

# COCHRAN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

JULY 14, 2026

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## MINUTES

### CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

JULY 14, 2026

The Regular Meeting of the Cochran City Council was held on July 14th, 6:00 PM in the City Auditorium, 102 N Second Street, Cochran, Georgia with the following present:

Carla Coley, Mayor

Shane Savant, Pro Tempore Mayor

Trecia Gardner, Councilmember

Dianne Lester, Councilmember

Jim Elliott, City Attorney

Gary Ates, Councilmember

Lonnie Tedders, Councilmember

Angele Redding, Interim City Manager

Bonnie Raffield, Interim City Clerk

Staff present: Tiger Odom, Public Works Supervisor – Jeff Trawick, Police Chief – Brock Wilcher, Fire Chief - Danny Smith, Code Enforcement.

**CALL TO ORDER:** The Meeting was called to order by Mayor Carla Coley.

#### 1. Public Hearing- Sign Variance Request

Mayor Coley called the meeting to order and announced the public hearing for a variance request for a sign ordinance at 342 North Second Street and explained the process for the public hearing, allowing three minutes for each speaker to speak in favor or against the variance. Mayor Coley opened the floor for public comment at 6:02 p.m. No one appeared to speak.

No Motion, variance denied. Hearing closed at 6:03 p.m.

The Regular Meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m.

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Prayer was led by Rufus Veal followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: A quorum was established.

| Attendee's Name | Title                                       | Present | Absent |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------|---------|--------|
| Carla Coley     | Mayor                                       | √       |        |
| Shane Savant    | Mayor Pro Tempore, District Three, Post Two | √       |        |
| Trecia Gardner  | Councilwoman, District One, Post One        | √       |        |
| Gary Ates       | Councilman, District One, Post Two          | √       |        |
| Rufus Veal      | Councilman, District Two, Post One          | √       |        |
| Lonnie Tedders  | Councilman, District Two, Post Two          | √       |        |
| Dianne Lester   | Councilwoman, District Three, Post One      | √       |        |

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**APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – July 14, 2026: Mayor Coley requested an amendment to the agenda to move consideration of the **Variance Request for 342 North Second Street** to the beginning of the agenda. Six items total.

Councilmember Lester made a motion to amend the agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Tedders and carried unanimously. Councilmember Ates then made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Tedders and carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Councilmember Ates made a motion to approve the June 4, 2026, Work Session Minutes and the June 9, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Pro Tempore Savant and carried unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** – No comments.

### PRESENTATION

Presentation from James Jones with Falcon Design Consultants providing updates on current City projects, including:

- Completion of the Street Project pending closeout documentation.
- Willie Basby Park improvements and remaining sidewalk repairs, waiting on playground equipment and sidewalk repairs.
- Approval of landscaping for the Downtown Streetscape Project.
- Planning and civil engineering work for the future Fire Station.

### DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

The Interim City Clerk presented the monthly financial report and Interim City Manager advised Council that the City remains on target for Fiscal Year 2026. There will be some allocations needed for the FY 25-26 budget.

The Fire Department reported:

- Response to a residential structure fire on Palm Street.
- Addition of a new firefighter.
- Receipt of a \$10,000 donation from Citizens Bank for fire equipment.

The Police Department reported:

- Departmental activity.
- Walmart grant funding.
- Adoption fees, equipment purchases and the need for part-time help with Animal Control.

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- Cross country team coach contacted Chief Jeff Trawick about using same July 4<sup>th</sup> route for August 1, 2026, race.

### Public Works reported on:

- Ditch cleaning with Pulaski State Prison.
- Lift station daily check on maintenance.
- Water system repairs.
- Cemetery maintenance.
- Drainage concerns.
- General maintenance throughout the City.

### Code Enforcement reported on:

- Burke Circle
- Dollar General retention pond.

## OUTSIDE AGENCY REPORTS

### Outside agency representatives provided updates regarding:

- DDA- Thanked everyone for their support. Reminder of Bleckley's Bullseye winners will be announced on August 7, 2026. Reminder of Scavenger Hunt Saturday, August 18, 2026.
- CHAMBER OF COMMERCE- Georgia Grown businesses. Special Permitting of Jail Creek
- IDA- Grocery store recruitment.
- CHIP Grant Workshop participation.
- Community beautification efforts.

## AGENDA ITEMS

1. Consider Variance Request for 342 North Second Street  
No Motion, variance denied.

2. Council discussed text amendment to **Section 40-32(4)** of the City's Sign Ordinance.

The text amendment was as follows; Increased allowable permanent window signage from **10% to 25%** of the total window area. Added language defining temporary window signs.

Following discussion, Councilman Ates made a motion to adopt the text amendment sign ordinance. The motion was seconded by Councilman Tedders and carried unanimously.

### **3. Approval of Pool Fill Policy**

Council considered the proposed Pool Fill Policy previously discussed during the Work Session. With a 1x pool fill sewer adjustment annually with meter reading before and after filling.

Customer must call before and after the pool fill, otherwise they will receive a 12-month average adjustment on sewer.

Following discussion, Mayor Pro Tem Savant made a motion to adopt the policy establishing procedures for sewer charge adjustments associated with residential swimming pool fills. Seconded by Councilman Tedders and carried unanimously.

### **4. Proposal and Approval of Falcon Design Services Proposal**

Council considered the proposal from Falcon Design Services to provide grant writing and grant administration services on an as-needed basis.

Following discussion, Councilman Ates made a motion to adopt the proposal for Falcon Design to provide and administer grant writing services as needed. Second by Councilman Tedders and carried unanimously.

### **5. Consideration of amendment to Ryland Environmental agreement**

Council made a motion to approve the amendment to Ryland's agreement to include roll-off services and container service rates omitted from the original contract.

Following discussion, Mayor Pro Tem Savant made a motion to adopt the amended agreement with Ryland. Seconded by Councilman Tedders and carried unanimously.

### **Amend the Agenda to add Approval Cross-Country Race Route Request**

Mayor Coley entertained a motion to amend the agenda to include consideration of a request from the local high school cross-country team for a road closure to accommodate its race route on **August 1, 2026**.

A motion was made by Councilman Ates and seconded by Councilwomen Lester to approve the agenda amendment and consider the road closure request. The motion carried unanimously.

### **6. Consideration to Approve the Road Closure for Cross-Country Race**

A motion was made by Councilman Tedders and seconded by councilman Veal to approve the requested road closure for the cross-country race route on August 1, 2026, that was presented by Chief Trawick. The motion carried unanimously.

## CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

The Interim City Manager reported on:

- The recently awarded CHIP Grant and workshop opportunities.
- Upcoming Airport Authority meeting and Georgia Municipal Association meetings.
- Comprehensive gas system inspection.
- Wastewater Treatment Plant inspection findings and anticipated repairs.
- Positive community feedback regarding the City's flag display.

She also thanked City employees for their continued hard work and dedication.

## MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Coley recognized **Councilman Rufus Veal** for completing **42 hours of training** through the University of Georgia Carl Vinson Institute of Government and the Georgia Municipal Association.

Council members expressed appreciation for:

- Councilwomen Gardner - thanked all for the work done.
- Councilman Ates - thanked Interim City Manager for her work and the continued teamwork and collaboration among council members, thanked Citizens Bank for donations to our Public Safety.
- Councilman Tedders - thanked Interim City Manager and city employees for all their work, thanked Citizens Bank for donation.
- Councilman Veal - thanked Interim City Manager, Mayor for their work and encouraged citizens to reach out to council.
- Councilwomen Lester - thanked Interim City Manager for being transparent and encouraged all to continue working on a good path for the city.
- Councilman Savant – was disappointed that he missed the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration. GMA convention was a good experience, a lot of things learned. Quoted “None of us knows as much as all of us.” He mentioned youth council and building bridges. Encouraged citizens to bring issues/concerns to council.

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## EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilman Tedders made a motion to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing potential litigation. The motion was second and carried unanimously.

Council entered Executive Session at 7:41 p.m.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Following Executive Session, Council reconvened at 7:56 p.m. With no further business to come before the Council, A motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Tedders and seconded by Councilmember Ates. Meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

APPROVED