



BROOKS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

August 18, 2025

Council Member Kay Brumbelow gave the Invocation, Mayor Langford led the Pledge, and then called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor: Daniel Langford

Council Members Present: Ted Britt
Kay Brumbelow
Brian Davis
Scott Israel

Guests: Lee Hearn, Fayette County Commission Chair

The proposed agenda for Monday, August 18, 2025, was emailed to the Mayor and Council Members for review before tonight's meeting. Mayor Langford asked for a motion to approve the agenda; Council Member Scott Israel motioned to approve the agenda as presented, and Council Member Ted Britt seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

The draft Council Meeting Minutes for Monday, June 16, 2025, were emailed to the Mayor and Council Members for review before tonight's meeting. Mayor Langford asked for a motion to approve the Council Minutes; Council Member Brian Davis motioned to approve the June 16, 2025, minutes, as presented; Council Member Kay Brumbelow seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Introduction – Liberty Tech Principal:

Nash Alexander, III, introduced himself as the Executive Director of the Liberty Tech Charter School and expressed how proud and excited he was to be here tonight. He recognized Liberty Tech Board Chair Nathan Flint and PTO President Akila Tuck, as well as additional support staff. Mayor Langford shared how proud he was that Liberty Tech has been part of Brooks for the past ten years.

Brooks Municipal Flag Announcement:

Bishop Watts announced the winner of the Brooks Municipal Flag contest, which began in January 2025 and ended in July 2025. There were 240 votes received by those residing in the 30205 zip code between July 1st and July 18th. Flag #9 received the most votes, with 87 votes out of 240. The designer of the winning flag is Ella Robinson, daughter of Michael and Jennifer Robinson, of Brooks, GA 30205. There were two slight changes made to the flag: the first was a redesign of the Native American at the center of the flag, and the second was the correction of the date of settlement to 1819. Flags will be ordered and available for purchase at the Brooks Heritage Celebration on October 25, 2025.

New Business:

Liberty Tech Access Road Agreement:

The proposed Liberty Tech Access Agreement was provided to the Mayor and Council earlier today, following its review and approval by the Town Attorney. The agreement is between the Town of Brooks, Fayette County, Fayette County Board of Education, and Liberty Tech Charter School. This agreement will provide a much-needed alternative route for parents picking up and dropping off students during the school year. The Town will reimburse the County for all project costs, totaling an estimated \$39,732.93. The access road will be made of gravel and will use the football parking entrance on the Highway 85 Connector, passing through the football parking area and along the tree line, to enter the Liberty Tech Charter School pick-up and drop-off location. This section will be one-way traffic only. This access road aims to alleviate the traffic congestion that occurs on Highway 85 Connector, W. McIntosh, and Price Road.

A resident at 263 McIntosh stressed the need to have something done immediately, as it is preventing emergency response vehicles from responding to her home, where her veteran husband is ill and falls frequently. How long will this project take, and is only one person paying for it? I can't afford for my husband to have to wait for EMS to arrive due to the traffic created by Liberty Tech. M. Ungaro stated that the Town of Brooks will be paying for this project.

A resident at 140 Brooklet Way inquired about the planned construction of the road, specifically why it will be made of gravel. The resident expressed that the gravel will not sustain the anticipated traffic and will eventually need to be replaced; why not pave it? Mr. Alexander was asked how many students there are currently at Liberty Tech Charter School; his response was 420 students. The resident asked, with that many students, how can the gravel road be the appropriate solution for that many cars? Commissioner Lee Hearn stated that the gravel road will be sufficient and will be maintained as needed.

A resident at 418 Price Rd expressed her happiness that the access road will be built, not only because she lives on Price Rd and the current traffic backup affects her access to her home, but also for the safety of all drivers around Liberty Tech Charter School, including her children who work at the Heavenly Coffee shop.

M. Ungaro responded that the gravel road will be constructed so that, in the event it needs to be paved, the foundation would support the paving. The project could take up to two weeks once all the signatures are obtained for the access agreement.

Mayor Langford requested a motion regarding the Liberty Tech Access Agreement; Council Member Scott Israel motioned to approve the Agreement, as presented, with Council Member Brian Davis seconding the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Approval to Use Fund Balance for the Liberty Tech Access Road Construction:

To pay for the access road, the use of fund balance dollars is required. Mayor Langford requested a motion to use \$39,732.93 from the fund balance to cover the cost of the access road, as per the Authorized Work Order. Council Member Scott Israel made a motion to approve the authorization work order of \$39,732.93; Council Member Kay Brumbelow seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Committee Reports:

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Langford shared that the town received a letter from Bill Turner, a resident of Brooks, stating that he appreciates the way the Brooks Cemetery is being kept clean and thanking Wayne Couch for his good work. This Thursday will be the monthly mayoral breakfast meeting. These meetings have fostered friendships and trust among all five mayors, as illustrated in the last LOST agreement. Fayette County was the first of the 159 counties in GA to submit its agreement, and it took only forty minutes to complete.

Mayor Langford stated that he qualified this morning for his fifth term as Mayor, and it has been a wonderful honor. He will appreciate your support going forward. The final editing is underway on the second volume of the Brooks History book, which is scheduled for publication and will be available for purchase at the Brooks Heritage Celebration.

Mayor Langford expressed he has spent several hours in the last month researching and responding to more open requests than he has ever recalled in the 28 years of serving Brooks as well as reading immensely long emails complaining about the new house that is going up at the corner of 85 Connector and Gable Rd; stating that he has not responded to these emails, as Mr. Ungaro, the Town Manager, has responded fully and in good faith to these inquiries and believes no further responses are necessary other than his. These complaints originate from a single source, not from multiple sources.

Mayor Langford stated that we as a council need to set as a goal a deep dive into our code ordinances, as they are seven or eight years old, and it's probably time to go through them and see what's working and what's not, and see if any changes need to be made. He would like to conduct two to three workshops (open to the public) to review and discuss, with the goal of completing this by the end of our next fiscal year, which is June 30, 2026.

Planning and Zoning:

M. Ungaro reported the newest addition to the town is the residential construction located at 124 Gable Rd. The project replaces the previous structure, which was demolished in November 2023. The two-bedroom, 2.5 bath house is being built to the zoning code for residential structures in the Town Mixed Use (TMX) district.

Recreation:

C. Moody shared that Football opens this weekend, and Baseball and Softball will start September 13, 2025.

Library:

K. Bradley reported that the Library received a \$100.00 donation in memory of Robert "Bobby" Kyser; the donation will be used to purchase additional books. The Brooks Summer Bingo program has ended, with five participating contestants: two in the 4-8-year-old division and three in the 9-13-year-old division. The following winners received a \$30.00 Amazon gift card for their efforts: in the 4-8 year category, Shaun Cavender (with the most bingos) and Mara Cuttie; in the 9-13 year category, Kaia Cuttie, and Avery Steed. Congratulations to all the winners.

Town Clerk Report:

L. Spohr reported three new trash customers and, unfortunately, one canceled their account due to a damaged trash can that was not replaced promptly.

The 2025 election qualifying started today at 8:30 a.m. at the Fayette County Board of Elections, located at 175 Johnson Street, Fayetteville. Qualifying is every day this week from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Information regarding the 2025 election can be found on the town's website or by calling town hall. Reminder for those qualifying: Personal financial statements are due no later than 15 days after qualifying and should be submitted to her so they can be uploaded to the state ethics website.

The available positions for the Town of Brooks that will appear on the November 4th ballot are Mayor, Post 1, Post 2, and Post 5. As everyone may or may not recall, in June, a resolution was passed to add the special election for post 5 to the November 4th election. The town spent \$598.00 with Fayette County News for ads regarding the special election for Post 5 over the past two weeks in August to ensure notice has been provided for the special election for Post 5, which will occur on November 4, 2025, in conjunction with the positions of Mayor, Post 1, and Post 2. In addition, the town ran two smaller ads in the last two editions of July, which were to ensure transparency regarding the availability of Post 5.

Open Records Requests: The Town Clerk has received 16 open records requests from the same property owner/renter since May 20, 2025. These requests require not only information found on the Town Clerk and Town Manager's computers, in town hall files, but also the Mayor and Council members' personal cell phone and email accounts. This has heightened the need to complete the records room to ensure that history files are easily found when requested. As mentioned in the last council meeting, open records requests typically are not a revenue-generating source, but lately, revenue has been received for these requests.

With the volume and nature of these requests, it was determined that business cell phones needed to be purchased for both the town clerk and the town manager to eliminate the invasion of privacy on their phones. This was an expense that was not included in the budget. The Town will be requesting brooksga.com email addresses by the end of the month for all council members and the mayor. If a council member would like the Town to purchase a cell phone for them, please let me know. Reminder: If a Mayor or council member uses their personal device, they are subject to open records requests.

Please check the website frequently to stay up-to-date with all the activities being added to the Brooks Heritage Celebration, as well as the fantastic sponsors who have made this event possible.

Finance Officer's Report:

The financials for the General Fund and Enterprise accounts were reviewed. July's LOST revenue is up 0.51% compared to last July, up 3.31% for YTD. June 2025's SPLOST revenue was up 0.79% compared to June 2024, and YTD 2023 SPLOST is up 2.77%. As of this evening, the Town has not received information from the Tax Commissioners' office regarding the computation of the millage rate, rollback rate, and the percentage of increase in property taxes, also known as the PT-32. The Tax Office is working diligently to compile and process the necessary information as soon as possible.

Town Manager Report:

Transportation:

Phase II of the sidewalk extension is 98% complete. This extends our downtown sidewalk from the Cannery to the Brooks Memorial Cemetery. Some minor cleanup work remains.

The paving of Morgan Mill between Hwy 85 Connector and Brooks-Woolsey Rd. has been delayed due to equipment issues. The County Road Dept. hopes to have the project completed soon.

The surface treatment on Brooklet Way is being monitored, and the contractor will come back in September to address any outstanding issues.

Brooks Market:

The August market was this Saturday. While August markets are typically slow, there appeared to be a steady flow of traffic. We had one new vendor, Busciglio Farms, and they did very well.

Any Other Business:

None

Adjourn:

Mayor Langford requested a motion to adjourn the open session of the meeting to proceed with the Executive Session. Council Member Brian Davis motioned to close the open session to proceed with the Executive Session; Council Member Scott Israel seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. The open session was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Executive Session – Real Estate - Opened at 7:24 p.m. / Closed at 7:35 p.m.

Mayor Langford requested a motion to adjourn the executive session. Council Member Kay Brumbelow motioned to adjourn; Council Member Scott Israel seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. The executive session portion of the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Mayor Langford reopened the open session of the council meeting at 7:38 p.m.

Any Other Business:

Realtor Dawn Scarbrough spoke on behalf of her client and sought the Mayor and Council's feedback on the potential annexation of property into the Town of Brooks.

D. Scarbrough: "said this is for approximately 46 acres that abut the city limits. It is not for a new subdivision or further division of the property. It's actually quite the opposite; we don't want to do anything new with the property other than building one new home. There are already two existing older homes that the new owner would like to keep, if possible. One would be a guest house on the larger tract where the new home would be built. There are currently two parcel numbers; however, Fayette County zoning considers these illegal lots since the 46 acres were split into two lots in the early 1980s. If annexed, we would like the two parcels to exist as they have since the 1980s. If this sounds like a reasonable request, we will file a formal application right away."

Respectfully Submitted,

Lorey Spohr
Town Clerk