



**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**February 11, 2025**  
**Cochran City Council**  
**Work Session @ 6:00 PM**

*City Auditorium, 102 N Second Street, Cochran, GA 31014*

**City Council**

**City Staff**

Billy Yeomans, Mayor	Richard Newbern, City Manager
VACANT <i>(District 1, Post 1)</i>	Candace Summerall, City Clerk
Gary Ates, Council Member <i>(District 1, Post 2)</i>	Jim Elliott, City Attorney
Carla Coley, Council Member <i>(District 2 Post 1)</i>	
Lonnie Tedders, Council Member <i>(District 2, Post 2)</i>	
VACANT <i>(District 3, Post 1)</i>	
Shane Savant, Council Member <i>(District 3, Post 2)</i>	

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Billy Yeomans called the work session to order at 6:00 PM

**II. AGENDA ITEMS**

**DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

**Finance Director's Report - Bonnie Raffield**

1. Financial Report Presented

- Council Member Coley inquired about police rows appearing in orange

**Police Department Report - Chief Jeff Trawick**

1. Vehicle Acquisitions:

- Received two fully outfitted patrol vehicles (mileage: 90k+ and 105k), Acquired a Dodge Charger, All vehicles were donations

2. Animal Control Update:

- Expansion project in progress, Construction delayed due to weather, Contractor has begun framing, Awaiting concrete work

### 3. Recent Law Enforcement Success:

- Joint operation with county and university
- Two suspects apprehended, Recovery of stolen firearms and evidence, Drug seizures completed

### 4. Equipment Donations:

- 16x8 enclosed trailer donated by WOW (Woody Butts)

## **Fire Department Report - Chief Brock Wilcher**

### 1. Operations Update:

- Responded to routine emergency calls
- Clarified department responds to all medical emergencies and vehicle accidents within city limits
- Managed response during recent winter weather event affecting approximately 700 students

### 2. Mutual Aid:

- Four department members assisted Coweta County Fire
- Covered stations during battalion chief's funeral

## **Public Works Report - Willie Farrow**

### 1. Infrastructure:

- Discussed five lift stations plus main lift station
- Working on generator solutions
- Potential generator donation from City of Stockbridge under consideration

### 2. Future Planning:

- Discussing need for multiple generators
- Working on implementing SCADA system for monitoring
- Plans to present annual retreat presentation at next meeting

## **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE - Melissa Barker**

### 1. Upcoming Events:

- Candidate Forum: March 4th at 6:30 PM at City Auditorium
- Bingo for Books at Elementary School

- Bingo Night: Monday at 6:30 PM featuring Scott's BBQ
- Caffeinated Connections: March 5th at Oxley Performance Computers
- Ribbon Cutting: February 28th at 3:00 PM for Blush Honey Salon
- Annual Banquet: March 22nd
  - Silent auction
  - Guest speaker Charlie English
  - Business of the year awards
  - Various activities planned

## **PUBLIC HEARING ON HB 581**

**Time: 6:30 PM**

Overview of HB 581 Presented by Council Member Carla Coley:

### 1. Key Provisions:

- Provides statewide floating homestead exemption
- Limits property tax increases due to home value appreciation
- Includes optional sales tax to offset property taxes
- Implements procedural modifications for property tax assessment

### 2. Current Status:

- Passed in March 2024
- Signed into law April 2024
- Effective January 1, 2025
- 62.9% of Georgians voted in favor

### 3. HB 92 Updates:

- New bill introduced to address gaps in HB 581
- Changes definition of homestead to include 5 acres

- Allows surviving spouse to retain floating exemption
- Extends opt-out deadline to March 31, 2029

**Public Comments:**

Ray Martin (172 First Avenue) spoke in favor of opting in, citing:

- Concern for retirees on fixed incomes
- Impact on community stability
- Discussion of rental property assessments
- Support for gradual funding increases

**The public hearing was closed at 6:49 PM.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

The work session concluded with announcement of potential February 27th meeting if needed to address HB 581 opt-out decision before March 1st deadline.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Candace Summerall

Date: February 11, 2025