

CITY OF CORNELIA  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
AUGUST 5, 2025

The Cornelia City Commission met in a Workshop Session on Tuesday, August 5, 2025, at 5:00 PM in the Commission Conference Room, 181 Larkin Street, Cornelia, GA. Mayor John Borrow called the meeting to order, and the following Commissioners were present: Janice Griggs, Mark Reed, Don Bagwell, and Tony Cook. Also present: City Attorney, Steve Campbell, City Manager, Donald Anderson, City Clerk, Debbie Turner.

Mayor Borrow opened the meeting, and they discussed the crosswalk on Irvin Street. City Manager Anderson stated that Smash It and the Boxing gym have closed permanently. The owners were the ones requesting a crosswalk, so with them closing, there is no need for it. Mayor Borrow said that we will remove that item and replace it with the naming of the new park.

Habersham County Chamber President, Ellie Van Doornum gave her quarterly report. She stated that not including the \$10,449.51 for May and June we have collected \$36,732.82. Most of the money Ms. Doornum said has been spent on the Chamber's website. She passed around the ads that have been placed in different magazines. She said that they have put two full-page ads in the dining guide, which she said is very popular. Ms. Doornum said that she and Mr. Anderson are working on an Art Mural Project, which is very exciting. They met with Cheyenne Renee, who is doing a 50-50 mural project, which is 50 murals in 50 states, focusing on rural towns, and she will also do a documentary with it. They have settled on a scene from Lake Russell looking down from Chenocetah Tower. Ms. Doornum stated that it will be paid from the Hotel/Motel tax revenue they receive. Commissioner Reed asked if she could start promoting the Big Red Apple since we are in our 100<sup>th</sup> year of it.

The mayor went over the items on the Agenda, and they discussed the Planned Unit Development by ZKS Properties. Commissioner Reed said it would be nice for them to add sidewalks. Commissioner Griggs said that there are not that many people who walk Irvin Street. She said that there are only about six houses on that street and wondered if you could justify the expense.

City Manager Anderson went over the Blair Road Sewer Project and stated that Fieldale has not been able to use their hatchery for several years due to a lack of sewer. Carter and Sloope are ready to design the sewer line once you approve the agreement and the mayor signs it. Commissioner Reed asked if it would run from Camp Creek to Iron Ore. Mr. Anderson said yes.

Commissioner Bagwell made a motion to enter executive session, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

Commissioner Bagwell to exit the executive session, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 4 - 0

No Action Taken!

The meeting adjourned at 6 PM

---

Debbie Turner, City Clerk

---

John Borrow, Mayor

CITY OF CORNELIA  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
AUGUST 5, 2025

The Cornelia City Commission met in Regular Session on Tuesday, August 5, 2025, at 6:00 PM in the Commission Conference Room, 181 Larkin Street, Cornelia, GA. Mayor John Borrow called the meeting to order, and the following Commissioners were present: Janice Griggs, Mark Reed, Don Bagwell, and Tony Cook. Also present: City Attorney, Steve Campbell, City Manager, Donald Anderson, City Clerk, Debbie Turner.

Commissioner Cook gave the invocation and Guest Blaine Watson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Reed made a motion to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 4 -0

Commissioner Bagwell made a motion to approve the minutes from July 1st as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

Commissioner Griggs made a motion to approve the minutes from July 17th as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 4 - 0

City Manager's Monthly Report - We submitted a pre-application to the Appalachian Regional Commission requesting \$2.5 million to help with the cost of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade Project. We made it past the first round so we have submitted the final application. We should know if we will receive the funding by September. The estimated cost of the project is \$34 million so we will continue to pursue funding opportunities to help offset the cost. We have applied for a grant through the Georgia ReLeaf program to help with the cost of the landscaping at the new park. This is the same grant that we received in 2024 to plant trees on the corner of Moss and Wells Street. The estimated cost of the landscaping is \$156,000 so we have requested the maximum grant of \$15,000. We are seeing an increase in our homeless population sleeping in public areas which is a violation of our Urban Camping Ordinance. As a result, we have installed signs at all the parks that read that the park is open from dawn until dusk. The signs also have the language from the ordinance so that when the Police Department finds people sleeping in the parks there will be no question that they were not aware of the law. Unfortunately, we had to cancel the July Summer Nights Festival because of inclement weather. Of the 3 that were scheduled for this year, 2 of them were cancelled because of the weather and the other one had a poor turnout because of the threat of rain. We are evaluating this event to see if it is worth continuing because there is a lot of work that goes into planning and setting up for it only to have to cancel at the last minute. His report is made an integral part of the minutes.

### Special Recognition for Police Officers

Chief Johnathan Roberts recognized Officer Erin Swinehart for saving a man's life using her CPR skill when she was dispatched to Fieldale. She is receiving the Chief's Accommodation Award. Chief Roberts stated that Lieutenant Joey Newkirk helped a man who was having a Mental Health crisis. He then invited Woodmen of the World Kenneth McEntyre to give Lieutenant Joey Newkirk the Woodmen Life Saving Award. Mr. McEntyre said that he would like to thank all the officers.

Mayor Borrow thanked them for their service to Cornelia and its citizens.

### Public Forum

### Old Business

#### Resolution # 08-25-01 to Zone 1900 Level Grove Road as a PUD

This is a request by Cook Communities to re-zone the 36.84 acres at 1900 Level Grove Road from R-2 to PUD to allow for mixed use development with 300 residential units and three commercial out parcels. Following the Public Hearing at The July 1<sup>st</sup> Commission Meeting you voted to post this request. To date staff have received no comments for or against the request. Commissioner Cook made a motion to pass the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 4 - 0

### Public Hearing

#### Request for a Planned Unit Development at 381 Irvin Street

This is a request by ZKS Properties, LLC. to re-zone the property at 381 Irvin Street from R-1-B to a Planned Unit Development to allow for the construction of 16 townhomes. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on this request on July 17, 2025. Following the hearing they voted to recommend approval of the request.

Mayor Borrow opened the Public Hearing and asked if there was anyone who wanted to speak for or against it.

James Irvin with Foothills Land Design came forward to show the plans for the townhomes and ask if they had any questions. He explained that the parking would be behind the townhomes and there would be a 10-foot buffer on all sides. There will be a playground, and 1 acre will be open space. Mr. Irvin explained

that the Townhomes will have a craftsman style, and they feel this is a good use of the space. He said it is close to the entertainment district and many commercial buildings as well. Commissioner Reed said that according to your plan analysis, it includes sidewalks. He asked if there were sidewalks on Hoyt and Irvin Street. Mr. Irvin said they have 5-foot sidewalks for the units. City Manager Anderson asked Mr. Irvin if the sidewalks could be constructed on the city right of way so that they would be accessible to the public. Mr. Irvin said they would have to look at the cost of that. Mayor Borrow asked what the small, narrow strip is on the plat. Mr. Irvin stated that it is shown to be right of way on the tax map. Commissioner Reed made a motion to post with the condition that the sidewalks be built on the city right of way and extend to the property lines on both Irvin Street and Hoyt Street sides of the property. Commissioner Bagwell seconded the motion. Approved 4 - 0

#### New Business

#### Proclamation for National Recovery Month

September is National Substance Abuse Recovery Month. This is a proclamation declaring September as National Recovery Month in the City of Cornelia.

Mayor Borrow read the Proclamation out loud. Bruce Anderson III, Johanna Anderson, and Executive Director Boyd Kinney from SD-24 came forward to address the Mayor & Commissioners. Ms. Anderson spoke and stated that each year they hold all kinds of Events, and this year they will hold a Bus tour in Toccoa on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 6 pm until 9 pm. She said that just looking at them, you would never know they are recovering. Ms. Anderson said that people have a certain view of what recovery looks like, and that we want to show our recovery and show that recovery happens in our community. Mayor Borrow thanked them for coming.

#### Agreement with Pioneer RESA for School Resource Officer

This is the agreement with Pioneer RESA for our School Resource Officer. The terms of the agreement are the same as the previous agreement, Pioneer RESA pays 80% of the cost of the Officer and the city pays the remaining 20%. The city manager recommended approval of the agreement with Pioneer RESA. Commissioner Griggs made a motion to approve the agreement, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 4 - 0

#### Agreement with Carter & Sloope

Fieldale has not been able to use their hatchery located on Blair Road for several years due to the lack of sewer. They would like to begin using this

facility again, so they have contacted the city about the possibility of getting sewer to the facility. The property is in our Sewer Service Delivery Area. The estimated cost to run a sewer line to the property from the sewer lift station located on Wilson Road is \$1.5 million. Because Fieldale will be spending \$15 million renovating the facility and creating new jobs, we have received a GEFA grant to extend our sewer to the property. Carter & Sloope is ready to begin design on the sewer line once this agreement is approved. The cost for them to design, bid, and oversee the project will be \$413,400. The city manager recommended that the mayor be authorized to sign the agreement with Carter & Sloope for the Blair Road Hatchery Sewerage Project. Commissioner Reed made a motion for the Mayor to sign the agreement, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 4 - 0

#### Budget Adjustment for the Police Department

We budgeted to purchase new guns for the Police Department this year. We sold the old guns to the Police Officers for \$300.00 per gun, so we have miscellaneous revenue in the amount of \$6,900.00. The city manager recommended that these funds be transferred to the Police Department's small Equipment Line item to offset the cost of the new guns. Commissioner Bagwell made a motion to do the budget adjustment, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

#### Appointment to the Downtown Development Authority

The Downtown Development Authority has nominated Jace Reeder with Fender's Diner to fill the unexpired term of Sarah Higgins who resigned from the Board in July. After reviewing his application, the city manager Stated that he feels that he will be an asset to the DDA and recommended that the commission approve the appointment of Jace Reeder to the Board. Commissioner Reed made a motion to appoint Jace Redder to the DDA, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

#### GEMA Recipient-subrecipient Agreement for Hazzard Mitigation Grant

In 2018 the city applied for a Hazzard Mitigation Grant from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency to install emergency generators at the North Fire Station and the City Shop. We received notice that we have been approved for funding in the amount of \$106,614 for this project. If we accept the funding the project must be completed by May 2026. Both buildings need emergency generators since they are both vital to our operations during emergencies. The city manager recommended that the commission accept this grant and authorize the mayor to execute the necessary documents. Commissioner Cook made a motion for the mayor to execute the documents, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

Naming Rights to the new Amphitheater Park

Mayor Borrow stated that this honor is usually reserved for someone who has had a significant impact on the city. Mayor Borrow said that he and the Commissioners have gotten together, and they couldn't think of anyone who has had a greater impact on Cornelia than our City Manager, Donald Anderson, over the past 20 years. Commissioner Bagwell made a Motion to name the new park after City Manager Donald Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 4 - 0

Mr. Anderson said he was very honored and humbled that you think that highly of me, he thanked them very much.

Mayor Borrow said he would like to thank him for the impact he has had on Cornelia.

Commissioner Bagwell made a motion to go back into executive session, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 4 - 0

---

Debbie Turner, City Clerk

---

John Borrow, Mayor

CITY OF CORNELIA, GEORGIA

AFFIDAVIT OF PRESIDING OFFICIAL(S) FOR A CLOSED PUBLIC MEETING

While in Regular Session, the motion was made to enter an Executive Session to discuss certain matters in a closed session.

( ) To discuss with the council pending and/or potential litigation, settlement claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions, which is exempt from the Open Meetings Act pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-2(1).

( ) A meeting to discuss the purchase, disposal of, or lease of property; authorize the ordering of an appraisal related to the acquisition or disposal of real estate; enter into a contract to purchase, dispose of, or lease property subject to approval in a subsequent public vote; or enter into an option to purchase, dispose of, or lease real estate subject to approval in subsequent public vote, which is excluded from the Open Meetings Act pursuant to Section 50-14-3(b)(1)(C).

( ) A meeting discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or employee, which is excluded pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-3(b)(2).

( ) Discussion in Executive Session of Records that are otherwise protected from disclosure under the Open Records Act as pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-3- (b)(4).

X The subject matter of the Executive Session of the Regular Session was devoted to matters within the exceptions provided by law.

\_\_\_ Because of events occurring during the closed session, I am unable to affirm the subject matter of the Executive Session of the Regular Session was devoted to only matters within the exceptions provided by law.

\_\_\_\_\_  
John Borrow, Mayor, City of Cornelia

Sworn to and subscribed before me this September 2,  
2025

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public