CITY OF EUHARLEE
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
OCTOBER 20, 2026 – 6:00 PM

Mayor Craig Guyton called the meeting to order with the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present were Mayor Craig Guyton; Council Members Greg Free and Jayson Frederick; City Manager James Stephens and Community and Economic Development Director Katie Gobbi. Council Member Tim Abbott was not present.

Public Hearings

Mayor Craig Guyton opened the public hearing for Text Amendment Application TAZ 2026.01, Ordinance 2026.08, an ordinance to amend the zoning ordinance regarding signs and temporary banners. There were no changes and no members of the public had signed up to speak on this item. Mayor Guyton closed the public hearing.

Mayor Guyton opened the public hearing for Text Amendment Application TAZ 2026.02, Ordinance 2026.10, an ordinance to amend the zoning ordinance to add Article IX governing data centers.

City Manager James Stephens presented five additions made to the draft ordinance in response to public comments and council deliberation from the initial public hearing. The five additions are as follows:
1. Decommissioning Section: Requires an approved decommissioning plan prior to issuance of a land disturbance permit, to be developed by a certified entity, providing financial protection for the city if a facility ceases operations.
2. Public Water Supply Requirement: Requires use of public water supply rather than wells and includes language specifying that infrastructure costs will be covered by the applicant rather than the city or its citizens.
3. Emergency Response Plan: Requires an emergency response plan developed in coordination with the fire marshal and the end tenant, including a mandatory annual drill.
4. Environmental Impact Assessment: Adds a requirement for an environmental impact assessment.
5. End User Verification: Adds a provision to verify that an actual end user exists, preventing purely speculative applications from being considered.

The following members of the public spoke during the public hearing:

Amanda Abbasi thanked the council for moving the second reading to November 3rd to allow additional public review and asked about town hall access, expert independence, ordinance availability, and owner responsibilities. Mayor Guyton confirmed that the town hall would be recorded and open to public questions, with a possible live stream pending council concurrence. He stated that, to his knowledge, the participating experts were independent of the data center industry and that the meeting would use a question-and-answer format rather than a formal presentation. Officials confirmed that the updated ordinance would be available online and that owner responsibility for infrastructure and project reviews and decommissioning costs would be stated in writing. City Manager Stephens noted that the current draft did not require the owner and operator to be named.

Ron Hartman thanked the council for the town hall meeting and additions to the proposed data center ordinance. He requested that the draft ordinance be pinned to the top of the city's Facebook page for continued public access and asked about the qualifications and independence of town hall experts. Mayor Guyton stated that he was seeking subject matter experts, including a potential Georgia Power representative, rather than data center industry representatives, to maintain a balanced and fair process. Mr. Hartman suggested a larger venue if attendance exceeded the room that seats approximately 40 to 50 people

and asked about speaking-time limits. Mayor Guyton stated that tables could be removed to accommodate additional chairs and that a larger venue could be considered if significant attendance was anticipated. He described the meeting as informal but said he would intervene if any individual was monopolizing time. Mr. Hartman also asked who would pay infrastructure costs for data centers below the 100-megawatt threshold referenced in Georgia Power's infrastructure-cost provision. City Manager Stephens acknowledged the concern, agreed that the threshold triggered the heavy load application process, and agreed to seek clarification on infrastructure-cost responsibility for smaller projects.

Mayor Guyton closed the public hearing for Ordinance 2026.10.

Mayor Guyton announced a town hall meeting on the data center ordinance is scheduled for October 27, 2026 at 7:00 pm and a second public hearing and opportunity for council action on Ordinance 2026.10 is scheduled for November 3, 2026.

Mayor Guyton opened the public hearing for Text Amendment Application TAZ 2026.03 - Ordinance 2026.11 - Amend Zoning Ordinance to Amend Article VI to Regulate Gas Stations

Community and Economic Development Director Katie Gobbi provided background on the application, noting it has been reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission at their most recent meeting, where a public hearing was held. The proposed text amendment would add a special condition under Section 6.36 of the zoning ordinance prohibiting a gas station, convenience store with fuel sales, or retail fuel facility from being located within one mile, measured by roadway distance, from an existing gas station. The Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval.

The following members of the public addressed the council:

Jasim "Ali" Malik, 851 Euharlee Road, owner of JoJo's and the applicant, supported the proposed amendment. He stated that nearby gas stations would divide the existing customer base and could harm businesses operating on tight fuel margins. He urged the council to favor diverse development, including retail stores, service businesses, restaurants, and family-friendly amenities, to create jobs, increase foot traffic, and keep revenue circulating locally rather than duplicate existing services.

Rana Iftikhar Ahmed, 937 Euharlee Road, opposed the amendment. He described plans to redevelop a mobile home park as town homes with commercial frontage, anticipating approximately 200 families and 300 to 400 vehicles. He expressed concern that restricting competing gas stations could create a monopoly, lead to higher prices, and discourage investment. He asked the council to allow market competition and requested additional time to prepare and return with legal counsel, noting that he had learned of the matter the previous day.

Mayor Guyton closed the public hearing for Ordinance 2026.11 The second public hearing and second reading of Ordinance 2026.11 is scheduled for November 3, 2026.

UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS

2nd Reading Text Amendment Application TAZ 2026.01 - Ordinance 2026.08 - Amend Zoning Ordinance - Sign Temporary Banners – Katie Gobbi

Community and Economic Development Director Katie Gobbi confirmed there were no changes to the ordinance since the prior public hearing. She confirmed that the Planning and Zoning Commission had recommended approval unanimously.

Council Member Tim Abbott asked whether the ordinance includes a notification process for improperly placed signs prior to removal. Mrs. Gobbi confirmed that the ordinance requires temporary signs to display

the name and phone number of the owner so they can be contacted. She noted that in practice, the code enforcement officer typically retains removed signs until the owner comes to retrieve them.

1st Reading Text Amendment Application TAZ 2026.03 - Ordinance 2026.11 - Amend Zoning Ordinance to Amend Article VI to Regulate Gas Stations – Katie Gobbi

Community and Economic Development Director Katie Gobbi confirmed that this was the first reading of the ordinance, and the Planning and Zoning Commission had recommended approval unanimously. She noted that the commission added a condition to measure the one-mile separation by roadway distance rather than linear distance. Council Member Tim Abbott confirmed that the ordinance applies only within city limits. Council Member Abbott reiterated their support for the ordinance as discussed during the public hearing. He cited Euharlee's size of 5.7 square miles and favored more diverse commercial development over additional gas stations. Council Member Jayson Frederick supported the one-mile separation requirement, stating his concern that nearby competing businesses would divide customers and financially harm existing businesses. He also acknowledged JoJo's owners' long-standing commitment to the community. Council Member Greg Free stated he agrees with the economic growth, but the city does not need another gas station.

A second reading and second public hearing are scheduled for November 3, 2026.

Land Development and Zoning Fee Schedule – Katie Gobbi

Community and Economic Development Director Katie Gobbi presented a proposed updated fee schedule for land development and zoning applications, noting that the Planning and Zoning Commission had voted to recommend approval. She explained that the city uses a third-party engineer to review site plans, land disturbance and construction plans, and plats, and that current fees are not sufficient to cover those costs. The proposed changes would apply to new applications only, not applications currently in process.

Key proposed fee changes include:

- Initial review fee: increased from $500 to $750
- Preliminary plat: increased from $250 to $500
- Final plat: increased from $250 to $500
- Resubmittals: increased from $50 to $500, with an administrative waiver provision for minor corrections that do not require a full engineering review
- Advertising/public notification: increased from $200 to $400, actual costs of legal notices

Mayor Guyton noted the fees are not intended to generate profit. Ms. Gobbi noted the fees are more so to recover actual costs, particularly for resubmittals, which require the third-party engineer to conduct a full review. also noted that the city intends to review fees on a regular basis going forward following codification.

Council Member Jayson Frederick expressed a desire to review past proposed versus actual costs to better evaluate whether the increases are sufficient.

Council Member Tim Abbott noted difficulty in benchmarking without prior experience in the field but expressed trust in staff's judgment and emphasized the importance of covering costs.

Mayor Craig Guyton noted that the fee structure provides consistency and allows fees to be collected at the time of application, which is administratively simpler than billing after the fact.

Mrs. Gobbi confirmed that having a published flat fee schedule is more efficient for staff than passing through variable engineering bills. She also confirmed that the Planning and Zoning Commission approved the fee schedule unanimously.

Osborne Park Negotiations – James Stephens

City Manager James Stephens reported on the status of ongoing contract negotiations with Hasbun, the responsive low bidder for the Osborne Park project, facilitated by CTI Engineers. He noted that CTI has experienced staff changes and that the most recent staff member handling negotiations had a family emergency, resulting in a third CTI representative conducting negotiations. He reported that the negotiated price has been brought below the budgeted figure.

However, the Grant Administrator, Brielle Shinall expressed concern that some scope reductions may have impacted on pay items covered under the grant. In particular, the removal of the fishing pier from the scope

was identified as a concern, as it is one of the grants pay components. CTI and staff have requested additional time to verify that the negotiated scope reductions will not affect the city's ability to be reimbursed under the grant from the Department of Natural Resources.
Council discussion included a question about whether the grant application could be amended to allow for scope changes. City Manager Stephens noted that an amendment may be possible, the time involved would not be ideal. He confirmed that the fishing pier would need to be reincorporated into the scope to protect grant reimbursement eligibility. City Manager Stephens confirmed that Hasbun anticipates beginning work in January and completing the project by June, which is four months before the grant expiration date.
Mr. Stephens noted a final recommendation on the Osborne Park contract that is expected at the November 20, 2026 council meeting.

Public Comments
Ron Hartman, asked about the status and public availability of the city's facility master plan, whether projects had been identified for the approximately $2.8 million in SPLOST and LOST revenues he anticipated in 2027, and opportunities for public input on the master plan.
City Manager Stephens explained that the facility master plan had not yet been initiated. He stated that the request for qualifications required careful preparation to address existing facilities and potential economic development, including the granary and surrounding property. He confirmed that the planning process would include public input and town hall meetings, as occurred before the first phase of Osborne Park.
Mr. Stephens also explained that SPLOST expenditures must comply with the voter-approved referendum and that LOST revenues provide approximately 60 percent of the general fund budget for police protection, parks and recreation, and general operations.

Amanda Abbasi, a property developer on her third resubmittal, expressed concern that the proposed $500 resubmittal fee would burden smaller developers who already pay for their own engineers. She stated that the proposed fees would have resulted in $1,500 in resubmittal charges in addition to her initial $500 application fee.
Community and Economic Development Director Katie Gobbi explained that the fees were intended to balance cost recovery with the needs of smaller developers. She noted that minor corrections not requiring a full engineering review could qualify for an administrative waiver and that the fees encouraged compliance at initial submission.
In response to Mayor Guyton's question about a transitional period, Mrs. Gobbi confirmed that existing applications would remain under the current fee schedule. Ms. Abbasi clarified that her concern related to future projects rather than her current application.

Adjournment
With no further discussion the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:53 pm.

CITY OF EUHARLEE
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 20, 2026 – 7:00 PM

Mayor Craig Guyton called the City Council Meeting to order at 7:08 pm.

FY 2025 Audit Presentation - Williamson and Company CPAs - Christian Hatch, CPA
Christian Hatch, CPA, of Williamson and Company CPAs, presented the results of the audit of the City of Euharlee's financial statements for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2025. The audit was conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States and the standards applicable to financial audits of local governments. The council was provided with a copy of the full audit report. The city's FY 2025 audit reported an unmodified (clean) opinion, no material internal control weaknesses or compliance violations, and no financial statement findings. Mr. Hatch reviewed financial highlights to include, increased revenues and net position, planned spending of ARP (fully expended in 2025) and SPLOST funds, general fund budget variances, capital improvements, and equipment financing scheduled

for payoff by 2028. He noted his presentation was a snapshot of the audit report and will be available for questions at any time. Mayor Guyton thanked Mr. Hatch and Williamson and Company CPAs for their work, and extended thanks to city staff for their efforts.

Public Comments – Agenda Items Only

No members of the public signed up to speak on the agenda items.

Approval of Minutes

Council Member Greg Free motioned to approve minutes for the work session and the city council meeting from October 6, 2026, as written. Council Member Jayson Frederick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS

2nd Reading - Text Amendment Application TAZ 2026.01 - Ordinance 2026.08 - Amend Zoning Ordinance Sign Temporary Banners – Katie Gobbi

Community and Economic Development Director Katie Gobbi confirmed no changes had been made to the ordinance and requested council approval. She noted the ordinance had received unanimous approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission. Council Member Greg Free motioned to approve Ordinance 2026.08 - Amend the Zoning Ordinance for Signs and Temporary Banners. Council Member Tim Abbott seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approve Land Development and Zoning Fee Schedule

Community and Economic Development Director Katie Gobbi requested council approval of the updated land development and zoning fee schedule as discussed during the work session. She noted the intent for the new fees to take effect November 1, 2026, with all existing applications in process to remain on the current fee schedule. Council Member Greg Free asked staff in they were comfortable with the fees and staff said yes. Mayor Craig Guyton motioned to approve Land Development and Zoning Fee Schedule. Council Member Tim Abbott seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Council Member Greg Free made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Jayson Frederick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

With no further discussion the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:20 pm.