CITY OF WALESKA

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

June 15, 2026

Present:

Mary Helen Lamb – Mayor

Dennis Cochran – Pro Tem

Walt Cook – Councilmember

Eddie Blackwell – Councilmember

Peter Brown – Councilmember

Kathryn Hurley – Associate Attorney Representing the City Attorney

Lamar Rogers – Engineer

Chris Lumpkin – Water Maintenance Manager

Absent:

Michael Greene – Councilmember

Kristi Bosch – Councilmember

Lauren Garrett – City Clerk

Item 1: Call to Order

Mayor Mary Helen Lamb called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with a quorum present.

Item 2: Invocation / Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was delivered, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item 3: Five Minute Public Input

Ms. Cindy Iraci addressed Mayor and Council regarding kudzu growth on property behind her residence adjacent to the fire station/police station property. She stated the area has not been maintained and requested that the responsible entity maintain the property to prevent damage to vegetation and trees.

Discussion followed regarding ownership of the property. Council determined the property is owned by Cherokee County rather than the City. Staff was directed to contact Cherokee County regarding the concern and provide any information received to Ms. Iraci.

Tim Stancil asked for an update on the Sardis Road project. Turnipseed Engineers reported that engineering plans should be completed within approximately two weeks and will then be submitted to Cherokee County and EPD for review and permitting. The anticipated construction timeline is August 2026, subject to approvals.

Item 4: Consideration to Approve Regular Council Meeting Minutes June 1, 2026

Councilmember Cochran made a motion to approve the Regular Council Meeting Minutes from June 1, 2026. Councilmember Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 5: Consideration and Adoption – Official Zoning Map Amendment

City Planner Catherine Long presented the proposed Official Zoning Map Amendment. The Mayor opened the required public hearing. There being no public comments, the public hearing was closed.

A motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell and seconded by Councilmember Cochran to adopt the Official Zoning Map Amendment. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 6: Second Reading and Consideration for Adoption – Telecommunications Ordinance

The Mayor opened a public hearing regarding the proposed amendments to the Telecommunications Ordinance and Sign Ordinance. Catherine Long advised that the Planning Commission had reviewed the proposed amendments and recommended approval. There being no public comments, the public hearing was closed.

Item 7: Second Reading and Consideration for Adoption – Sign Ordinance

A motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell and seconded by Councilmember Cochran to adopt the ordinance amending both the Telecommunications Ordinance and Sign Ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 8: Public Hearing on the Proposed FY2027 Budget

Rachel Bembry presented an overview of the proposed FY2027 budget, explaining that the budget generally carries forward the current level of services with only minor changes from the FY2026 budget. She reviewed the General Fund, governmental funds, and enterprise funds, highlighting significant revenue and expenditure changes, the proposed 3% employee salary adjustment, increased insurance and pension costs, and the proposed capital project funding.

Rachel explained the budget development process, including how projected revenues and expenditures were balanced to maintain current service levels. She reviewed the preliminary tax digest and stated that the proposed budget is based on a 3.12 millage rate, noting that additional information regarding the millage rate and its impact on taxpayers will be presented during the millage adoption process.

Rachel also reviewed the SPLOST and T-SPLOST funds, explaining that projected revenues are budgeted to accumulate in fund balance until allocated by the Mayor and Council for future capital projects.

The enterprise fund budgets were then presented. Rachel explained that the Water Fund operates as a self-supporting enterprise fund funded through user fees. She noted that the proposed budget includes grant funding and related expenditures for the Highway 108 Water Service Lines Project, a projected operating surplus to support future capital infrastructure needs, and no proposed water rate adjustment for FY2027. She further advised that water rate increases will likely be necessary in future fiscal years to maintain financial stability and debt compliance.

Rachel reviewed the Sanitation Fund, noting that the proposed budget reflects previously approved sanitation rate adjustments to account for increasing service costs. She also recommended that the Council consider applying the existing $50 non-payment fee to delinquent sanitation accounts to recover administrative costs associated with collection efforts.

Rachel concluded the presentation with a summary of the City's overall proposed FY2027 budget.

Following the budget presentation, the Mayor opened the public hearing on the proposed FY2027 Budget and invited public comment. There being no comments from the public, the Mayor closed the public hearing.

Item 9: Consideration of the Reappointment of Joy Huddleston to the Sequoyah Regional Library Board

Mayor Lamb recommended the reappointment of Joy Huddleston to the Sequoyah Regional Library Board, noting her continued service and dedication.

A motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell and seconded by Councilmember Cochran to reappoint Joy Huddleston to the Sequoyah Regional Library Board. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 10: Water System Report

Lamar Rogers reported that work on the Sardis Circle water project continues to progress, with weather causing minor delays. He also provided updates regarding the Highway 108 Water Line Project, discussions with property owners regarding future water line extensions, and communications with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) concerning water system improvements.

Chris Lumpkin reported that all City water tanks have been repainted and that work on the ground storage tank had been completed.

Chris informed Council that more than twenty meter reading units (MXUs) had recently been damaged during mowing operations, resulting in replacement costs to the City. Council discussed options to reduce future damage, including implementing a replacement fee after an initial occurrence, amending the City's fee schedule, and providing educational information to residents regarding proper care around water meter equipment. Staff was directed to prepare proposed fee schedule revisions and an informational flyer for Council's consideration at a future meeting.

Item 11: City Clerk's Report

Chris Lumpkin gave a report due to the absence of City Clerk Garrett. A customer wishes to purchase a meter on McCory Rd. Council approved this meter purchase.

Item12: City Attorney's Report

City Attorney Brandon Bowen reported that the deed of dedication for a roadway previously accepted by the Mayor and Council had been prepared and would be executed.

Item 13: Mayor's Report

None.

Item 14: Council Remarks

Council discussed a commercial construction project within the City and confirmed that the contractor had applied for the required business license and sign permit.

Council also discussed the City's ordinance governing golf carts and side-by-side utility vehicles. Members expressed interest in researching how neighboring municipalities regulate golf cart use, particularly on or near state routes, and whether amendments to the City's ordinance may be appropriate. Staff was asked to research the matter and report back to Council.

Item 15: Adjournment of Regular Council Meeting

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Cochran and seconded by Councilmember Brown. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED THIS 6th DAY OF July, 2026.

Mary Helen Lamb

Mary Helen Lamb, Mayor

Attest

Lauren Garrett

Lauren Garrett, City Clerk