

*"Preserving Our Heritage,  
Shaping Our Future"*

Historic Home of Gravel Hill  
Est. 1815

*Timothy Byler*, MAYOR



*City Hall*

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Flemington, GA 31313

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**CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**JANUARY 13TH, 2026 AT 4:30 P.M.**  
**FLEMINGTON CITY HALL - 156 OLD SUNBURY RD**

Present at City Hall: Mayor Timothy Byler  
Mayor Pro Tempore ('MPT') Rene' Harwell  
Councilman Larry Logan  
Councilman Hasit Patel  
Councilwoman Leigh Smiley  
Councilman Paul Martin  
Councilman Manish Patel  
Shameka Hawkes, City Clerk  
Craig Stafford, City Attorney  
LT Anthony Gallob, Liberty County Sheriff's Office ("LCSO")

Present via Phone: None

Absent:

1. The regularly scheduled meeting/swearing in ceremony of the Council of the City of Flemington was called to order by Mayor Pro Tempore Rene' Harwell on Tuesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 4:31 p.m. on the front lawn at Flemington City Hall. A quorum necessary to conduct business was visibly present.
2. The invocation was given by Mayor-Elect Byler and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.
3. Swearing-In Ceremony for Mayor & Newly Elected Council & Mayor Pro Tem held by Judge Nancy Aspinwall on the lawn of City Hall- *Councilwoman Smiley made a motion to Approve and Councilman Logan seconded the motion. All approved. The motion passed.*
4. *Councilwoman Smiley made a motion to approve the December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes as written and Councilman Logan seconded the motion. All approved. The motion passed.*
5. Lt. Gallob reported that overall, there was a decrease across the board in assessments and calls for service. A total of 84 calls were dispatched during the reporting period. The only minor increase observed was in traffic accidents. Lt. Gallob further stated that officers worked diligently to remain visible within business areas and neighborhoods during the Christmas break, which is reflected in the Crime Prevention activity. Traffic enforcement did show a decline; however, the data regarding calls per hour and calls by days of duty remains consistent with previous periods. Mayor Byler inquired about findings related to speeding concerns. Lt. Gallob responded that the department is currently reviewing the number of stop signs needed as an initial step, as previously discussed by Council. The department is also looking into the installation of rolling speed bumps, which will be ordered and erected accordingly. Lt. Gallob added that the Fire Department has already been consulted and is aware of the plans and is coordinating with the Police Department on this matter.

6. Financial Reports - Kim McGlothlin stated that she was unable to attend the previous meeting in which the new financial reports, with updated formatting, were presented. She explained that the City has now implemented the Georgia State-mandated Chart of Accounts, which allows financial data to be easily identifiable and broken out clearly. Kim reported that approximately 55% of revenues remain to be collected, meaning the City has collected about 45% of its total budgeted revenues to date. She noted that the adopted budget from the summer is currently a combination of several different funds, including the General Fund, Hotel-Motel revenues, and other funds that should ultimately be separated and reported individually by fund. Kim further stated that the City is currently running ahead of schedule in terms of revenue collection. The Council did not have any questions regarding the financial reports.

**7. Rezoning Petition 2025-51-F – Presentation by LCPC**

Jeff Ricketson, representing the Liberty Consolidated Planning Commission (LCPC), presented Rezoning Petition 2025-51-F, submitted by Aaron K. Duncan on behalf of the Estate of Otto Dykes, to rezone 2.57 acres from R-20 Residential to C-3 Highway Commercial in order to market the property. The property is located at 1780 E. Oglethorpe Highway, LCTM Parcel 069B006, between Tommy Carter Funeral Home and La Quinta Inn. LCPC confirmed the request was properly advertised and that the rezoning is consistent with Liberty County Comprehensive Plan, with no adverse impacts identified. Staff and LCPC recommended approval with standard and special conditions. The public hearing opened at 5:12 PM and closed with no public comment. Council discussed concerns regarding zoning intensity and future land use, noting that C-3 allows broader uses than C-2. The public hearing was reopened at 5:24 PM for additional discussion and closed again at 5:25 PM. *Councilman Patel made a motion to approve the rezoning as C-2 with special conditions requiring compliance with the City's overlay and community appearance standards. Mayor Pro Tem Harwell seconded the motion. All approved. The motion passed.* Council members completed and signed financial disclosure statements certifying that they have no financial interest in the property affected by the rezoning, in compliance with state law.

**Hampton Inn/VIP Liberty, LLC-Sign Permit -Presentation by LCPC**

Jeff Ricketson, representing the Liberty Consolidated Planning Commission (LCPC), presented a Sign Permit application for Hampton Inn / VIP Liberty, LLC, located at 1148 E. Oglethorpe Highway, LCTM Parcel 069C035, owned by Dennis Patel and zoned C (Highway Commercial District). The request included a logo change over the main entrance, refacing the main monument sign, and installation of "WELCOME" lettering on the portico. The proposed exit sign change was noted as not allowed. The sign contractor is AAA Sign Co., Inc., Augusta, GA. *Mayor Pro Tem Harwell made a motion to approve the sign permit as presented. Councilwoman Smiley seconded the motion. All approved. The motion passed.*

**8. Liberty CVB Bi-Annual Review-Desiree Riley**

Desiree provided Council with an overview of how Flemington and Liberty County have been promoted over the past six months, highlighting new partnerships and ongoing initiatives that continue to drive visitation, awareness, and economic impact. She discussed the bi-monthly Spouse Tours, which introduce visiting spouses and guests to local attractions, dining, shopping, and the history of Liberty County. These tours also help strengthen relationships with local businesses and increase community engagement while showcasing Flemington and the surrounding areas. Desiree further noted that outreach efforts include community events, regional promotions, and partnerships across all cities within the county, aimed at increasing visibility and reinforcing brand recognition. A major focus has been promoting the "places and tastes" of Liberty County, using local food culture and unique venues to position the area as a destination rather than a stop. She shared that the Small World Festival was recognized by the Southeast Tourism Society as an Event of Distinction, and emphasized that the CVB remains focused on strategic promotion and community partnerships. Councilman Patel asked about access to financial figures and how hotel-motel tax funds are being used, and inquired about hotel owner representation on the CVB board. Desiree stated she would relay these questions to Leah Poole, who will follow up with Council.

## 9. Transient/Peddlers Business License

Clinton Betty, known as “Jellyman,” appeared before Council to discuss his Transient/Peddler’s License. He stated that he sells coconuts and sugar cane, has a large customer base, and typically operates three days per week from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Following discussion, Council agreed to allow Mr. Betty to continue operating under the previously grandfathered arrangement established by the former Mayor, at a rate of \$200 per month, until the ordinance is formally updated.

## Engineering Report – Randy Dykes

Randy stated that he met with the president of Platinum Paving, who reviewed the project details with field staff and acknowledged that the City’s concerns were valid. He apologized to Council and expressed a desire to move forward. Randy reported that a change order has been prepared and provided to the City Attorney and Mayor Pro Tem, which will reduce the contract amount by \$172,700. He stated that the Mayor’s signature is required on the change order, after which the final pay request can be processed and the project closed out. Randy Dykes presented a contract change order for the Paving Project. *Mayor Pro Tem Harwell made a motion to approve the change order. Councilman Logan seconded the motion. The motion passed.*

Randy reported that the LMIG Grant project is approximately 80% complete. He stated that signatures are needed to submit the required documentation, and the information will be provided to the City Clerk for completion of signatures.

## *Business in Progress-update*

### **Audit Update-Mayor Pro Tem Harwell**

MPT have been in contact via email with Lisa Lee of Golden & Associates. One report has been received, and Ms. Lee has advised that she is working on the remaining reports needed for the City’s new auditors. The auditors are scheduled to be on site on January 20, and we are attempting to schedule a meeting with Ms. Lee to discuss outstanding items. An audit extension has been filed.

### **Millage Collection Contract-Mayor Pro Tem Harwell**

Mayor Pro Tem Harwell reported that the initial millage contract previously approved was incorrect, as it did not include the County fee. She stated that the proposed County fee, as written, was not acceptable for the City of Flemington. Mayor Pro Tem Harwell advised that she has been in contact with Jamie Sharp and Joseph Mosley, and that Kim will also provide input as the parties work together to revise the contract. She noted that the missing component is a cap on the County fee, and that she is hopeful to present an updated contract at the February Council meeting.

## *Work in Progress-update*

- 564 Tremain Drive: **No update**
- Traffic Calming in Neighborhoods (Tranquil South and Others): **Will obtain the cost for the signs and proceed with having them erected.**
- Community Homeless Coalition/Homeless Ordinance-Councilman Logan & Councilman Hasit Patel: **Councilman Logan reported that he met with the Homeless Prevention representative in Hinesville and stated that their program is robust. He noted that several related items should be discussed further during the upcoming workshop, including a potential ordinance regarding urban campers.**
- Branding and Marketing-Councilman Hasit Patel, Gail Evans and Councilwoman Smiley: **No update (Mayor Byler ask to be included in the meetings)**
- Annexation: **No update** “Deferred to Workshop for further discussion.”
- Flemington Downtown Development Authority-MPT Harwell: **MPT to contact existing committee members.** “Deferred to Workshop for further discussion.”

- Highway 84 Corridor-Zoning, Architectural Standards, and Land Use: **No Update** “Deferred to Workshop for further discussion.”
- City-wide Design & Architectural Standards- **No Update** “Deferred to Workshop for further discussion.”
- Social Media Policy-**MPT Harwell to research. (Policy needs to be put together)**
- Ordinance Enhancements for Nuisance Abatement- **No Update** “Deferred to Workshop for further discussion.”
- Parking Ordinance-HOA Rule vs City Ordinance-**Council discussed drafting in the ordinance requiring developers to provide larger driveways, required setbacks, and designated overflow parking.** “Deferred to Workshop for further discussion.”
- Mobile Home Ordinance- **Ordinance is needed** “Deferred to Workshop for further discussion.”
- Welcome Sign Project- Councilman Hasit Patel, Gail Evans and Councilwoman Smiley: **Chairman Lovett reported that he met with GDOT regarding the sign. Council was advised that a Council representative needs to follow up with GDOT for approval. Mayor Byler will contact GDOT to proceed.**
- Establish Historic District- **Historic Overlay**
- Grant Writer Search & Design Planning for New City Park: **Marcus Sacks office will assist with Grant opportunities.**
- Patriots Trail Paving: **Previously Discussed**
- Community Engagement-FDDA: **No Update**
- Measure Progress-Ongoing & Long-Term
  - Measure Progress and Establish Key Performance Indicators
  - Implement Phased Time Line-**Create a template/tracker that will measure progress with specific dates short- and long-term goals.**

Council discussed and tentatively scheduled a Workshop for Monday, January 26, 2026 at 10:00 AM. Council also scheduled a Budget Workshop for April 8, 2026. The Solid Waste letter was discussed, noting that page 2 states Solid Waste will collect January 2026 fees at the end of the year. Flemington Outdoor Maintenance reported a hole collecting water that will be filled with one load of dirt. Lt. Gallob will place a cone in the yard until the repair is completed.

*Councilwoman Smiley made a motion to adjourn and MPT Harwell seconded the motion. All approved. The motion passed.*

10. *The meeting adjourned*