



BROOKS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

February 23, 2026

Council Member Ted Britt delivered the Invocation, Mayor Langford led the Pledge, and called the meeting to order at 6:29 p.m.

Mayor: Dan Langford

Council Members Present: Ted Britt
Brian Davis
Scott Israel
Sara Nelson
Bishop Watts

Agenda:

The proposed agenda for Monday, February 23, 2026, 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 Brian Davis motioned to approve the agenda as presented; Council Member Scott Israel seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Council Meeting Minutes:

The draft Council Meeting Minutes for Monday, January 26, 2026, 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 Bishop Watts motioned to approve the January 26, 2026, minutes, as presented; Council Member Sara Nelson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Public Hearing: Amendment of the Approved Amended FY2025 Budget Opened at 6:35 p.m. / Closed at 6:37 p.m.

L. Spohr presented a PowerPoint outlining the purpose of amending the approved FY2025 budget. Approval of this amendment would eliminate an "auditor finding" in the FY2025 audit. Since this is the first reading, no action would be required this evening.

During the FY2025 audit, the Town's auditor determined that adjustments were necessary in the General Government and Public Works categories to reflect expenditures incurred during the fiscal year accurately. These adjustments are primarily due to an invoice paid in July that was for services performed before June 30, 2026, mainly associated with the Hwy 85 Connector and W. McIntosh Road improvement project. The proposed audit adjustments will recognize these expenditures in the appropriate fiscal period. As a result, the General Fund's unrestricted fund balance is also affected.

Public Works expenditures totaled \$128,349, compared to the approved amended budget of \$93,416. General Government expenditures totaled \$351,269, compared to the approved amended budget of \$384,042.

L. Spohr reported that the previously approved unaudited fund balance of \$533,363 will decrease by \$38,485, due to expenses of \$22,285 for the Hwy 85 Connector and W. McIntosh Road project, \$10,000 for the Hardy Hall roof replacement, and \$8,200 for the FY2025 COLA increase for staff.

Mayor Langford asked if Council had any questions. Hearing none, he opened the public hearing at 6:35 p.m. and asked if anyone wished to speak regarding the proposed FY2025 budget amendment. Hearing no comments, Mayor Langford closed the public hearing at 6:37 p.m.

Mayor Langford stated that the adjustment reflects the reclassification of payments made on July 15, 2026, back to June 30, 2025, to align with the proper fiscal year. He asked whether the Town would be required to repay any funds to the federal government.

L. Spohr explained that the FY2025 audit will include an “auditor’s finding” related to ARPA funds. Due to a technicality, the Town will be required to repay \$74,967.43 to the federal government upon completion of the audit and finalization of all adjustments. Repayment to the federal government will not be made from the General Fund or Fund Balance but will instead be paid directly from the ARPA account.

The next public hearing and request for approval of the proposed amended FY2025 will be on Monday, March 16, 2026.

New Business:

Mayor Pro-Tem Selection:

Mayor Langford explained the responsibilities of the Mayor Pro Tem, who presides only when the Mayor is unable to attend a council meeting. Council Member Scott Israel has served the Town well as Mayor Pro Tem, and although he was unable to make a recommendation himself, he welcomed the Council's recommendation.

Council Member Ted Britt made a motion to appoint Council Member Scott Israel as Mayor Pro Tem. Council Member Sara Nelson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Crown Castle Proposed Lease Extension with a Fixed CPI:

L. Spohr reported that a representative of Crown Castle had approached the Town of Brooks to renegotiate the existing cell tower lease before its expiration (5/01/2027), proposing a new 30-year lease extending through May 2057. The proposed lease would maintain the current rental rate for the remainder of the existing term, with an increase effective in May 2027 and every 5 years thereafter. Crown Castle requested one modification to the escalation structure, changing from a CPI-based adjustment to a fixed 10% increase every five years.

The proposed agreement would include a 15% revenue share for all future tenants and add right-of-first-refusal language limited to Crown Castle competitors. L. Spohr stated that the Town Attorney had reviewed the request and advised that, provided the new lease includes language specifying the annual revenue received, the agreement would not be required to go through the sealed bid process. It was further stated that Crown Castle would prepare a draft agreement if the Mayor and Council approved the change from a CPI-based escalation to a fixed 10% increase. L. Spohr noted that the current CPI is 2.4% and that a fixed rate would enable both parties to forecast future costs and revenues better. The anticipated revenue over the 30-year term is estimated to be approximately \$850,000 or more.

Mayor Langford asked for a motion regarding the proposed change in escalation terms.

Council Member Scott Israel inquired whether the proposed 10% escalation would grant Crown Castle any ownership interest in the property. M. Ungaro clarified that the Town of Brooks retains ownership of the land and that Crown Castle is solely leasing the property, with no ownership rights.

Council Member Scott Israel proposed a motion to approve the new lease agreement, which features a fixed 10% escalation every 5 years. Council Member Bishop Watts seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Ordinance 2026-001 Regulate Vehicular Speed on Gable Rd.:

M. Ungaro reported that concerns were raised at a previous meeting about excessive traffic and speeding on Gable Road, where the posted speed limit is 20 mph. Resident D. Rice reported several near incidents, including being struck herself and an Amazon delivery driver nearly being hit. D. Rice also expressed concern for the safety of her grandchildren, who are near the roadway while visiting. M. Ungaro stated that he also spoke with another Gable Road resident, P. Baker, who also shared concerns about speeding and the volume of delivery trucks using Gable Road as a cut-through to access the Hwy 85 Connector.

M. Ungaro explained that the Town has the authority to regulate speed limits on roads located entirely within the town limits. The proposed ordinance would reduce the posted speed limit from 20 mph to 15 mph on the section of Gable Road between W. McIntosh Road and the Hwy 85 Connector to promote a safer, more controlled environment. He noted that Gable Road is approximately 10 feet wide and is a one-way road, and that speed humps, tables, or bumps may be utilized to help enforce the reduced speed limit.

Council Member Scott Israel asked whether the Town would be required to coordinate with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) or conduct a traffic study. M. Ungaro stated that it would not be necessary, as the road is within the town limits and is not part of a state highway system.

Mayor Langford called for a motion regarding Ordinance 2026-01, an ordinance to regulate vehicular speed on Gable Road; to provide for severability; to repeal conflicting ordinances; to provide an effective date; and for other purposes.

Council Member Scott Israel made a motion to approve Ordinance 2026-01 as presented. Council Member Sara Nelson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

M. Ungaro stated that the turnaround time for the new signs should be no more than two weeks.

D. Rice asked if Gable Rd was a maintained road. M. Ungaro replied, "Yes." D. Rice then asked if the pothole on Gable Rd could be fixed. M. Ungaro said he would contact the Fayette County Road Department to have that fixed.

Town of Brooks and Fayette County Tax Commission Agreement:

L. Spohr explained the purpose of the proposed agreement between the Town of Brooks and the Tax Commissioner, Kristie King, and before this agreement, tax services provided to the Town were performed at no cost. However, it has become common practice throughout the State of Georgia for municipalities utilizing their county tax officials for revenue collection, assessments, notices, fines, and related services to be charged a fee.

Under the proposed agreement, the Town will be charged \$2.50 per parcel. With 329 parcels in the Town of Brooks, the total annual cost will be \$850.00.

Mayor Langford called for a motion regarding the agreement between the Town of Brooks and the Tax Commissioner. Council Member B. Davis made a motion to approve the agreement as presented. Council Member Scott Israel seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Intergovernmental Agreement with Fayette County – Woods Rd. Pipe Repair:

M. Ungaro reviewed the Wood Road Pipe Repair Agreement with Fayette County, which was previously provided to the Mayor and Council for their review. The project involves rehabilitation of an existing forty-four (44) foot double-line, seventy-two (72) inch corrugated metal pipe on Woods Road by constructing a reinforced concrete invert and stabilizing the inlet and outlet. The work will occur between approximately 314 and 342 Woods Road at a cost of \$26,211.67. The repair is expected to extend the pipe's life by approximately 15 years and take about three (3) days to complete.

Council Member Scott Israel asked about potential road closures. M. Ungaro stated that only one lane will be closed at a time. This project is listed on the 2023 SPLOST referendum, with an estimated cost of \$450k for the Woods Rd culvert repair. With this proposed agreement and repair, the Town will save approximately \$425k for other SPLOST 2023 projects.

Council Member Sara Nelson inquired about reducing the speed limit on the Brooks side of the road to 35 mph. M. Ungaro stated he would review the request and noted that lowering the speed limit and installing speed bumps within Town limits would require an ordinance.

Mayor Langford called for a motion regarding the Wood Road Pipe Repair Agreement with Fayette County; Council Member Scott Israel made a motion to approve the agreement for the Wood Road Pipe Repair with Fayette County; Council Member Ted Britt seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Committee Reports:

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Langford announced that Coffee with the Mayor and Judge Jason Thompson will be held on Saturday, February 28, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at Heavenly Coffeehouse. He encouraged the public to attend.

Mayor Langford reported that he attended a Fayette Leadership program meeting on February 10th and noted the value of the program in learning more about the county and connecting with community leaders. He also shared that he attended a dinner with the local mayors and their spouses in late January, honoring Mayor Gary Laggis of Woolsey upon his retirement after 38 years of service. Due to a scheduling conflict, he was unable to attend the most recent mayoral breakfast.

Mayor Langford proposed May 9, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. for a dedication ceremony for Ruth Woods Way Road, named in honor of Ruth Von Stroble, who was the first wife of Vernon Woods, one of the most prosperous farmers in this community. She was a beloved teacher at Brooks District School and was killed in a car wreck at the age of 47. The road was constructed last year to alleviate congestion on Hwy 85 Connector. M. Ungaro will notify Ms. Woods' children of the date and time.

Lastly, Mayor Langford stated that a review of the Town's ordinances and the appointment of a committee, including a resident or residents, to conduct a comprehensive review, should take place in June or July to identify needed corrections, amendments, and additions.

Recreation:

C. Moody said there is a committee planning "Opening Day", which will be held on Saturday, March 21st beginning at 9:00 a.m. The certificate of occupancy for the new concession stand should be received by opening day, and everything should be good to go.

Library:

K. Bradley requested approval to deaccession of 500 children's library books with copyright dates ranging from 1955 to 2007. The books are either in poor condition or have not been checked out in 15 years or more. The estimated current value of the books is \$468.96, approximately 10% of their original purchase price.

Mayor Langford asked for a motion to approve the deaccession. Council Member Sara Nelson made a motion to approve the request, and Council Member Bishop Watts seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Town Clerk / Finance Officer:

L. Spohr reported that no residents have taken advantage of the Town's trash referral incentive program, which offers one free quarter of trash service (valued at \$45.63) for referring a new customer residing within the Town limits. L. Spohr reported completing virtual training sessions on audit preparation and human resources policies.

L. Spohr presented the January 2026 financial report. LOST revenue for January totaled \$19,047.12, reflecting a 5.76% decrease compared to both the previous month and year to date. SPLOST revenue (December distribution) totaled \$19,173.43, representing a 5.59% decrease from

the prior month and a 0.65% decrease year-to-date.

As of January 2026, the Town's primary revenue categories—Sales Tax, TAVT, Property Tax, and Rental Income are performing at or above budgeted projections.

Town Manager:

Transportation:

Fayette County will begin updating its Comprehensive Transportation Plan next month. Public input opportunities will be announced once they are scheduled.

Sinkhole Repair:

The Fayette County Road Department has completed an initial phase of the sinkhole repair by grouting the storm pipe beneath the roadway. Additional repairs are scheduled to continue on Wednesday.

Council Member Scott Israel asked what caused the sinkhole. M. Ungaro stated that it was old, improperly installed, and most likely a do-it-yourself project done a long time ago.

Fayette Forward:

Fayette Forward, a nonprofit organization working to develop a countywide network of multi-use trails to improve connectivity between activity centers and residential areas, continues to advance its planning efforts. The Town Manager has been meeting with representatives for the past several months, and a draft map of proposed projects is expected soon.

Fayette Chamber:

M. Ungaro represented Brooks at the Chamber's annual countywide economic outlook meeting on Thursday and reported everyone was duly impressed with the look and feel of Brooks.

Any Other Business:

Council Member Sara Nelson reported that expert clock repairman John Freeman has repaired the library clock. The clock, which was donated to the library by the Putman family, had been inoperable for several years. Council Member Nelson requested that the Mayor and Council sign a thank-you card expressing appreciation for the repair, which was completed at a nominal cost.

Adjourn:

With no additional business to discuss, Mayor Langford moved to adjourn tonight's meeting. Council Member Brian Davis made a motion to adjourn. Council Member Bishop Watts seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous; the meeting was adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lorey Spohr -Town Clerk