

Regular Council Meeting

December 2, 2025

Meeting began at 6:00pm.

Invocation by Dr. Daryl Vining, Pastor Matrious, Hebron Fellowship Baptist,
3200 US Hwy 41, Byron, GA 31008

Pledge of Allegiance led by Myra Caesar, of Maryland.

Welcome Extended by Mayor J. Micheal Evans to all those in attendance and on social media at the meeting.

Present were Mayor J. Micheal Evans, Councilman Robert D. Bird, Jr., Councilwoman Velicia Y. Lowe, Councilman Edward Armijo, City Attorney Rebecca Tydings, and City Administrator Krista Bedingfield.

Mayor's Moment

Mayor J. Micheal Evans requested a revision to the agenda, moving item #2 Ceremonial Swearing of Councilwoman Post 3-Velicia Y. Lowe from New Business to Mayor's Moments.

Motion given by Councilman Robert D. Bird, Jr. Second by Councilman Edward Armijo.
Motion Carried. Unanimous

Ceremonial Swearing of Councilwoman Post 3- Velicia Y. Lowe: City Attorney Rebecca Tydings administrated the Oath of Office in the presence of Mayor and Council, as well as, family and friends. Mayor J. Micheal Evans presented Councilwoman Lowe with a framed copy of the oath.

Public Comments

None.

Adoption of Minutes

November 4, 2025; Regular Council Meeting

Motion given by Councilman Robert D. Bird, Jr. Second by Councilman Edward Armijo.
Motion Carried. Unanimous.

Old Business

None.

New Business

FY 2025 Audit Presentation, M&J CPA's Advisors: Mayor J Micheal Evans asked David Irwin, Partner at Mauldin & Jenkins, to presented to the governing authority

- A clean, unmodified opinion of the city's FY2025 financial statements, in accordance with governmental accounting standards. This is the highest possible assurance, the city's Compliance "Yellow Book" Report had no audit findings and no material weakness or significant deficiencies in internal controls.
- Mr. Irwin acknowledged and commended the city management and staff, with a special acknowledging to City Accountant Carol Harrison and her team for their preparation, responsiveness and professionalism.

Financial Highlights (as of June 30):

- Total Assets & Deferred Outflows: ~\$47.9 million.
- Includes capital assets (net of depreciation): ~\$34.4 million.
- Cash/Cash Equivalents: ~\$11.3 million (reflective of strong liquidity).
- Total Liabilities & Deferred Inflows: ~\$4.3 million.
- Long-term liabilities: ~\$2.1 million.
- Net Position: ~\$43.5 million (increase of \$1.7 million from FY24).
- General Fund: Revenues: ~\$5.17 million (in line with FY24).
- Major sources: Property taxes (\$3.1 million); “Other taxes” \$1.5 million (insurance premium, franchise, alcohol, etc.).
- Expenditures: ~\$5.2 million (down \$343K from FY24; public safety = \$3.4 million, general government just over \$1 million, public works: \$276K).

Budget Performance:

- General Fund expenditures \$1.4 million under final amended budget.
- Sustained without transferring from any other funds.
- Fund Balance: Increased by \$87K to \$4.8 million.
- Represents eleven (11) months of operating expenditures (“very strong,” providing fiscal “cushion” and stability) without having to transfer funds.

Other Funds:

- SPLOST Fund: \$346K Planned decline, reflecting voter-approved capital project spending.
- Enterprise Funds (Water/Sewer, Sanitation, Stormwater): All produced positive operating cashflow; rates aligned with costs.

Footnotes & Disclosures:

- No significant changes.
- Required audit communications: No disagreements with management, no uncorrected misstatements, full cooperation, and auditor independence affirmed.

Governing Authority offered their appreciation to the auditors, the city’s management and staff for all their hard work.

Approval - Increase FY 26 Employee Christmas Bonus FT & PT Employees: Mayor J. Micheal Evans and City Accountant Carol Harrison proposed an to increase the Employee Christmas Bonus from \$200 for full-time, and \$100 for part-time to \$250 for full-time, \$125 for part-time; city covers FICA taxes.

- An increase of \$54.14/full-time, \$27.07/part-time employee.
- Staff Counts: Current - 62 full-time, 12 part-time.

Total Cost Impact:

- Prior cost: \$14,726.70
- New: \$18,408.22 (net increase over budget: \$1,299.27).

This difference is absorbable across departmental funds.

The Governing Authority agreed that the city’s employees are highly valued and the bonus was considered timely and deserved. Acknowledgements from several members expressing desire to do even more for staff.

Motion given by Councilman Edward Armijo. Second by Councilman Robert D. Bird, Jr. Motion Carried. Unanimous

Sanitation Ordinance and Contract Amendments (Ordinance No. 2025-6): Mayor J. Micheal Evans, City Administrator Krista Bedingfield requested changes to the Sanitation ordinance and contract amendments as follows:

Effective on bills starting February 2026 (services change Jan 1, 2026).

- Residential Rate Increase: +\$0.50/month (to address rising landfill fees).
- Commercial Cart Fee: From \$27.50 → \$30.00/month.
- Second Cart Rule:
 - Now enforced: households with excessive garbage may need a second cart.
- Includes 2 free bulk items per month/customer; additional carts at \$18/month (discounted).

Contract Term: Current sanitation contract with Ryland in effect until 2030; aim is to avoid mid-term fee increases unless significant cost spikes (landfill, minimum wage, fuel) occur.

Ordinance Revision: Incorporates added rate/fee detail; cross-referenced in Ch. 48 (Solid Waste Mgmt.) & Ch. 22 (Fees).

Notification Plan: Customers/citizens to be notified via social media.

Council Discussion

Emphasis on proactivity to avoid frequent increases and negotiating to sustain contract stability. Commercial rate hadn't been raised in 3+ years; new rate considered appropriate. Review and breakdown of all scheduled fee changes provided (see Exhibit A, page 12 of the agreement).

Motion given by Councilman Edward Armijo. Second by Councilman Velicia Lowe. Motion Carried. Unanimous

Comments from Council:

Post 1: Robert D. Bird, Jr. offered his thanks and appreciation to staff for their continued dedication; expressing a special appreciation to Mrs. Harrison for her financial stewardship and excellent audit results. Recognized Councilwoman Lowe and welcomed her to the team.

Post 2: vacant

Post 3: Velicia Lowe offered a special acknowledgment to family members, friends and community groups like the Warner Robins Alumni chapter, Delta Sigma Theta for all their support and encouragement through this journey. Expressed her excitement for the future and all that is to come while working in this new role.

Post 4: Edward Armijo extended invitation to the Centerville Lighted Christmas Parade happening this weekend, noting that it may be cold, but will still be fun. Emphasized this is a unique local event and encouraged community attendance. Praised the city's conservative budgeting, highlighting that the general fund could operate the city for a full year—an uncommon accomplishment. Noted strong collaboration among council members, staff, and employees in managing the budget responsibly.

Mayor J. Micheal Evans: Promoted the Centerville Lighted Christmas Parade, scheduled for Saturday, December 7th, 2025, starting at 7:00 PM. The parade will proceed along Houston Lake Road, turn left on Thompson, and finish at the middle school.

Thanked citizens of Houston County for supporting SPLOST initiatives through voting, which enabled these community improvements.

Citing several completed city projects made possible by SPLOST and ESPLOST funding, including:

- The fire station
- Public works building
- Improvements on Wilson Drive to aid traffic flow
- Upgrades to Church Street and Center Park
- New or upgraded playgrounds

Acknowledged Mayor John Harley for his leadership during these projects.

Executive Session: Potential Pending Litigation: Mayor J. Micheal Evans

Motion given by Councilman Robert d. Bird, Jr. Second by Councilman Edward Armijo. Motion Carried. Unanimous.

Adjourned to Executive Session at 6:47pm.

Reconvened Council Meeting at 7:03pm.

Affidavit and Resolution: City Attorney Rebecca Tydings

Motion given by Councilman Edward Armijo. Second by Councilman Robert D. Bird, Jr. Motion Carried. Unanimous.

Mayor J. Micheal Evans adjourned the meeting at 7:04pm.

Mayor J. Micheal Evans

Attest by City Clerk Lee Siefert

Date