

City of Byron
Mayor and Council Minutes
August 10, 2026

The City of Byron Mayor and Council met in regular session in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Complex. Mayor Michael Chidester, Council Members Michael Chumbley, James Richardson, Chris Hodges, Alan Dorsey, and Rusty Adams were in attendance. City employees that attended were City Administrator Tiffany Sandefur, City Clerk Telina Allred, Deputy Clerk Elissa Lee, Chief Court Clerk Dede Thibodeaux, Police Chief Wesley Cannon, Lieutenant Rob Boutwell, and Fire Chief Josh Riley. City Attorney Brian Causey attended the meeting as did 62 visitors. Representatives from the Byron Buzz, Leader Tribune, and WMAZ attended the meeting as well.

Mayor Chidester called the meeting to order at 6:00pm, asked James Richardson to give the invocation, and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion made by Michael Chumbley, seconded by Chris Hodges to approve the minutes of the Mayor and Council Meeting held on July 13, 2026. Unanimous.

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: The following items were from August 4, 2026, Planning & Zoning actions and recommendations:

- A. A Public Hearing was had regarding the rezoning of parcel 054D 154 from current zoning A-1 Agricultural Area to I-1 General Industrial Area. The Public Hearing opened at 6:03 pm to allow those to speak in favor of or against the rezoning. No one spoke regarding the rezoning request. The Public Hearing closed at 6:06pm.
- B. Alan Dorsey made a motion, seconded by Michael Chumbley to rezone the property located at parcel 054D 154 from the current A-1 Agricultural Area to I-1 General Industrial Area. Unanimous.
- C. A Public Hearing was had regarding consideration to amend Article II of Part IV of Appendix A-Land Development, Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations of the Municipal Code of Byron, Georgia, relating to A-1 Agricultural District and permitted uses therein. The Public Hearing opened at 6:07pm for those to speak in favor of or against the proposed amendments. Mr. George F. Turner spoke on his concerns regarding wildlife and environmental stress, continuous noise that may be at harmful decibels, light pollution, and high-voltage transmission lines.

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Kathrin Schnabel stated the Data Center needed strict governance and inquired about the specifications of 200 acres or more regarding the amendments. Mary Blankenship offered up many questions as did Hollie Alexander wanting to know if the Mayor and Council were for the Data Center to which they answered that they were. Mayor Chidester stated once again to the citizens that they are taking everyone's concerns and input very seriously and felt that everyone will see that in the Ordinance. The citizens also wanted to see the working draft of the proposed Ordinance to which Mayor Chidester said it would be made available at their request. Jason Jones spoke again to council on his ultimate concern of the dangers of continuous noise and DbA and DbC readings, creating heat islands, as well as flood control. Donna Rainwater was worried about the power grid load and if it would create an increase requiring the power company to get immanent domain and she also stated that a wildlife study needed to be done. Sherry McNeal added to that stating proper inspections needed to be done. George Turner talked about generator concerns and how they will need to run them constantly, he feared. William Korink asked how far back on the land the Data Center can go or most importantly, how far back they must go. Elizabeth Soety talked about electricity demand and water usage. When Mayor Chidester assured her that these items were being addressed, she stated that she would just have to take his word for it. Jason Blankenship talked about the post construction site and if there are violations, is it covered in the ordinance. Ben Collins spoke on how he felt that in public hearings, the intent of what the plan is for the land must be disclosed. Ben first asked the Mayor if he was aware that a data center wanted to go on the property and he said yes. He then asked the council the same question and the council said no. Ben then accused the Mayor of hiding information from the council at which time City Administrator Tiffany Sandefur stated no that the information and letter was in the council packet regarding the data center. He asked if anyone had signed a non-disclosure agreement to which they answered they had not. Council Member Dorsey commented that they did not know what a Data Center was until now. Karen Hatton stated she also had concerns about the noise levels and water usage. Janelle Bailey asked if a landowner can request to be annexed to make up the 200-acre requirement. The Mayor answered that there was the caveat of the high transmission line and that there is the requirement of the land being contiguous to city land as well before that could ever happen. She said that communication methods to the public need improvement and that most people don't get the paper. City Clerk Telina Allred stated that on the City of Byron website you can view and print agendas the Friday before the council meeting to be held on Monday. She said it is posted on the bulletin board in the lobby also. She said that any Ordinance up for readings and proposed adoption is printed for public viewing in the lobby as well and is on a blackboard so that the public can thumb through it. Kathrin Schnabel commented on the necessity for public notice and does not agree with the current methods to which Ellen Foster agreed, thinking it was not right. George F. Turner was the last speaker and gave a big thank you to all for hearing them. Mayor Chidester stated that as controversial as the item is and welcomed their questions and input reminding everyone of the Public Forum on August 24th at 6:00pm. He told Mary Blankenship that he is working on who to speak with regarding well-water effects and had not forgot the item. He told all the "sound dampening" does in fact work to control noise. He let all know that he and council have made visits to the Data Center to observe for themselves and were pleased to hear birds chirping. Council Members Chris Hodges, Rusty Adams, Alan Dorsey, and James Richardson all gave some final

remarks and thanked everyone. Mr. Richardson reiterated that they were going to operate in the best interest of the city. The Public Hearing closed at 8:12pm.

- D. Motion made by Michael Chumbley, seconded by James Richardson to approve the amendment to Article II of Part IV of Appendix A-Land Development, Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations of the Municipal Code of Byron, Georgia relating to A-1 Agricultural District and permitted uses herein. Unanimous.

CITIZEN TIME TO ADDRESS COUNCIL: Jason Jones spoke to Mayor and Council stating that he had spotted the Public Works employees working behind Barbour Farms doing some limb trimming and using a Mini excavator with a bush hog on it. He was bothered that they had no protection and it could be very dangerous. Police Chief Cannon stated he would look into the matter. The council thanked him for bringing it to the city's attention.

ORDINANCE (#2026-5) REGARDING DATA CENTER:
First reading was held of Ordinance (#2026-5).

ORDINANCE (#2026-6) REGARDING LAND DEVELOPMENT (IF NECESSARY):
First reading was held of Ordinance (#2026-6).

AGREEMENT WITH GWES, LLC:

Motion was made by Chris Hodges, seconded by Rusty Adams, to approve the following Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute a professional services agreement with Georgia Water & Environmental Services, LLC regarding the Benjamin Hawkins Infrastructure Evaluation. Unanimous.

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BYRON, GEORGIA AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT REGARDING BENJAMIN HAWKINS INFRASTRUCTURE EVALUATION WITH GEORGIA WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Byron, Georgia and it is hereby so resolved by the authority of same that the Mayor is authorized to execute a professional services agreement regarding Benjamin Hawkins infrastructure evaluation with Georgia Water & Environmental Services in substantially the same form as the attached Exhibit "A" which by this reference is made a part of this Resolution.

All Resolutions or portions of Resolutions in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

**SO RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BYRON,
GEORGIA ON THE 10th DAY OF AUGUST, 2026.**

ROAD CLOSURE REQUEST: Motion made by Chris Hodges, seconded by Michael Chumbley to approve the request for road closure of Hudson Drive making it private once again. Unanimous.

WATER/SEWER DEPARTMENT SURPLUS REQUEST:

Motion made by Chris Hodges, seconded by Alan Dorsey to approve the Water/Sewer Department request to put a 1997 Ford F250 on govdeals. Unanimous.

POLICE DEPARTMENT SURPLUS REQUEST:

Motion made by Chris Hodges, seconded by Alan Dorsey to approve the Police Department request to put a 2014 Ford Explorer on govdeals. Unanimous.

CLOSED SESSION: At 8:23 pm, motion was made by Michael Chumbley, seconded by Chris Hodges that the Mayor and Council go into closed session, all allowed by O.C.G.A. 50-14-2 for the purpose of discussing pending litigation.

MOTION APPROVED

Those voting in favor of the motion for closure: Council Members Michael Chumbley, James Richardson, Rusty Adams, Chris Hodges, and Alan Dorsey. Those voting against the motion for closure: None.

Those attending the Closed Session were Mayor Michael Chidester, Council Members Rusty Adams, James Richardson, Michael Chumbley, Chris Hodges, and Alan Dorsey. City employees that attended the meeting were City Clerk Telina Allred, City Administrator Tiffany Sandefur, and City Attorney Brian Causey, and Police Chief Wesley Cannon.

OPEN SESSION: Motion made by Michael Chumbley, seconded by Chris Hodges to return to open session at 8:31. Unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion made by Michael Chumbley, seconded by Chris Hodges to adjourn the meeting at 8:32pm. Unanimous.

Telina Allred
Clerk of Council

