



**Vestavia Hills
City Council Minutes
February 23, 2026
7:30 AM**

1. Call to Order

The City Council of Vestavia Hills met in a special strategic work session on this date at 7:30 AM, following publication and posting pursuant to Alabama law. A number of staff and members of the public also attended virtually, via Zoom.com, following publication pursuant to Alabama law.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Ashley Curry, Mayor Pro-Tem Rusty Weaver, City Councilors Kimberly Cook, Ali Pilcher and Mike Vercher.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT: Jeff Downes, City Manager; Patrick H. Boone, City Attorney; Cinnamon McCulley, Asst. City Manager; Umang Patel, City Clerk; Shane Ware, Police Chief; Zachary Clifton, Finance Director; Lori Beth Kearley, Public Works Director; Jamie Lee, Director of Parks and Leisure Services; Taneisha Tucker, Library Director; Marvin Green, Fire Chief; Keith Blanton, Building Safety Director; James Randall, Human Resources Director; Ethan Fisher, City Engineer; Sandi Wilson, Superintendent; Christopher Brady, City Engineer; Dillon Watts, Inspector; Daniel Tackett, Assistant Library Director; Jenny Gray, Principal Accountant; Michael Keller, Police Captain; Joel Gaston, Police Captain; Ryan Farrell; Deputy Fire Chief; Scott Ferrell, Deputy Fire Chief; Tamara Forbes; Interim Court Director; Steven Michael, Captain*;

*attended via Zoom

Introduction & 2024 Review of Results

2. Breakfast and Introduction of Planning Agenda & Theme - Jeff Downes

Mr. Downes opened the session and stated that the purpose was to review 2025 results from the previous strategic plan and prepare for the next cycle. He explained that strategic planning was a repeating process of setting priorities, implementing them over a year, and then evaluating outcomes. He described the use of electronic polling to collect council input anonymously and said the polls would help guide discussion. He introduced the planning theme based on *For the Love of Cities* by Peter Kageyama and stated that the city aims to

strengthen residents' emotional attachment to Vestavia Hills. He outlined a hierarchy of community needs, starting with basic infrastructure and safety, followed by housing and amenities, social interaction, and purpose-built public spaces such as parks and gathering areas.

3. Review of 2025 Strategic Plan & Accomplishments - Cinnamon McCulley

Mrs. McCulley explained that the 2025 strategic plan, created by the previous council, is the basis for evaluating performance. Each department set performance metrics tied to the plan's strategic priorities and meeting those metrics indicates progress on the plan. She noted that the city will develop a new strategic plan at the end of the two-day session.

4. VH Connect Activity Review and Conclusions - Jeff Downes

Mr. Downes noted that the city used tools such as Vestavia Hills Listens, VH Connect, and targeted text messages to communicate with residents and collect feedback on projects, including the Greendale sidewalk project. These tools helped the city measure participation, understand concerns, and adjust communication as needed.

5. Review of Financial Condition - Jeff Downes

Mr. Downes stated that the city's financial position is strong and revenues and fund balance have grown since 2018. The City follows adopted financial policies on debt levels and use of excess funds, and these policies guide decisions. The city balances maintaining adequate reserves with investing in services and capital improvements.

6. In-Meeting Poll of City Council as to 2025 Accomplishments - Jeff Downes and Cinnamon McCulley

Mr. Downes explained that he and Cinnamon McCulley will use polls during the meeting to gauge Council views on 2025 accomplishments and future priorities. Responses will be anonymous. Poll results are for discussion and planning, and do not represent formal Council action.

2026 Priority Items for Detailed Review & Discussion (Pt 1)

7. Communications, Branding and Economic Development Updates - Cinnamon McCulley

Mrs. McCulley provided an update on communications, branding, and economic development, describing how the city uses surveys, print newsletters, digital tools, and community meetings to reach different audiences. She outlined economic development efforts organized around six trade areas (Rocky Ridge, Highway 31 North and South, Cahaba Heights, Liberty Park, and Patchwork Farms), reported on recent business recruitment and trade area performance, and discussed ideas for future events and location choices with the council. She presented an option of moving the tree lighting to Liberty Park, and doing one tree lighting and parade event at night. Mrs. Cook stated she did not think it was good to move the tree lighting to Liberty Park, but liked the idea of doing the parade, currently located at Liberty Park, at night. Mr. Weaver concurred and said he did not want to move the tree lighting to Liberty Park.

8. SHAC Site: Design and Construction Review — Doster Construction & CMH Architects

Programming Considerations:

- **Police East Side Operations - Chief Shane Ware**
- **Maintenance Facility Relocation & Enhancements - Lori Beth Kearley & Jamie Lee**
- **Parks and Leisure Services Use & Demands - Jamie Lee**
- **Eastside Satellite Library/Community Building - Cinnamon McCulley (Steering Committee)**

Representatives from Doster Construction and CMH Architects reviewed the master plan and early design and construction approach for the SHAC site, including infrastructure phasing and the importance of the mine reclamation grant. They presented the FY 26–27 infrastructure package and explained how planned roads, utilities, and grading would support future facilities such as an east side police facility, a maintenance building, and possible civic/library uses

Police East Side Operations - Chief Shane Ware:

Chief Ware explained the need for an east side police facility to support continued growth and maintain response times for Liberty Park and Cahaba Heights. He stated that the proposed building would provide additional operational space, training and emergency operations functions, and storage and equipment capacity that the current facilities could not support.

Maintenance Facility Relocation and Enhancements - Lori Beth Kearley & Jamie Lee:

Public Services Director Kearley and Parks and Leisure Services Director Lee described current space and layout constraints at the existing maintenance area and the operational and safety issues created by traffic and storage limitations. A new maintenance building at the SHAC site would provide adequate covered storage, materials space, staff restrooms, and safer circulation for equipment and vehicles.

Parks and Leisure Services Uses and Demands - Jamie Lee:

Mr. Lee reported continued growth in recreation programs and use of parks, fields, and civic facilities. He emphasized the high demand for diamond fields and showed the numbers demonstrating that demand is outstripping supply particularly in those sports. Additional capacity and better support facilities at the SHAC site would help the city respond to current and future demand for parks and leisure services.

Eastside Satellite Library/Community Building Feasibility Study - Cinnamon McCulley (Steering Committee):

Mrs. McCulley, speaking for the steering committee, summarized the preliminary feasibility work for a potential east side satellite library and community building at the SHAC site. Possible uses include meeting rooms, study and learning spaces, limited food and beverage options, and outdoor gathering areas. The committee has been asked to consider phased development and seek broad community input.

9. Renovation of Fire Station #4 and Pool Heater: Design & Construction Update -- Doster Construction and Williams Blackstock Architects

Representatives of Doster and Williams Blackstock presented updated plans for renovating and expanding Fire Station #4, including the addition of a fifth apparatus bay and exterior

improvements to align with city standards. They also reported that the pool heater project scope had been refined to focus on essential infrastructure, that the bid process was being restarted on that basis, and that the schedule was designed to meet the target opening date for the pool season.

10. Fire Department Briefing - Chief Marvin Green

Chief Green briefed the council on call volumes, staffing, facilities, and training, noting increased runs to extended care facilities, and the operational challenges of Liberty Park's geography. Employee morale is high according to survey results. Recruitment and paramedic training efforts are strong, including heavy rescue and joint training programs with neighboring cities. He identified facility and apparatus space needs at multiple stations that will require phased investment.

11. Police Briefing: Updates/Trends, Park Security & Micromobility - Shane Ware

Chief Ware spoke on recent public safety updates and trends, including issues related to park security and micromobility. He summarized key developments and concerns, and discussion ensued.

**12. Economic Development Updates – Jeff Downes
Redevelopment of the Former Days Inn Property**

- Bray Town Center Updates
- Placer AI Metrics

Redevelopment of the Former Days Inn Property:

Mr. Downes reported on the status of the redevelopment of the former Days Inn property and outlined recent progress and next steps. The Council has advised patience over accepting less than what the citizens want for that property.

Bray Town Center Update:

Mr. Downes provided an update on Bray Town Center, including recent activities and milestones that must be achieved before the city invests further money in infrastructure according to the agreement that was carefully negotiated by the Council.

Placer AI Metrics:

Mr. Downes presented Placer AI metrics relevant to local economic development and explained key trends that show investments in infrastructure and public-private partnerships is increasing foot traffic and revenue.

At 3:54 PM, there being no further business, the Mayor recessed the meeting until 7:30 AM, February 24, 2026


Ashley C. Curry, Mayor

ATTESTED BY:


Umang Patel, City Clerk