type of residential.

Ms. Ernest and Tonya James at Julliette Crossing stated that they are family homes with children, but there's nothing in the subdivision or in that area for children to do. There's no park, no playground, and no swimming pool. She stated that there's no gates around the retention ponds, and they have a lot of kids and small animals in the area. Mr. James stated that you don’t want parking on the street and expressed his concerns about the driveways, the entry and exit to the subdivision and the poor quality of the homes. He stated that they should be allowed to build less houses, not the amount that they're requesting

Mr. Nathan Souther, at 116 Conifer Drive, expressed his concerns with traffic and with driveways in the streets.

Ms. Devin Roswell, at Juliette Crossing, stated that she appreciated the feedback from Mr. Findley and trying to partner with the community. She expressed concerns about the quality of the homes and amenities.

Mr. Tyler Findley addressed some of the concerns regarding the retention pond, storm water runoff, and amenities. He stated that they bought the neighborhood already designed. He stated that while they do not have any in Juliette Crossing and would be limited to what they can do in a conservation neighborhood, they do anticipate having an amenity. Their thoughts are some picnic areas, a frisbee golf course, and some other things that are unobtrusive to nature that can be enjoyed by kids, teenagers, and adults.

Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing for the proposed Rezoning of Parcel 053 048, Tyler Findley, Edgar Hughston Builders, LLC for council consideration.

Mr. Hewet offered a motion to deny the Rezoning of Parcel 053 048, Tyler Findley, Edgar Hughston Builders, LLC for council consideration. Seconded by Mr. Hill.

After a brief discussion Mayor Wilson called the question of all those in favor of or opposition to the denial of the proposed Rezoning of Parcel 053 048, Tyler Findley, Edgar Hughston Builders, LLC. The motion passed unanimously.

**First reading of Annexation and Zoning Ordinance for Parcels 015 010Z and 027 018A**

Mr. Brian Causey, the City Attorney, stated an ordinance of the Mayor and Council of the City of Forsyth, to annex parcels of land into the city limits of the City of Forsyth, and other purposes related thereto. This is relating to parcels 015 010Z and 020 018A. This is owned by Robert Bryson, and they are located off of Smith Road.

**Tabled agenda items from May 19, 2025 council meeting**

* **Approval of** **an Intergovernmental Agreement to provide funding for the Monroe County Public Library.**

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to remove the approval ofan Intergovernmental Agreement to provide funding for the Monroe County Public Library from the table. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wilder offered a motion to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement to provide funding for the Monroe County Public Library. Seconded by Mr. Hewett.

Mr. Dodd questioned where the money was going to come from.

Mr. Goolsby stated that he wasn’t saying we shouldn't help financially with a library that's located in the city as well as the county, but it crosses a lot of boundaries of service delivery and questioned how they came up with the cost.

Mr. Hill stated that the library right now is a little bit of a hornet's nest. There's a lot going on. He questioned, are they planning on staying with Flint River and how many members would be on the board. Mr. Hill stated that our residents use the library, and therefore we should put money in, but he wasn’t certain whether now is the right time to do so.

Commissioner Lamarcus Davis stated that he was not aware of a hornet’s nest and that he had not heard anything about the library in the past four or five months. That's the first thing that came up. Yes, sir. And He stated that the county's been paying for the library for all these years. They are doing renovations, making it ADA compliant. He stated that it's an intergovernmental agreement for the school board and the city to contribute to that library to have a board member on it. He was not sure about the number and the amount. Mr. Davis stated that he would like to go over the intergovernmental agreement and he thinks it would be a great opportunity to work together.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to able until the June 16, 2025 council meeting to get dialogue from the county regarding the board and the cost Seconded by Mr. Hill.

After a brief discussion Mayor Wilson called the question of all those in favor of or opposition to tabling the approval ofan Intergovernmental Agreement to provide funding for the Monroe County Public Library to allow time to get dialogue from the county. The motion passed with five votes in favor (Hill, Hewett, Allen, Goolsby, and Dodd) and one opposition (Wilder).

Mayor Wilson stated that any councilmember with questions regarding the agreement needs to get them to the City Manager to be directed to the county before the next meeting.

* **Lee Smith**

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to remove Lee Smith from the table. Seconded by Mr. Wilder; the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wilder offered a motion to deny the request from Mr. Lee Smith to pay the invoice for the sewer line repair. Seconded by Mrs. Allen.

Mr. Dodd stated that he thinks the city needs to pay some of the invoice.

Mr. Mike Batchelor, the Utilities Director, stated that the sewer issue was brought up at Lee’s Hair Cutting, which would involve several adjoining properties as what we call a common lateral. Through investigations with H2O Innovations, our city contractor, reviewing our city maps, property records, the key findings that the roots intended to enter the city sewer main through the end of our line and travel into the private lateral. The tree is on private property outside the city right-of-way. The right-of-way is seventeen feet from the center line and ends at the back of the sidewalk. He stated they have not excavated and confirmed that the root turned from this tree, but the suspected tree sits outside the city right-of-way. The lateral and the clean-up manhole that is on one side does not recognize the city infrastructure. He stated that anything from the main out is the customer or property owners. Mr. Batchelor stated that the plan of action is to excavate and uncover the intrusion, which is at the end of the line, and clear that up, remove any kind of roots, and repair it, repair the road, and take care of the city’s part.

Mayor Wilson called the question of all those in favor of or opposition to the deny the request from Mr. Lee Smith. The motion failed with four in opposition (Hill, Hewett, Dodd, and Mayor Wilson) and three in Favor (Allen, Goolsby, and Wilder)

Mr. Hill stated that he understands Mr. Lee's issue here, and he doesn’t want to pass the buck. Well, I He stated that he is not here to absorb residents' expenses. Essentially, if we pay for this, the residents pay for it. He questioned if there was anywhere else in the city where part of the sewer main was four inches and had some question regarding the manhole. Mr. Hill questioned if Lee's Haircutting as well as the other business owners need to go after the owner of the tree.

After a brief discussion Mr. Hill offered a motion to review the itemized bill and determine what was done in the city main to determine the amount to pay. Seconded by Mr. Dodd.

Mr. Goolsby questioned if it could be submitted as a insurance claim.

Mr. Hill withdrew his motion to review the itemized bill and determine what was done in the city main to determine the amount to pay.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to turn the information over to the insurance company for a claim. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of a change order for the Volume Chevrolet Water Project**

Mr. Hill offered a motion to approve the change order for the Volume Chevrolet Water Project. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Requisitions Greater than $6,000**

* **UV Superstore- 19, 567.98**

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the requisitions greater than $6000 as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

**City Manager’s Report**

No business to report

**City Attorney Report**

No business to report

**Mayor’s Report**

No business to report

**Council Board Reports**

Mrs. Allen stated that the Convention and Visitors Bureau met on May 27, 2025 Ms. Stanbery gave an update on future events. She stated that Telling Their Story will take place on June 21, 2025 at the Hubbard Campus. She thanked the Mayor, City Manager, the Fire Department and friends who came out to assist at her mother’s house fire.

Mr. Dodd stated that the Golf Board met on Thursday night. They are almost done with the greens.

Mr. Hill reminded everyone that on June 7, 2025 at 7:30p.m Main Street will host the second concert, performing will be the No Diggity Band on the downtown square. He reminded everyone of the Main Street Market on Fridays and the Downtown Development meeting on Monday, June 9, 2025 at 5:00p.m.

**Additional Business**

Mr. Goolsby questioned, when is the comprehensive plan that we have done?

Mr. Dean Nelson stated that it was updated in 2022, and it's set for an update in 2027. It is every five years.

Mr. Goolsby stated that he thinks if we could get substantial participation from the city, county, and residents, we could have a good comprehensive plan. It's our roadmap for five to twenty years. That is our roadmap and when we make zoning decisions, that is what we base it on. He asked if it made sense, to start discussions now, to get the plan out to people.

Mrs. Allen thanked Kemie, Shayla, Shay, and Chief Bunn for attending the Convention and Visitors Bureau meeting.

Mr. Wilder reminded everyone of the commitment to Mrs. Colbert on Jenay Court with the storm water drainage

**Public Comments**

Ms. Linda Hampton at 419 MLK Jr. Drive thanked the council for approving to pay on the van for the Senior Center Van and requested that the council put money into community-based services. She asked the council to consider funding the Monroe County Library.

Mr. Scott Bogulski at 390 Sunset Terrace and 590 W Peachtree thanked the the police officers got there first. the fire chief, Mayor and the City Manager. He stated that on May 20th, four sheriff deputies went to the property of 390 Sunset. Their CAD system says they were there to serve a warrant, but the Magistrate Court says that there was no such warrant. While on the property, three of the four deputies did not turn on their cameras to take note of what they were doing on the property against their policy. One deputy opened the front door to that house without a warrant and his daughter was inside. They were peeking in the windows, and they don't have a warrant to back that up. He stated that he couldn’t get an explanation for what they were doing at that property. Mr. Bogulski stated that he is requesting the city call the GBI to protect the rights of his daughter and any other occupant of that house. He asked that the council support his request for assistance. He asked that the council press Sheriff Freeman to coordinate with the police chief in regard to future actions of the sheriff's office inside the city limits to protect the rights of other citizens.

Ms. Isabelle Tanner at 167 W. Main stated that she came before the council to make them aware of the situation. It has to do with zoning. She stated that she owns the two-story brick building right across from the Department of Corrections. The address is 211 Tift College Drive. In May of 2017 the zoning was changed from Neighborhood Business to Highway Business. On April 3, 2025 one tenant signed a lease to begin counseling services on May 16th. Two days later someone else approached her realtor and wanted to open a counseling service upstairs, which was the only two empty rooms that she had, and she wanted to start on April 15 2025. Ms. Tanner stated that she was not aware of any problems until April 23, 2025 when she was notified by her potential tenant, Amber Flannery. She stated that she completed an application for conditional approval for a clinic in the building and delivered it to the City Hall, along with the six copies of the survey that were required. On May 9, 2025 she was notified, along with her potential tenant, that the request for conditional approval would go before the Planning and Zoning Board on June 23, 2025. and then before City Council on July 7, 2025. After that time, if everything was approved, they would get a business license, and they could move into their offices.

**Executive Session**

No executive session is needed.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Dodd offered a motion to adjourn at 8:08pm. Seconded by Mr. Wilder; the motion carried unanimously.