



**City of Flowery Branch
City Council Meeting
Thursday, May 7, 2026, 6:00 PM
5410 Pine Street
Flowery Branch, GA 30542**



Call Work Session to Order:

Mayor McClellan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor McClellan and Council Members Chris Mundy, Joseph Mezzanotte, William McDaniel, and Pete Lena.

Also present were City Manager Tonya Parrish, City Clerk Shelia Cooper, Finance Director Matthew Hamby, Human Resources Director Krystle Hightower, Public Works Director Bill Whidden, Public Utilities Director Peter Woerner, Planning & Community Development Director Chris McCrary, Budget & Purchasing Manager Nancy Rodriguez, and City Attorney Ted Baggett.

Absent: Council Member Charles Vanderbilt

Pledge of Allegiance:

Mayor McClellan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adoption of Agenda:

Mayor McClellan announced that the developer had withdrawn the applications in regard to Ordinances 780, 781, 782. He further advised the developer had withdrawn the application in regard to Ordinance 783. As a result, there would be no public hearing for Ordinances 780,781,782, and 783.

There was a motion made to adopt the agenda as presented, removing Ordinances 780, 781, 782, 783 from the Public Hearing.

Motion: Chris Mundy
Second: William McDaniel
Ayes: Chris Mundy, Joseph Mezzanotte, William McDaniel, Pete Lena
Nays: None
Result: passed

City Attorney Baggett advised that the motion should be amended to remove Ordinances 780, 781, 782, 783 from the voting session.

There was a motion made to amend the adoption of the agenda by removing Ordinance 780, 781, 782, and 783 from the Public Hearing Section and by removing Ordinance 780, 781, 782 and 783, from the New Business - Voting Session.

Motion: Chris Mundy
Second: William McDaniel
Ayes: Chris Mundy, Joseph Mezzanotte, William McDaniel, Pete Lena
Nays: None
Result: passed

Awards & Recognitions:

Mayor McClellan introduced Rev. Charles Dickey of the Flowery Branch VFW and invited him to introduce the organization's members. He then thanked the members of the Flowery Branch VFW for their service.

Mayor McClellan also presented former Mayor Edward Asbridge with the National Day of Prayer Proclamation.



Mayor McClellan presented City Clerk Shelia Cooper with the proclamation recognizing the 57th Municipal Clerk's Week.



Public Hearing:

- a. Public Hearing and Second Read to Consider Proposed Amendments to the Planned Unit Development (PUD) Conditions, for Purposes of Clarification, Applicable to the Commercial Use Section of Sterling on the Lake, Pursuant to Ordinance 239-N / 240-N.

Director McCrary presented a proposed amendment to the Sterling on the Lake Planned Unit Development (PUD) Ordinance with the intent of clarifying the permitted uses of the commercial outparcels that are a part of the Sterling on the Lake Master Plan. Staff have attended past meetings with developers interested in the development of the subject parcels for proposals that included convenience stores. Per the approved ordinance, the parcels are limited to uses consistent with the Neighborhood Shopping (NS) zoning district. The current Neighborhood Shopping (NS) zoning code prohibits convenience stores, with or without fuel pump stations; however, such uses were not prohibited at the time the previously amended PUD ordinance was adopted (2008). This amendment clarifies that convenience stores, with or without fuel pumps, are not permitted on the subject properties. Staff recommend approving the amendment to Ordinance 239-N and 240-N.

City Clerk Cooper read the caption for Ordinance 239-N and 240-N.

There being none for or against, Mayor McClellan closed the public hearing at 6:14 p.m.

- b. Public Hearing and First Read of Ordinance 780 for the Annexation and Rezoning at 0 Sasser Road; Tax Parcel Identification Number 15044 000040 (95.842 acres) Rezoning from Hall County Planned Residential Development (PRD) to City of Flowery Branch Single Family Townhome (SF-TH). - This item was removed from the agenda.
- c. Public Hearing and First Read of Ordinance 781 for the Consideration of a Variance Associated with 0 Sasser Road for the Reduction of Minimum Lot Area for Attached Townhomes, Article 6, Table 6.2 from 3,500 square feet to 2,600 square feet. - This item was removed from the agenda.
- d. Public Hearing and First Reading of Ordinance 782 to Consider a Variance for Property Located at 0 Sasser Road from the Requirements of Zoning Ordinance §10.21(c), Which Mandates That Streets Exceeding 360 feet in Length Incorporate a Minimum of Twenty-Five (25) feet of Lateral Deviation from a Straight Alignment. Variance Request is to Eliminate the Required 25-foot Lateral Deviation. - This item was removed from the agenda.
- e. Public Hearing and First Read of Ordinance 783 for the Rezoning of Parcel 08099 000004 (0 McEver Road) From M-1 (Light Manufacturing and Industrial) and N-S (Neighborhood Shopping) to M-1 (Light Manufacturing and Industrial). - This item was removed from the agenda.

Unfinished Business - Work Session:

- a. Public Presentation by Joe Rothwell with Georgia Mountains Regional Commission of the Draft Comprehensive Plan Before Draft Submittal to DCA.

Mr. Joe Rothwell, Georgia Mountains Regional Commission presented the draft Comprehensive Plan that will be submitted to the Department of Community Affairs. The plan is a long-range policy document that guides the city's future growth, development, and resource allocation. It serves as a strategic blueprint for the community's vision, long-term goals, and objectives in areas such as land use, transportation, housing, economic development, grant opportunities, and other priorities over a 20-year period, with updates every five to ten years. Comprehensive planning is required by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 and is developed in coordination with the Department of Community Affairs, which certifies that the plan meets required standards. The plan also affects eligibility for state and federal funding, including Quality Local Government status, supports land use policy, and strengthens grant applications.

The update process included informational outreach and opportunities for public input, including community open house forums. According to available population estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau, Flowery Branch has seen its population explode more than four hundred percent from 2,071 in 2000 to 10,925 in 2024 and an estimated 13,660 residents at the time of this update in 2026. Growth is expected to continue as downtown redevelopment, new housing construction, and annexations move forward. This trend is reflected in single-family building permits, which increased from 174 in 2016 to 477 in 2020 and 465 in 2025.

The pace set in the past is expected to continue in the coming decades. Building permits issued for new single-family house construction have increased (almost year-over-year) from 174 issued in 2016 to 477 in 2020 and 465 in 2025. Annexation requests have also risen,

particularly along the Hog Mountain corridor and near Thurmon Tanner Parkway, Falcon Parkway, and McEver Road. With additional residential and commercial annexations under consideration, the city is likely to see continued growth. Survey results show that residents support a planned and balanced approach to managing that growth.

The vision statement paints a vivid picture of the future the community is striving toward, capturing the spirit, aspirations, and character its residents hope to see realized. It functions as a guiding compass, unifying leaders, residents, and stakeholders around shared goals and helps guide decision-making throughout the planning process. Several vision statements, and accompanying taglines, were developed by the stakeholder committee and presented to the citizens of Flowery Branch via a public survey. The new vision statement and tag line are the result of that collaboration with the public.

- b. Consider Authorizing the Appropriation of Funds from the Remaining GEFA Drinking Water Loan and Water and Sewer Fund Reserves, and Executing the Construction Contract with Sol Construction, LLC for the Groundwater Wells #4 & #5 Reactivation Project.

Budget Manager Rodriguez presented a request to appropriate funds from the remaining GEFA Drinking Water Loan and Water and Sewer Fund reserves and to execute a construction contract with Sol Construction, LLC for the Groundwater Wells #4 and #5 Reactivation Project. The City owns two inactive groundwater wells at the corner of Atlanta Highway and Vireo Drive. The property was acquired from the State of Georgia so the wells could be reactivated to supplement the City's drinking water supply. The City retained ESG Engineering, Inc. to design and permit the work needed to reactivate the wells and connect them to the water system. Bids were publicly advertised and opened on January 29, 2026, at which time Sol Construction, LLC was identified as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. On February 19, 2026, City Council formally recognized Sol Construction, LLC as the lowest responsive, responsible bidder. On April 16, 2026, the contract was presented to Council and staff recommended postponing the award because funding had not yet been identified. The original Project Budget \$2,428,768.00. However, \$667,340.73 has been spent on the purchase of well property and site preparation. The available budget is now \$1,761,427.27, with additional funds needed of \$1,562,702.73. Staff has identified available funds and is requesting authorization to utilize \$950,000.00 from the remaining funds in the GEFA Drinking Water Loan and \$755,128.00 from Water and Sewer Fund reserves to fully fund the project. The construction contract documents have been finalized and compiled into the Conformed Set, which is now presented for Council's consideration.

Council held a discussion with Finance Director Hamby.

New Business - Work Session:

- a. Consider Resolution 26-008 to Join as Amicus Curiae in the Continuing Chang V. City of Milton Litigation Now Before the Georgia Court of Appeals

Clerk Cooper read the caption for Resolution 26-008.

Attorney Baggett presented Resolution 26-008 which considers joining as Amicus Curiae in the ongoing Chang v. City of Milton litigation currently before the Georgia Court of Appeals. The City of Milton has requested continued support from cities, including

Flowery Branch, that previously joined as amicus parties before the Georgia Supreme Court. In this next phase of appellate review, the amicus brief is expected to ask the Court to eliminate the current exception to sovereign immunity that applies only to cities, but not to the State or counties. A ruling in favor of Milton's position could help shield municipalities from potentially significant financial liability and would place cities on equal legal footing with counties and the State when performing the same functions related to road construction and maintenance.

- b. Consider Resolution 26-009, Third Quarter Amendment to the Budget for FY2026 as Previously Adopted on June 19, 2025.

Clerk Cooper read the caption for Resolution 26-009.

Budget Manager Rodriguez presented the third-quarter amendment to the FY2026 budget, originally adopted on June 19, 2025. The General Fund includes one adjustment transferring contingency funds to the Police Department for additional Flock cameras contracted technical services. The Water/Wastewater Capital Projects Fund includes two adjustments; transferring funds from Oakwood Industrial Lift Station Project to the Wastewater Pump Station Modification Project and for establishing Waterline Repair Project. The SPLOST VII Capital Projects Fund also includes two adjustments; transferring General Fund appropriations from the Parks Property and Improvements Project to the Public Safety Land Purchase Project and appropriate SPLOST Funds to the Park Property Improvements Project as established by the SPLOST VIII referendum.

Council held a discussion with Finance Director Hamby.

Department Reports:

City Clerk Report:

City Clerk Cooper reported that she earned her Certified Municipal Clerk designation from the International Institute of Municipal Clerks, a credential requiring one hundred and sixty hours of education and local government experience. She also noted that she is one of fifty-four clerks in Georgia to achieve this certification among one hundred fifty-nine counties and five hundred thirty-six municipalities.

Department of Fun Report:

City Clerk Cooper noted upcoming events in the city.

Finance Department Report:

Director Hamby encouraged residents to view the city's financial reports and budget through the transparency portal on the city's website. He also noted that the City of Flowery Branch app is available for download from app stores and Google Play.

Human Resources Report:

Director Hightower provided a Human Resources update and noted that May is Mental Health Awareness Month. She reported that the Ramsey SmartDollar program launched on August 4, 2025, with 42 percent participation and positive financial outcomes, including debt reduction and increased savings. The department also participated in its first career fair at Lanier Tech and held a defensive driving class for 27 employees.

Director Hightower further reported that she earned the SHRM-CP designation on February 10, 2026. The four-hour exam consists of 134 questions covering organizational, people,

leadership, business, interpersonal, and workplace knowledge, as well as situational judgment. She also attended the Georgia SHRM Legal One Day Conference in May 2026. In addition, the department is implementing PowerDMS for policy management, training, compliance, and quizzes. Upcoming goals include standardized onboarding, providing annual employee training, and expanding on-site employee resources (ESS).

a. Council Report

Council Member Mezzanotte thanked Mr. Jack Probst for his time on the Comprehensive Committee.

Adjournment Work Session:

Mayor McClellan adjourned the work session at 7:24 p.m.

Voting Session Agenda

Call Voting Session to Order:

Mayor McClellan called the voting session to order at 7:24 p.m.

Public Comments:

Patrick Wright, 6490 Bell Drive, Flowery Branch, Georgia 30542

Mr. Wright, owner and manager of Van Pugh Boat Storage, requested a revision to the barrier plan on Gaines Ferry near the traffic circle at McEver and Gaines Ferry Road.

Reverend Charles Dickey, American Legion Post 328, Flowery Branch, Georgia 30542

Reverend Dickey spoke about the organization's mission of serving veterans, their families, youth, and the community. He noted that the post includes veterans from all branches of the service and ethnicities and that its members hope to become more active in the Flowery Branch community. He also said they are seeking guidance, assistance and support.

Frank Cowan, 6490 Bell Drive, Flowery Branch, Georgia 30542

Mr. Cowan requested modifications to the median at the McEver roundabout.

Mike Alan, Quality Marine, 6490 Bell Drive, Flowery Branch, Georgia 30542

Mr. Alan requested revisions to the roundabout plans to avoid eliminating the left turn onto Bell Drive.

Consent Agenda:

a. Consider April 16, 2026 City Council Meeting Minutes

There was a motion made to approve the consent agenda.

Motion: Chris Mundy

Second: Joseph Mezzanotte

Ayes: Chris Mundy, Joseph Mezzanotte, William McDaniel, Pete Lena

Nays: None

Result: passed

Unfinished Business - Voting Session:

- a. Second Read to Consider Proposed Amendments to the Planned Unit Development (PUD) Conditions, for Purposes of Clarification, Applicable to the Commercial Use Section of Sterling on the Lake, Pursuant to Ordinance 239-N / 240-N.

City Clerk Cooper read the caption for Ordinance 239-N and 240-N.

There was a motion made to approve Ordinance 239-N and 240-N.

Motion: Joseph Mezzanotte
Second: William McDaniel
Ayes: Chris Mundy, Joseph Mezzanotte, William McDaniel, Pete Lena
Nays: None
Result: passed

- b. Consider Authorizing the Appropriation of Funds from the Remaining GEFA Drinking Water Loan and Water and Sewer Fund Reserves, and Executing the Construction Contract with Sol Construction, LLC for the Groundwater Wells #4 & #5 Reactivation Project.

There was a motion made to authorize appropriation of funds from the remaining GEFA drinking water loan and water and sewer fund reserves and executing the Construction Contract with Sol Construction LLC for the Groundwater Wells #4 and #5 Reactivation Project.

Motion: Chris Mundy
Second: Joseph Mezzanotte
Ayes: Chris Mundy, Joseph Mezzanotte, William McDaniel, Pete Lena
Nays: None
Result: passed

New Business - Voting Session:

- a. Consider the First Reading of Ordinance 780 for the Annexation and Rezoning at 0 Sasser Road; tax parcel identification number 15044 000040 (95.842 acres) Rezoning from Hall County Planned Residential Development (PRD) to City of Flowery Branch Single Family Townhome (SF-TH). - This item was removed from the agenda.
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- e. Consider Resolution 26-008 to Join as Amicus Curiae in the Continuing Chang V. City of Milton Litigation Now Before the Georgia Court of Appeals
City Clerk Cooper read the caption for Resolution 26-008.

There was a motion made to approve Resolution 26-008 to join as Amicus Curiae in the continuing Chang V. City of Milton Litigation.

Motion: Joseph Mezzanotte
Second: Pete Lena
Ayes: Chris Mundy, Joseph Mezzanotte, William McDaniel, Pete Lena
Nays: None
Result: passed

- f. Consider Resolution 26-009, Third Quarter Amendment to the Budget for FY2026 as Previously Adopted on June 19, 2025.
City Clerk Cooper read the caption for Resolution 26-009.

There was a motion made to approve Resolution 26-009.

Motion: William McDaniel
Second: Chris Mundy
Ayes: Chris Mundy, Joseph Mezzanotte, William McDaniel, Pete Lena
Nays: None
Result: passed

Executive Session:

There was a motion made to enter executive session for matters related to the acquisition/disposition or real estate, for matters related to certain personnel issues, and for matters related to pending or potential litigation at 7:41 p.m.

Motion: Pete Lena
Second: Chris Mundy
Ayes: Chris Mundy, Joseph Mezzanotte, William McDaniel, Pete Lena
Nays: None
Result: passed

There was a motion made to exit the executive session at 8:27 p.m.

Motion: Chris Mundy
Second: William McDaniel
Ayes: Chris Mundy, Joseph Mezzanotte, William McDaniel, Pete Lena
Nays: None
Result: passed

Adjournment:

There was a motion made to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m.

Motion: Chris Mundy
Second: William McDaniel
Ayes: Chris Mundy, Joseph Mezzanotte, William McDaniel, Pete Lena
Nays: None
Result: adjourn

Oliver McClellan
Mayor

Date

Shelia Cooper
City Clerk

