



**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**January 8, 2026**  
**Cochran City Council**  
**Work Session 6:00 PM**

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

**City Council**

**City Staff**

Billy Yeomans, Mayor	Richard Newbern, City Manager
Trecia Gardner (District 1, Post 1)	Tiffany Lapp, Interim City Clerk
Gary Ates, Council Member (District 1, Post 2)	Jim Elliott, City Attorney
Carla Coley, Council Member (District 2 Post 1)	
Lonnie Tedders, Council Member (District 2, Post 2)	
Dianne Lester (District 3, Post 1)	
Shane Savant, Council Member (District 3, Post 2)	

- I. Call to Order** by the Mayor Pro tem Gary Ates @ 6:00 PM
- II. Invocation** by Councilman Shane Savant
- III. Pledge of Allegiance** by Councilwomen Dianne Lester
- IV. Attendance**- Mayor absent All Councilmembers Present.

## **5. Approval of Agenda**

A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented.

**Motion by:** Councilwoman Carla Coley

**Second by:** Councilman Lonnie Tedders \_\_\_\_\_

**Vote:** Unanimous / Passed -

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## **6. Department Head Reports**

### **Public Works**

Public Works provided updates on ongoing and planned infrastructure projects, including road resurfacing, drainage improvements, and water and sewer system coordination. Discussion

included prioritization of areas experiencing leaks, pressure issues, and long-term infrastructure planning.

### **Fire Department**

The Fire Department presented its monthly report, highlighting a Christmas Day structure fire on Sixth Street. Fire personnel successfully rescued an occupant from the residence. Council expressed appreciation for the department's quick response and professionalism.

### **Police Department**

It was noted that the Police Chief was attending a professional conference and would present the monthly report at the next regular council meeting.

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## **7. Housing and Grant Programs (CHIP / CDBG)**

Council received updates on CHIP and CDBG housing projects, including homes under rehabilitation or reconstruction and several projects nearing completion. Staff discussed remaining 2024 CDBG funds, eligibility requirements, and procedures for identifying additional homes within the approved target area.

Council also discussed upcoming public hearings, application processes, and planning for 2026 CHIP and CDBG grant applications, including consideration of housing versus infrastructure projects.

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## **8. Community Resource Center Proposal – Cochran Helps**

Council heard a presentation regarding a proposed public-private partnership with Cochran Helps to operate a community resource center at the Peyton Williams Center. Proposed services include food distribution, health and wellness resources, education and employment assistance, and community support programs.

It was clarified that the facility would remain available for community events and gatherings and that any future need for refrigeration or expanded food storage would be accommodated at a separate facility. Council discussed oversight, privacy considerations, and community engagement. No formal action was taken.

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## **9. Building Inspections and Permitting Proposal**

Council received a presentation from Falcon Design regarding a proposal for building inspection and permitting services. The proposed fee schedule complies with House Bill 461 and International Code Council standards.

Discussion included fee calculations, revenue distribution, liability considerations, and anticipated benefits to the City. Council requested additional review prior to taking action.

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## **10. Governance and Administrative Items**

### **Council Committees**

Council discussed reinstating standing council committees, including Finance and Administration, Public Safety, Public Works, and Community and Economic Development. Committees would serve in an advisory capacity only. Consensus supported further consideration at a future meeting.

### **Ethics Board**

Council reviewed the City's ethics ordinance and noted that the terms of the current ethics board have expired. The appointment process was discussed, and Council members were asked to identify potential candidates for future appointment.

### **Budget Calendar**

The proposed budget calendar was presented, outlining timelines for departmental input, council review, public hearings, and budget adoption in June. Council discussed scheduling considerations. Formal approval was deferred to a subsequent meeting.

### **Public Facilities Authority**

Council discussed the potential establishment of a Public Facilities Authority as a financing mechanism for major capital projects. Staff were asked to provide additional information prior to consideration.

### **Fees and Compliance**

Council discussed proposed fees including a \$25 after-hours utility reconnection fee and a \$25 zoning verification letter fee. Updates were also provided regarding EPA lead service line compliance requirements and use of the 120 Water platform. Council requested further clarification before action.

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## **11. Comprehensive Plan Update**

Council was notified of the upcoming comprehensive plan meeting scheduled for January 27 at 2:00 p.m. at the 4-H Office. Staff explained the role of the comprehensive plan in guiding zoning and development decisions.

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## **12. Announcements**

Council was reminded of upcoming training and networking opportunities, including Cities United. Appreciation was expressed to department heads and staff for their work during the holiday period and ongoing budget preparation.

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## **13. Executive Session**

A motion was made to enter executive session.

**Motion by:** Councilman Lonnie Tedders

**Second by:** Councilman Shane Savant \_\_\_\_\_

**Vote:** Unanimous / Passed

Council entered executive session at [8:28 pm].

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## **14. Return to Regular Session**

Council returned to regular session at [9:16].

*No action taken.*

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## **15. Adjournment**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

**Motion by:** Councilman Lonnie Tedders

**Second by:** Councilwomen Carla Coley \_\_\_\_\_

**Vote:** Unanimous / Passed -

The meeting was adjourned at [9:16 pm].