



City of West Point
Council Work Session Minutes
Tuesday, July 28, 2026 @ 5:30 p.m.
West Point Council Chambers

The Work Session of the Mayor and Council was held in the Council room of West Point City Hall on July 28, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. with Mayor Steve Tramell opening the session.

Members Present:

Mayor Pro-Tempore Joel B. Finlay
Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III
Councilmember Gloria R. Marshall
Councilmember Sandra Thornton
Councilmember Kevin M. Patrick

Members Absent:

Councilmember Gerald W. Ledbetter

Review Agenda

Mayor Steve Tramell called the meeting to order. He reviewed the agenda and asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Councilmember Gloria R. Marshall made said motion. Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III seconded the motion; **passed unanimously**.

Public Comment on Any Items

No Public Comment

New Business

- **Recognize Historic Preservation Commission**

Mayor Steve Tramell recognized three retiring members of the Historic Preservation Commission for their years of dedicated service to the community. Debra Robertson and Jane Fuller each completed six terms, serving a total of 18 years on commission. Joe Thompson completed four terms. Contributing 12 years of dedicated service. Mayor Tramell expressed his appreciation for their commitment to preserving the city's historic character and thanked each commissioner for their lasting contributions to the community.

- **Greg Panzer, Harris County Economic Development**

Greg Panzer, representing Harris County Economic Development, provided an update on development opportunities within the Northwest Harris Business Park. The park, served by the City of West Point's full utility infrastructure, is strategically located on Progress Boulevard approximately two miles from Interstate 85, offering convenient access to Atlanta, Columbus, Montgomery, and the broader Southeast logistics corridor. The business park is home to several major automotive suppliers that support the nearby Kia manufacturing facility, including Adient, Daehan Solutions Georgia, Daesol Materials Georgia, Kopla America, and Glovis Georgia. As Harris County's premier industrial park, the Northwest Harris Business Park offers hundreds of acres of development-ready property, comprehensive utility services, and excellent interstate access. Its established automotive manufacturing base and strategic location make it an ideal site for manufacturing, distribution, warehousing, logistics, and other industrial operations.

- **Georgia Council for the Arts Grant**

Meghan Richardson, Economic Development Director, reported that the city was selected as one of five Georgia communities to participate in the Georgia Council for the Arts' Red Clay Creative Cohort. Through the program, the city received a \$20,000 grant, along with training and technical assistance. Ms. Richardson explained that the purpose of the program is to use creative placemaking to strengthen public spaces, foster community connections, and enhance quality of life. She also announced two free Creative Placemaking Workshops that will introduce the program and provide information about available funding opportunities. The workshops are scheduled for Saturday, August 1, at 9:30 a.m. at the West Point Depot and Tuesday, August 11, at 5:30 p.m. at the Virginia Cook Activity Center.

- **SBA Structures LLC Ground Lease Agreement**

Ed Moon, City Manager, presented a Ground Lease Agreement with SBA Structures, LLC for the lease of City-owned property to support the operation of a wireless communications facility (cell tower). Under the agreement, SBA Structures will lease the designated site and will be responsible for operating and maintaining the telecommunications infrastructure at its sole expense. The lease allows the City to retain ownership of the property while generating a long-term source of recurring, non-tax revenue. The agreement includes provisions governing the lease term, renewal options, rental payments, maintenance responsibilities, access rights, assignment, default, and termination. The proposed lease provides an initial annual rental payment of \$40,000, plus a one-time payment of \$20,000, for a total first-year payment of \$60,000. In addition, the city will receive 25% of qualifying revenue sharing generated under the agreement. Annual base rent will increase by 3% each year, rising to approximately \$70,140 by Year 20 if all renewal options are exercised, while continuing to include the 25% revenue-sharing provision. The agreement is expected to improve wireless communication services in the area while providing the city with a stable and increasing long-term revenue stream.

- **Historic Preservation Commission Appointments**

Kristin Lester, City Clerk, announced that there are two vacancies on the Historic Preservation Commission. One position carries a term that will expire in October 2026, and the other carries a term that will expire in October 2027. Applications have been received from Patsy Cloninger and Kirsten Dunn, and their applications have been included in the council packets for review and consideration at the next business meeting.

- **West Point Development Authority Property Replat**

Meghan Richardson, Economic Development Director, presented the proposed replat for the Hotel Anchor & Mixed-Use Development for the Council's consideration. She reported that the West Point Development Authority approved the replat earlier in the week as part of the development documents. Ms. Richardson explained that the replat revises the subdivision layout to better accommodate the mixed-use development. The primary revision adjusts the property lines to provide additional parking for the restaurant parcel, resulting in 15 additional parking spaces. She noted that the revised layout improves the functionality and marketability of commercial development. Staff recommended that the Council support the proposed replat and consider formal approval following the Planning Commission's recommendation at the August 10 Business Meeting.

- **2026 Proposed Millage Rate**

Ed Moon, City Manager, presented information regarding the 2026 property tax digest and millage rate. He reported that the city received the preliminary tax digest from Troup County in May and from Harris County in July. He explained that Georgia law does not require every city to receive a certified digest by a specific

calendar date, as delays may occur due to property owner appeals, taxpayer litigation, late state approval, corrections to the digest, or changes in exemptions. Mr. Moon reported that the City's net total tax digest for property located in Troup and Harris Counties increased from \$535,388,000 in 2025 to \$650,407,071 in 2026. He also noted that the total value added through reassessments increased from \$15,784,862 in 2025 to \$24,498,421 in 2026. Mr. Moon stated that the City's 2025 millage rate was 7.852 mills and that the calculated rollback millage rate for 2026 is 7.556 mills. He explained that property tax revenues are projected to increase regardless of whether the rollback rate is adopted due to the growth in the tax digest. Mr. Moon further explained that adoption of the rollback millage rate of 7.556 mills would not require public hearings but would result in less property tax revenue for the City. He noted that adoption to keep the millage rate the same would require the City to advertise its intent to increase property taxes and conduct three public hearings in accordance with Georgia law, while generating additional property tax revenue. The council would like to tentatively increase the millage rate by staying the same as prior year at 7.852 mills. Staff will prepare to advertise a tax increase and hold three public hearings.

Other

Councilmember Sandra Thornton presented Mayor Steve Tramell with the Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Institute's Certificate of Excellence. It was awarded during the Georgia Municipal Association's Annual Convention on June 28. The Certificate of Excellence requires 120 hours of training, including at least 54 hours from the required list and the Newly Elected Officials Institute and the Robert E. Knox, Jr. Municipal Training Leadership Institute. The training program consists of more than 80 courses.

Ed Moon, City Manager, congratulated city employee LaSheika Ward for successfully completing the Certified Human Resource Manager (CHRM) program. This prestigious program is designed and sponsored by the Georgia Local Government Personnel Association (GLGPA) and administered by the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government. Through her dedication to professional growth and excellence in human resources, LaSheika has demonstrated a strong commitment to serving her organization and community.

Councilmember Gloria Marshall invited everyone to attend the Back-to-School Giveaway by Jay Harper, on Saturday, August 1, 12:00 PM. Event will be held at Jack's Family Restaurant, Valley, Alabama.

The next Business Meeting, August 10, 2026 5:30p.m.

- Georgia Council for the Arts Grant
- SBA Structures LLC Ground Lease Agreement
- Historic Preservation Commission Appointments
- West Point Development Authority Property Replat
- Public Hearing at 6:00 PM – 2026 Millage Rate (Property Tax Increase)

ADJOURN

Mayor Tramell asked for a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III made said motion and seconded by Councilmember Sandra Thornton; **passed unanimously.**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.