

Zinda McDaniels, Mayor
Lula Smart, Mayor Pro Tem
Robby Christian, Councilmember
Kechia Harrison, Council Member
Vacant, District 2 Council Member



James Lawrence, City Manager
Dawn Montgomery, City Clerk
Karla Walker, City Attorney
Lawrence McGhee, Chief of Police

THE CITY OF QUITMAN

100 W. Screven Street
Quitman, Georgia 31643

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 5, 2026

6:30 pm, City Hall Annex

I. Opening Ceremonies

Attendance: Councilman Harrison, Councilman Christian, and Mayor Pro Tem Smart (via Zoom) were present, establishing a quorum. Also in attendance were City Manager Lawrence, City Attorney Walker, Police Chief McGhee, and City Clerk Montgomery.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the March 31st work session, April 17th regular meeting, and April 28th work session were unanimously approved.

III. Mayor's Report & City Events

City's Week Review: Described as "awesome" and "went really well," with high engagement and employee support. Specific highlights included a basketball game and lunch with downtown businesses.

Upcoming Activities: Ministerial Association Breakfast: Another breakfast is being planned.

Juneteenth Celebration: Scheduled for Friday and Saturday (specific dates not provided; flyer to be released). Pastor's Breakfast is planned for June 18th,

July 4th Celebration: Will be held jointly with the county. Alternatives to fireworks (e.g., laser show, light show) are being explored due to a burn ban. A meeting with the county is scheduled for tomorrow at lunch to finalize options. The event will be free, with potential vendors for sweets and a hot dog cook-off planned.

Councilman Cole has resigned from his position.

A special election is mandated to fill the vacancy; it will not be a runoff, and anyone can qualify.

IV. Police Chief's Report

Monthly Call Statistics: Total Dispatch calls 541, 16 Felony arrests, 5 DUI's, 18 Domestic, 9 vehicular accidents

Personnel Updates: New Officer: Daniel Rand graduated from the Police Academy on April 24th. Academy Candidate: Montavia Pickett entered the Academy on May 4th, with expected graduation in August. **Staffing:** The department currently has 12 officers, described as "comfortable" but "not actually a full staff"

V. City Manager's Report

Fire Department

Crown Laundry Fire Response: The fire department and mutual aid partners responded professionally to a structure fire at Crown Laundry. The fire was contained; no injuries were reported, and the building is operational.

Fire Chief Position: The position remains open. Many applicants have been interviewed, and six applications are currently under review. The final candidate will be presented to the council for approval after the vetting process.

Fire Hydrants: Approximately 23 fire hydrants in the city require repair or replacement. Work has been ongoing for the past couple of months, with three hydrants already replaced at an approximate cost of \$8,000 each. The goal is to ensure all fire hydrants are operational for the fire department, with repairs dependent on parts availability.

Administration & Operations

Employee Recognition: City employees were thanked for their continued work and commitment.

Purchasing Policy Refinement: Ongoing work includes adding a requisitions process as an additional layer in purchasing. Shopping lists or estimates are uploaded directly to the Edmonds accounting system, reviewed and approved by the speaker, and stored digitally for easy recovery of estimates and invoices. Departments are being trained on the new process.

Operations Warehouse Facility Transition Strategy:

Objective: Consolidate inventory across departments to reduce redundant purchases, address issues of lost or unaccounted items, and resolve a finding from the 2017 internal audit regarding inventory reconciliation.

Implementation: A 30-

day staggered transition plan has been implemented to avoid signing a lease for a building that remains unoccupied for an extended period.

New Administration Building Sign: The sign is approximately 50% complete. It is fully funded by settlement proceeds from the insurance company of the driver who hit the original sign, with no additional city funds encumbered.

Infrastructure

Active Leaks:

400 East Graveling Street: Waiting for parts for repair.

City limits: 811 locate completed, waiting on AT&T clearance for repairs.

Highway 84 and Shiver Road: Waiting for clearance from the Georgia Department of Transportation. Repair will require the installation of a metal road plate, for which a quote is in progress. State procedures must be followed for Highway 84 leaks.

Washington Street: Identified as a "hot topic." The main issue is that inlets need reconstruction, which is beyond the city's current financial capability. Areas around some inlets have been cleaned up. The city is waiting to identify how to reconstruct the inlet drains and acquire the necessary parts.

Electric Department

Operations: Last month, the department responded to 10 power outage calls, completed two service installations, and approximately 31 borders.

Human Resources

Employee Count: The current employee count is 87, down from approximately 100.

Meter Reader Department: The department has been finalized with an increase in meter readers. The goal is to achieve more accurate readings and faster bill generation. Bills were generated before May this month, which was noted as "fantastic," with the goal of generating bills before the month they are due.

Financial & Audit

Unrestricted Account Balance: As of April 30, 2026, the balance was \$1,222,967.51. Discretionary spending continues to be monitored due to ongoing audit recovery efforts.

Audit Recovery Update

Fiscal Year 2018 (FY2018): This year was added for recovery as part of House Bill 1567. The process is 63% complete. The goal is to submit

FY2018 to the state by June 30. New Audit Engagement (James Moore):

Goal: Submit 2019 and 2020 to the state by December of this year.

Goal: Submit up to 2025 by May of 2027.

Goal: Complete FY26 and FY27 by January 2028.

Bank Confirmations: 50% complete across 42 bank accounts. The city is waiting for Citizens to submit confirmations for 100% completion.

VI. Citizens to be Heard

Utility Bill Email Issue:

A Citizen reported receiving utility bills via email that appear to come from "D. Harrison" instead of a generic city email, an issue occurring since at least December. City staff confirmed D. Harrison does not have an email address in his name. A work ticket was submitted to Edmonds (the system provider) last week to diagnose and rectify the issue.

Vacancy of Mr. Cole's Position (Gary Christian): A citizen inquired if the person Mr. Cole ran against could take the vacant council position. The answer confirmed that a special election is mandated, not a runoff, and anyone can qualify.

Appreciation for City Workers: A citizen praised city workers for their "magnificent job" in moving equipment and acknowledged their efforts and participation during "Cities Week."

VII. Three-Party Agreement for Industrial Park

Problem: The city's electrical lines do not extend to the portion of land sold to Agridigm and SBSI (steel company) in the industrial park. Extending these lines would require agreements with Georgia Transmission Corporation and the railroad company,

with requirements (e.g., insurance) and costs exceeding the city's current capacity and budget.

Proposed Solution: Allow EMC to service *only* Agridigm and SBSI for electricity, thereby preventing the city from having to build extra infrastructure currently. The city will continue to receive revenue from sewage, water, and gas services for these businesses, as existing infrastructure is in place for those.

Future Plan: The new budget will allocate funds to properly extend city services to the industrial park.

Decision: A motion to approve allowing the city to execute a three-party agreement with EMC, SBSI, and Agridigm (AB) was unanimously approved.

VIII. Budget Retreat/Workshop Planning

Decision: Proposed dates for budget hearings and workshops (May 11th, 12th, and 18th) were approved.

Decision: A call meeting on May 26th to possibly approve the fiscal year 2027 budget was approved. Only one hearing is required a week before budget approval.

IX. FY26 Budget Amendments

Rationale for Discrepancies: Amendments are required to "legally spend this money" and avoid an "audit disclaimer" for the current fiscal year. The current year's budget "was materially deficient," created without sufficient arithmetic or payroll trend analysis, and based on 2018 numbers. Payroll numbers from Paycor indicate funds have already been spent beyond budgeted amounts.

Police Department: Original Budget: \$633,000; Estimated: \$780,000.

Fire Department: Original Budget: \$620,000; Estimated: \$1,050,408 (a difference of approximately \$400,000).

Public Works Department: Original Budget: \$288,000; Estimated: \$485,000.

Water and Sewer Department: Original Budget: \$0; Estimated: \$298,000.

App End Side Visas: Original Budget: \$221,486; Estimated: \$629,000.

Decision: A motion to amend the Budget 2026 for the departments and amounts presented was made, seconded, and approved due to actual costs exceeding budgeted amounts.

X. Resolutions

Action Item: Change the resolution number on the adopted purchasing policy from "26001" to the next sequential number found in the city clerk's office.

Decision: A motion to approve the change of the purchasing policy resolution number was made, seconded, and approved.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 pm.

BY: Zinda McDaniel
Zinda McDaniel, Mayor

ATTEST: Dawn Montgomery
Dawn Montgomery, City Clerk

Minutes Approved: 6-2-2026