

City of Thomasville Council Meeting, January 27, 2025

The Council of the City of Thomasville met in regular session on the above date. Mayor Todd Mobley presided, and the following Councilmembers were present: Mayor Pro Tem Terry Scott and Councilmembers Scott Chastain, Royal Baker and Lucinda Brown. Also present were the City Manager, Chris White; Assistant City Manager, Sheryl Sealy; City Attorney, Timothy C. Sanders; Chief Financial Officer, Ashley Cason; other city staff; citizens and members of the media. The meeting was held in Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 144 East Jackson Street, Thomasville, Georgia. Simultaneous access to the meeting was provided to those members of the media and citizens unable to attend the meeting via the City of Thomasville's online live stream feed located at www.thomasville.org.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Todd Mobley called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

INVOCATION

Mayor Pro Tem Terry Scott gave the Invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Pro Tem Terry Scott led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Pro Tem Scott moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of January 13, 2025, as presented. Councilmember Chastain seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded: AYES: Mobley, Scott, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

PROCLAMATION

Councilmember Scott Chastain recognized South Georgia Ballet as the recipient of the prestigious Governor's Award for their significant contributions to the Arts and Humanities in Georgia. Councilmember Scott presented a proclamation to the South Georgia Ballet for their contribution of outstanding ballet training and providing accessible arts education to Southwest Georgia.

RECOGNITION

Deputy Chief, Fire Marshal Jonathon Conner reported that on 4, 2025, Thomasville Fire Rescue responded to the 100 block of Remington Avenue for a working fire. Upon arrival, fire personnel observed flames burning through the roof. Unknown to Thomasville Fire Rescue personnel, three extraordinary people made a selfless decision to enter the building to alert those inside. To thank those three individuals, Thomasville Fire Rescue presented them with the *Citizens Life Saving Award*; the highest award Thomasville Fire Rescue can give a citizen. Deputy Chief, Fire Marshal, Conner presented the awards to:

Mr. Question Rauls, Mr. Chris Taylor and Mr. David Wilson

The commemorative award was inscribed with the following:

*"In recognition of your selfless and courageous act of rendering aid in a sudden and unexpected situation, which resulted in the preservation of life on January 4th, 2025.
We commend your valiant efforts and service before yourself."*

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Mayor Mobley acknowledged the following citizens listed on the Citizens to be Heard Sign-In Form:

1. Nate Tyler, resident of Cloverdale Drive, addressed the Council on behalf of the NAACP regarding the Drug Squad. He noted that with a new Police Chief and a newly elected Sherriff, it would be good time to provide the community with an update regarding funding of the Squad and also of the Police/Sherriff Chase Policies. Mr. Tyler noted that this is a community concern. He also thanked the Council and Leadership for all the support to the community during the recent 6+ inches of snow provided by Winter Storm Enzo. City Manager White noted he would contact Mr. Tyler to discuss his concerns.
2. Candee Henderson, resident of Thomas County, requested that Council consider finding viable uses of energy that would not include the use of fossil fuels, such as solar energy. She noted it is her mission to achieve 100% renewably sourced energy for Thomasville and Thomas county by 2035. Ms. Henderson encouraged Thomasville Utilities to stop promoting the use of Natural Gas, stop charging residents a per month tariff for the use of solar panels, and for the Council to commit to changing the city's fleet of vehicle to hybrid or electric vehicles by 2035.

ADOPT AGENDA

Mayor Mobley reported two additional items were discussed at the Workshop immediately prior to this meeting on this date. Both items were discussed and requested to be added to the agenda.

Mayor Pro Tem Scott moved to add consideration of a Resolution to approve CDBG submittal on behalf of Halcyon Home for the construction of a new facility, as discussed. Councilmember Baker seconded the motion. There was no discussion, the motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded AYES: Mobley, Scott, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

Councilmember Chastain moved to add consideration of a motion to lower the Electric PCA from 4 mills and to adjust rates from 2024 to 2025 rates as discussed. Councilmember Baker seconded the motion. There was no discussion, the motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded AYES: Mobley, Scott, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

Councilmember Chastain moved to adopt the agenda as amended. Councilmember Baker seconded the motion. There was no discussion, the motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded AYES: Mobley, Scott, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business for consideration by Councilmembers at this meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolutions regarding Thomasville Municipal Airport Planning and Design Master Services Consulting (MSC) Agreements and to authorize the Mayor, or Mayor Pro Tem, to sign necessary and related documents.

Airport Manager, Robert Petty reported that every five years, the City is required by Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to request statements of qualification from qualified airport consulting engineers. GDOT also requires separate requests for qualifications, statement of qualifications, and master services consulting agreements for planning and design services. Proposers also must be appropriately pre-qualified to perform the services per request for qualification in GDOT Airport Area Classes such as Area Classes 1.08 Airport Master Planning, 2.09 Airport Design, and 8.02 Airport Construction Administration and Observation. The Request for Qualifications were posted on the Georgia Procurement Registry website and on the city's website on 10/28/2024. Statements of Qualification were received from two (2) firms on 12/03/2024. A Selection Committee consisting of the Executive Director of Engineering and Inspections, City Engineer, Airport Director, and two members of the Airport Advisory Council reviewed the proposals received and independently ranked the firms. The selection committee recommends entering into Master Service Consulting Agreements with Passero as being the most qualified. Proposals were received from the following two consulting firms – each for Planning and Design:

Passero Associates Engineering Architecture – St. Augustine, Florida
Goodwyn Mills Cawood – Savannah, GA

It was noted that separate action was required as they were two separate agreements. It was further noted that Passero Associates Engineering Architecture was instrumental in the success of many project completions at the Airport.

1. Councilmember Baker moved to adopt a resolution authorizing the City to enter into a Master Services Consulting agreement with Passero Associates Engineering Architecture for Airport Planning/Environmental Services and authorize the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tempore to sign all the required paperwork to execute the agreement, as presented. Councilmember Chastain seconded the motion. There was no discussion, the motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded AYES: Mobley, Scott, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

The adopted resolution follows.

CITY OF THOMASVILLE, GEORGIA RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Thomasville has it as their responsibility to operate and maintain a municipal airport, owned and operated by the City of Thomasville, that primarily serves the purpose of providing access to air travel for the community such as general aviation activities like business flights, flight training, personal flying, and emergency services, in order to promote and support local businesses, tourism, and emergency response operations;

WHEREAS, City of Thomasville, Georgia is required by the Georgia Department of Transportation to solicit requests for qualifications for airport planning services that are pre-qualified in applicable Georgia Department of Transportation Area Classes;

WHEREAS, the City of Thomasville's current Master Services Consulting Services agreement for design services with Passero Associates Engineering Architecture ends on February 5th, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the City Council for the City of Thomasville, Georgia desires to enter into a Master Services Consulting Agreement for planning services with Passero Associates Engineering Architecture as being most qualified to perform this work.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED as follows:

Section 1. Incorporation of Recitals. The Recitals set forth above are incorporated herein by this reference as if set forth fully in this Section 1.

Section 2. Approval and Authorization of Agreement. The City Council for the City of Thomasville, Georgia approves the award amount attached hereto and made a part hereof as Exhibit A ("Agreement") and authorizes the Mayor, or Mayor Pro Tempore in the Mayor's absence, to execute and deliver the Agreement to proceed contingent on formal allocation of federal funding.

Section 3. General Authority. From and after the approval of this Resolution, the Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, City Manager, officers, and employees of the City of Thomasville, Georgia are hereby authorized, empowered and directed to do all such acts and things and to execute all such documents as may be necessary to comply with the provisions of the Agreement as executed and are further authorized to take any and all further actions and execute and deliver any and all other documents and certificates, including but not limited to the Agreement, as may be necessary or desirable in connection with the execution and delivery of the Agreement and any related documents, all of the forgoing in consultation with the City Attorney.

Section 4. Actions Approved and Confirmed. All acts and doings of the City Council, Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, the City Manager, the officers, and employees of the City of Thomasville, Georgia that are in conformity with the purposes and intents of this Resolution and in the furtherance of the Agreement and the execution, delivery, and performance of the Agreement and related documents shall be, and the same hereby are, in all respects approved and confirmed.

Section 5. Severability of Invalid Provisions. If any one or more of the provisions herein contained shall be held contrary to any express provision of law or contrary to the policy of express law, though not expressly prohibited, or against public policy, or shall for any reason whatsoever be

held invalid, then such provisions shall be null and void and shall be deemed separable from the remaining provisions and shall in no way affect the validity of any of the other provisions hereof or of the Agreement ratified hereunder.

Section 6. Repealing Clause. All resolutions or parts thereof in conflict with the provisions herein contained are, to the extent of such conflict, hereby superseded and repealed.

Section 7. Effective Date. This resolution shall be effective immediately upon its adoption.

Adopted and approved this 27th day of January, 2025.

2. Mayor Pro Tem Scott moved to adopt a resolution authorizing the City to enter into a Master Services Consulting agreement with Passero Associates Engineering Architecture for Airport Architectural/Engineering and Construction/Engineering/Inspection Services and authorize the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tempore to sign all the required paperwork to execute the agreement. Councilmember Chastain seconded the motion. There was no discussion, the motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded AYES: Mobley, Scott, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

The adopted resolution follows.

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Section 7. Effective Date. This resolution shall be effective immediately upon its adoption.

Adopted and approved this 27th day of January, 2025.

Motion to approve renewal of City of Thomasville’s Guaranty on the Downtown Development Authority Loan with Thomasville National Bank and to authorize the Mayor, or Mayor Pro Tem, to sign necessary and related documents.

Chief Financial Officer, Ashley Cason reported that in December 2001, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) purchased 403 North Broad Street. At that time, the DDA obtained a loan from Thomasville National Bank, which was guaranteed by the City of Thomasville. Each year, the city renews that guaranty on the loan. In August 2005, the DDA entered into a 20-year lease agreement with the Georgia Department of Labor to lease 403 Broad Street for \$222,000 annually (\$18,500 monthly). This lease is for one-year terms, renewable up to 20 years. The Department of Labor has renewed the lease every year to date. The rental income from this lease is used to pay the loan and maintenance on the building. Currently, the loan balance is \$1,105,708.88. In 2024, the interest rate was 5.80%. For 2025, the interest rate will be 5.25%. The monthly payments will continue to be \$16,000. Again, these monthly payments are funded by the \$18,500 monthly rental payments that DDA receives from the Georgia Department of Labor to lease the building. The City Council only needs to approve a guaranty each year for this loan (like what has been done in the past).

Mayor Pro Tem Scott moved to approve the renewal of the City of Thomasville’s Guaranty on the DDA Loan with TNB and authorize the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem to sign all necessary and related documents. Councilmember Brown seconded the motion. There was no discussion, the motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded AYES: Mobley, Scott, Chastain, Baker and Brown.

Motion to approve active 2025 Pawn Broker License Renewals.

Customer Service Manager, Melissa Creel, reported that all 2025 Pawn Broker renewal licenses had been paid in full and required approval of the licenses by the City Council. She noted the 2025 renewals included Pawn Broker licenses for categories of General and Vehicle; General Only; and Vehicle Only.

Councilmember Chastain moved to approve the 2024 Pawn Broker Licenses as presented. Councilmember Baker seconded. There was no discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded: AYES: Mobley, Scott, Chastain, Brown and Baker.

The approved licensed establishments follow.

2025 PAWN BROKERS RENEWAL LIST AS OF 01/14/2025

Pawnbroker - GENERAL AND VEHICLE

License #163:	American Pawn Shop, 1306-A E. Jackson St., Thomasville, GA	\$ 150.00
License #163:	American Pawn Shop, 1306-A E. Jackson St., Thomasville, GA	\$2,500.00

Pawnbroker – GENERAL

License #164: Shepards bait & Tackle & Pawn, 1006 W. Jackson St., Thomasville, GA \$ 150.00

Pawnbroker – VEHICLE

License #166: Titlebucks of Tville, 1308 E. Jackson St., Thomasville, GA \$2,500.00

License #168: Titlemax of Thomasville, 15177 US Highway 19 S., Thomasville, GA \$2,500.00

License #170: First Choice Title, 914 E. Jackson St., Thomasville, GA \$2,500.00

ADD ON ITEMS:

Resolutions to approve the City of Thomasville’s submittal of FY2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) on behalf of Halcyon Home for construction of a new family violence shelter.

City Manager White presented the item on behalf of Grants Administrator, Pam Schalk. As was reported in Workshop, the Halcyon Home started operations on Oct. 6, 1994, after a local schoolteacher (Karyl Chastain Beal) was tasked with helping a friend flee an abusive situation. Because the friend's abuser knew all the friends and family, no one felt safe enough to take her in. Mrs. Beal learned that her own mother and many others had been victims of domestic violence. She was able to get her friend to safety, but not in Thomasville. Halcyon started out by offering domestic violence support groups in the community, which was heavily attended. Years later, they purchased a shelter where women could go for safety. The current location was built in 1902. Because of the current layout it does not meet the needs of many victims who need help but are unable to climb steep stairs. Those women are turned away. The current site is a 16-bed facility but can house up to 21 to include children. The women don't have any private space in the current facility. There are four adults in each room. In the family rooms, up to 10 people could be sharing only one bathroom. That is chaos, especially when the kids are in school. Staff work on the second floor, and there is barely enough room to move around. Taking crisis calls is a nightmare because of the overlapping conversations. Staff share one bathroom which is on the third floor. People in the community want to support the shelter by offering services, but there isn't enough space to allow them in. With the grant assistance, they hope to expand the number of bedrooms, bathrooms, and office space in a new facility. A private meditation room, training room for support groups, spare office for service providers to use when coming to assist the women, kids' playroom, teen room, file room, staff break room, and an adequate kitchen and family room are included in the proposed new facility. The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (SWGRC) will assist with the application and administration of the FY2025 CDBG application. The application request will be for \$1,000,000 toward the construction of a new battered women's shelter and related facilities. Halcyon Home will be responsible for all costs related to this project over the grant amount to include all administrative costs such as public notices and grant management assistance. Staff will assist with the application and the financial management related to the future award. The application will be submitted on Halcyon Home's behalf; however, the City is ultimately responsible for all conditions related to the grant application and grant award. A Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Thomasville and the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission and the Memorandum of Understanding between the City and Halcyon Home outlines each parties' responsibilities.

Mayor Pro Tem Scott moved to adopt a resolution authorizing the submittal of the FY2025 CDBG Grant to DCA to provide funding assistance for the construction of a new battered women's shelter; and authorizing the execution of both the referenced MOA and the MOU as discussed; and to authorize the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem to sign all necessary and related documents as presented. Councilmember Brown seconded the motion. Councilmembers acknowledged Halcyon Home's commitment and thanked Ms. Jennifer Green for her dedication to the Thomasville community. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded: AYES: Mobley, Scott, Chastain, Brown and Baker.

The adopted resolution follows.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, desires to assist with providing safe shelter for battered women in this region; and,

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, desires that an application be submitted to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for funding under the FY 2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Grant in the amount of up to one million (\$1,000,000) dollars; and,

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, desires to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission for the preparation of the application and the management of the future award; and,

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, desires to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Halcyon Home Board of Directors to outline each parties' responsibilities; and,

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, desires to authorize the Mayor, or Mayor Pro Tempore, to sign all necessary and related documents as shall be necessary in relation to the FY25 CDBG Grant.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, hereby authorizes the submittal of the FY 2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Grant in the amount of up to one million (\$1,000,000) dollars to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to provide funding assistance for construction of a new battered women's shelter; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, further authorizes the execution of both the referenced MOA and the MOU as to outline each parties' responsibilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, further authorizes the Mayor of the City of Thomasville or Mayor Pro Tempore, as the signatory on all necessary and related documents as shall be necessary in relation to the FY 2025 CDBG application.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Council of the City of Thomasville, Georgia, on this, the 27th day of January 2027.

Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) discussion with Electric Rate Restructure.

City Manager, Chris White reported that the City partnered with Electric Cities of Georgia to conduct cost of service study and an electric rate review in 2023 for the 2024 plan. The results of the study showed the rates heavily burdened medium, large and industrial customers, which deters the recruitment of new large and industrial users. The study also revealed that the small general non-demand and demand customers were significantly undercharged. Additionally, the current rates do not cover the costs.

City Manager White reviewed a PowerPoint presentation which included the listings and comparison of Electric Utility Rates FY 2024 and FY 2025, with insignificant rate changes. It was noted that the City's FY2025 Budget, adopted by the Council on December 16, 2024, was built based on the FY 2025 rates and with the lowered Power Cost Adjustment. City Manager White reported the rate restructuring and the lowered PCA, customers should see a small decrease. In conclusion, City Manager White noted the following:

- Residents would pay less with the electric rate increasing and having the PCA dropped from 10 mills to 4 mills (0.01 to 0.004).
- Residents make up 40% of the PCA rate.
- Residents pay \$1.939M of the \$4.960M.
- All users would pay less by dropping the PCA.
- The customer base would pay \$2.976M less with a 0.004 PCA than a 0.01.

Councilmember Baker moved to approve the electric rate restructuring and PCA adjustment as presented. Councilmember Chastain seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded: AYES: Mobley, Scott, Chastain, Brown and Baker.

REPORTS

Assistant City Manager reported the Black History Month Parade and Celebration would be held on Saturday, February 1, 2025. The parade has over 125 entries. A celebration is planned at The Ritz Amphitheater in downtown Thomasville. Councilmembers and the community were all encouraged to attend. was well attended and the community enjoyed the festivities. She further reported that this would be Public Information Officer, Tara Pearson’s last meeting with Council as she was leaving the City to explore other opportunities. Councilmembers and Leadership collectively wished Ms. Pearson the best in her endeavors.

Councilmembers collectively thanked the community for their support and encouraged citizens to continue to participate in community events. They encouraged citizens to research the effect of HB581’s adoption (State-wide Floating Homestead Exemption) on their community and surrounding areas. Councilmembers also commended city staff for their efforts during the recent Winter Storm Enzo; noting Thomasville was not accustomed to 6” inches of snow in such a short span of time.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business for consideration, the Thomasville City Council Meeting was adjourned at 6:25 PM.

CITY OF THOMASVILLE, GEORGIA

Todd Mobley

Mayor, Todd Mobley

Jelicia Brannen

ATTEST: City Clerk

