

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Mayor and Council for the City of Gray, Georgia was held on Monday, July 21st, 2025 at 6:00 PM in the D.V. Childs Civic Center located at 109 James Street.

Present: Mayor Ed Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem James Collins, Council Members Terry Favors, Terrell Fulford, and David Tufts, City Attorney John D. Newberry, City Superintendent Cheyenne Morgan, Main Street Director Ashley Roberson, Police Chief Adam Lowe, and City Clerk Cindy Yancey.

Guests: Senator Rick Williams, State Representative Dale Washburn, Tyler Peek, Danny Miller, Bill Conn, Steven Beaty, Chris Wiedner, Sam Kitchens, John Wood, Micah Harley, James Nobles, Gary Butler, Markus Davis, Anthony Finney, Joceyln Horton, Glen Warnick, Mark Roberts, Chloe Crutchfield, Natalie Lurie, and Debbie Lurie-Smith, *The Jones County News*.

Mayor Pro Tem Collins requested to move Streets/Sanitation to the top of the agenda.

Streets/Sanitation Committee:

- Georgia Department of Transportation
 - Tyler Peek and Danny Miller with the Georgia Department of Transportation were present for the meeting,
 - Mr. Peek indicated that the Georgia Department of Transportation was present to provide a follow-up regarding the state routes, as discussed during the meeting with mayor and council held in June.
 - Mr. Peek stated that there were concerns or questions about the changes that were made to the routes once the bypass was completed.
 - Mr. Peek has pulled GDOT's records and stated that the changes that were made are the changes that were agreed to by the city and the state routes no longer converge in the downtown area.
 - Mr. Peek submitted a 2007 agreement map showing which state routes would be converted to city or county streets.
 - Mr. Peek stated that, regarding street maintenance, roads removed from the state route system became the responsibility of either the city or county, depending on the applicable jurisdiction.
 - Mr. Peek stated that he did not find any correspondence in which the Georgia Department of Transportation agreed to repave the streets before they were handed over to the city or county.
 - Mr. Peek addressed concerns about the railroad traffic signals, noting that Atlanta's central office is seeking easier-to-maintain upgrades since parts for the current, aging signals are difficult to find.
 - The current range of estimated cost to upgrade the signals ranges from \$50,000 to \$400,000, depending on what the city decides to replace. Mr. Peek stated that he feels that the critical things that need to be replaced are the signal cabinet and the signal heads. The full evaluation of the signals should be complete by late fall.
 - Mr. Peek spoke about the Local Maintenance Improvement Grant that is available for street maintenance. Mr. Peek also advised that the city/county could make a one-time additional funding request to help with the maintenance of what used to be state routes.
 - Mr. Peek said that the Department of Transportation is looking at the signage to make sure that they have the proper signage coming into Gray directing both commercial and non-commercial motorists.

- Danny Miller gave an update on the GDOT resurfacing projects that are currently active in the area.
- Mayor Pro Tem Collins asked when the roads were officially turned over to the city.
- Mr. Peek explained that the roads were transferred to the city in 2017, but the DOT continued maintenance until taking full responsibility for the bypass in 2019.
- Mayor Barbee stated that the city is trying to correct what he would call an unforeseen problem for truck drivers and asked that the state add Eatonton Hwy back to the state routes.
- Mr. Peek stated that the DOT cannot be adding more routes.
- Mr. Peek stated that the fact that this is now coming up as a problem is a surprise to the department since the agreement was signed in 2007 and the bypass has been open since 2017.
- Councilman Tufts asked that the Police Chief update everyone on the truck traffic since the implementation of the no through truck ordinance.
- Chief Lowe stated that 99% of the trucks should not be coming through Gray and he feels that it is the local owner/operators that the ordinance is affecting.
- Truck Ordinance
 - The following citizens expressed concerns about the truck ordinance:
 - Glen Warnick
 - Gary Butler
 - Anthony Finney
 - Mark Roberts
 - Charles Rich
 - The following concerns were discussed:
 - Safety issue due to the truck route having so many turns.
 - Adding the truck traffic to the already congested school traffic on Bill Conn Pkwy.
 - Inconvenience
 - Senator Rick Williams stated that he feels that safety is an issue and he is willing to continue to work with the city and GDOT to try to figure out a solution.
 - Representative Dale Washburn stated that he is willing to work with the city and GDOT, but he does not have any authority over the Department of Transportation.
 - Mayor Pro Tem Collins stated that he does not agree with pointing the finger at the city, he said that the state worked for years and spent millions of dollars on the bypass, and it has created a mess for the truckers.
- Micah Harley
 - Mr. Harley explained that he operates a car dealership, and since the implementation of the truck ordinance, his business has experienced financial challenges. Mr. Harley noted that GPS systems for trucks now identify his location as restricted for large vehicles, resulting in higher freight charges for picking up vehicles. Therefore, customers are unwilling to pay the increased costs. Mr. Harley asked if there was another way to identify the restricted area, because he believes that would correct the problem that he is having.
 - Attorney Newberry asked the GDOT if there is other identifying information for the boundaries that the GPS technology could understand. Mr. Newberry informed Mr. Harley that the city was removing some of the city limit language from the code and he believes that this change may address the problem.

Finance/Tax Committee:

- Financial Update
 - Council Member Fulford gave an update on the 2024 property taxes.

Water/Sewer Committee:

- No Report

Main Street/DDA:

- AC Quotes
 - Ms. Ashley Roberson presented the following quotes to replace an AC Unit at 102 E Clinton.
 - Honey Heating & Air – 10,740
 - Mid -State Heating & Air – 15,870
 - Wilson Bryant - 13,504
- It was the consensus of mayor and council to move forward with Honey Heating & Air and to officially approve the quote at the August City Council meeting.

Plan Committee:

- Temporary Businesses
 - This item will be added to the August All Committee Meeting.

Personnel Committee:

- No Report

City Property:

- No Report

Public Safety Police/Fire:

- No Report

Miscellaneous:

- Bill Conn & Steven Beaty w/ New York Life
 - Mr. Conn and Mr. Beaty spoke with mayor and council about employee benefits that their company could offer to city employees at no cost to the city.
 - Mayor and council stated that they would speak with the city department heads.
- Chloe Crutchfield (Chamber) – State of Community Luncheon
 - Ms. Crutchfield invited mayor and council to the State of Community Luncheon on August 28th, 2025 from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

City Clerk