

CITY OF
Avondale
ESTATES
BOARD OF MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
21 N. AVONDALE PLAZA
AVONDALE ESTATES, GA 30002
<https://zoom.us/j/92024389480>

FEBRUARY 24, 2026, 5:30 PM

1. Meeting Called To Order
2. Adoption Of The Meeting Agenda
3. Commissioner Comments
4. Approval Of Meeting Minutes

Documents:

[BOMC 2.11.2026 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES.PDF](#)
[BOMC 2.11.2026 WORK SESSION MINUTES.PDF](#)

5. Public Comment
6. Adjournment

BOARD OF MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 11, 2026 5:30 P.M.
CITY HALL 21 N. AVONDALE PLAZA

Members Present: Jonathan Elmore, Mayor
Graham Reiney, Mayor Pro Tem
Michael Smith, Commissioner
Luis Suazo, Commissioner
Lyda Steadman, Commissioner

Staff Present: Patrick Bryant, City Manager
Shannon Powell, Assistant City Manager
Stephen Quinn, City Attorney
Karina Reyna, City Clerk
Harry Hess, Chief of Police
Jerry Branch, Deputy Chief of Police
Marcel Jackson, Director of Public Works, Parks and Sanitation
Ellen Powell, Creative, Marketing & Communications Director
Adriana Holt, Senior Marketing and Communications Coordinator
Isabella Salazar, Marketing and Communications Coordinator

Meeting Called to Order
The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda
Commissioner Michael Smith motioned to adopt the meeting agenda. Commissioner Lyda Steadman seconded the motion. The motion was APPROVED unanimously.

Commissioner Comments
Commissioner Lyda Steadman congratulated staff on achieving bronze certification. She explained her absence was due to a previously planned vacation.
Commissioner Luis Suazo remarked that, on the way in, they imagined how nice it would be to hold an outdoor meeting on a beautiful day.
Commissioner Michael Smith thanked everyone for attending the meeting.
Mayor Pro Tem Graham Reiney said they had no significant updates, thanked everyone for attending, and concluded their remarks.
Mayor Jonathan Elmore asked if everyone was enjoying the Olympics, expressed pride in the athletes, stated they had no substantive comments, and thanked everyone for attending.

City Manager Updates:

- Galentine's Day event on Friday featuring women-owned businesses offering workshops, special menus, drinks, and promotions; heart-shaped balloons will mark participating storefronts. This event is DDA-sponsored.
- The city was named a Tree City USA for the 42nd consecutive year and received its 16th straight growth award for urban forest management; it is one of the three oldest Tree Cities in Georgia. Residents are invited to celebrate Arbor Day on February 20 at 2 p.m., including planting an American hornbeam at Lanier

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Gardens with free saplings available.

- Thanks to the community for participating in the Centennial Celebration Survey, which received 156 responses; more details on the organizing committee will be shared in the coming months.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Luis Suazo motioned to approve the following meeting minutes:

January 28, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2026 Work Session Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Lyda Steadman seconded the motion. The motion was APPROVED unanimously.

Arbor Day Proclamation

The Mayor presented an Arbor Day proclamation recognizing the history and benefits of tree planting, noting the observance's origins in 1872 and its environmental importance. Jonathan Elmore proclaimed February 20, 2026, as the 153rd anniversary of Arbor Day and encouraged residents to support tree conservation. The Garden Club also invited the public to its Arbor Day celebration, where a tree will be planted in memory of longtime resident Sheila Biggs, who recently passed away at age 102.

Consideration of an Ordinance to Establish a Franchise Agreement with Google Fiber

The Board considered and approved an ordinance establishing a non-exclusive franchise agreement with Google Fiber Georgia LLC to install network facilities in the city's public right-of-way. City Manager Patrick Bryant clarified that the company intends to use existing above-ground infrastructure, such as telephone poles, but may bury lines underground if existing infrastructure is unavailable.

Commissioner Luis Suazo motioned adopt an Ordinance to Establish a Franchise Agreement with Google Fiber. Mayor Pro Tem Graham Reiney seconded the motion. The motion was APPROVED unanimously.

Consideration of a Memorandum of Agreement with the Atlanta Regional Commission for assistance with the Local Comprehensive Plan Update

The Board considered and approved a memorandum of agreement with the Atlanta Regional Commission to provide assistance with updating the city's Local Comprehensive Plan. The Board expressed appreciation for the commission's support in helping the city complete this required planning process and emphasized the importance of using the plan as a meaningful guide for future development and decision-making. Commissioners noted that the process will help shape the city's long-term growth and priorities and stressed the need to involve a wide range of stakeholders, ensure inclusive participation, and conduct strong community outreach to encourage resident engagement.

Mayor Pro Tem Graham Reiney motioned to approve a Memorandum of Agreement with the Atlanta Regional Commission for assistance with the Local Comprehensive Plan

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Update. Commissioner Lyda Steadman seconded the motion. The motion was APPROVED unanimously.

Public Comment

1. Bill Hover 89 Berkeley Rd.

Adjournment

Commissioner Lyda Steadman motioned to adjourn the Regular Meeting. Commissioner Michael Smith seconded the motion. The motion was APPROVED unanimously. The Regular Meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.

Karina Reyna, City Clerk

BOARD OF MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 11, 2026 5:45 P.M.
CITY HALL 21 N. AVONDALE PLAZA

Members Present: Jonathan Elmore, Mayor
Graham Reiney, Mayor Pro Tem
Michael Smith, Commissioner
Luis Suazo, Commissioner
Lyda Steadman, Commissioner

Staff Present: Patrick Bryant, City Manager
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Meeting Called to Order
The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda
Commissioner Luis Suazo motioned to amend the meeting agenda to remove Item 4. Appropriation of Donation to City's General Fund. Commissioner Lyda Steadman seconded the motion. The motion was APPROVED unanimously.

Commissioner Michael Smith motioned to adopt the meeting agenda as amended. Commissioner Lyda Steadman seconded the motion. The motion was APPROVED unanimously.

Continued review of the Public Meeting Process
The Board continued their discussion over the public meeting process. Commissioners thoroughly examined ways to improve transparency, resident engagement, and internal deliberation while maintaining an orderly and equitable system for public comment. The Board agreed on the importance of open access and transparency and reviewed several suggestions including holding public comment after commissioner remarks, encouraging residents to speak at the podium with microphones for the benefit of virtual attendees, and establishing a time limit for comments to ensure equity and fairness. Commissioners noted that limiting repeated or reactive comments helps prevent undue stress on board members and avoids turning public input into a debate or a "gotcha" session.

Discussion also addressed meeting structure and scheduling. Commissioners reflected on past formats with separate meetings spaced approximately two weeks apart, which allowed for more in-depth discussion and public observation of deliberations. They

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debated whether combining meetings increased efficiency or unintentionally reduced opportunities for meaningful dialogue. Several commissioners agreed that stacked meetings (two meetings in one evening) can work if structured properly and that the current approach does not inherently limit public participation, as residents now have multiple opportunities per month to engage. Commissioners discussed the current meeting schedule and structure, noting that stacking the work session immediately after the regular meeting provides continuity but extends the overall meeting time. Mayor Jonathan Elmore stated that the current format allows multiple public comment opportunities. They are allowed before agenda items are voted on, after the regular meeting, during work sessions, and via statements or petitions. This allows three to four distinct opportunities for residents to provide input. The regular schedule of every other Wednesday was seen as familiar and predictable for the public, making it easier for residents to plan attendance. Several commissioners expressed support for maintaining the consolidated format, citing personal scheduling constraints and the benefit of having a two-week window between meetings to review questions, clarify issues, and prepare for discussion. There was a consensus that written public comments at the end of work sessions, such as via comment cards or emails, are often more effective than verbal comments for commissioners to process and respond thoughtfully, especially at the end of a long meeting.

The conversation also highlighted the difference in purpose between regular meetings and work sessions. Commissioners noted that combining them can make work sessions feel like formal meetings, whereas a dedicated work session by moving to the table allows for more in-depth discussion without the pressure of immediate decision-making. Structured limits on verbal comments were viewed as reasonable, but there was agreement that no arbitrary cap should restrict the total number of public speakers.

Commissioners also reviewed the processes at nearby jurisdictions, including DeKalb County and the City of Decatur, where public comment is allowed on agenda action items and additional petitions or statements, followed by commissioner responses. Commissioners emphasized that while citizens may ask questions outside agenda items, such inquiries should receive follow-up even if immediate answers are not possible. The focus is on responsiveness, and efficiency while avoiding extended debates or “back-and-forth” confrontations during meetings.

Finally, staff clarified that the city’s current public comment policy, adopted in 2018, governs procedures, and any modifications would require a new policy to be drafted and adopted. City Manager Patrick Bryant summarized the new draft policy would include allowing general public comment prior to action items, limited to three minutes per commenter with no total time limit, followed by a ten-minute break between the regular meeting and work session. The work session would take place at the table in a round format, concluding with a second public comment period limited to items on the work session agenda. Comment cards may also be provided for those who do not wish to speak, allowing written comments to be addressed later.

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The discussion included logistics of public participation, with suggestions to have residents approach the podium rather than raising hands to ensure audibility and equity, while allowing discretion for individuals who are unable to stand or prefer not to move. Breaks were intended to allow informal conversation, which need not be broadcast, with table microphones and Zoom covering formal discussion. Practical concerns were noted regarding camera angles, staff positioning, and managing papers. The Board concluded with agreement to move forward with the proposed process while keeping logistical adjustments in mind.

City Manager Patrick Bryant encouraged the Board to provide directions via email to staff to guide the preparation of a proposed policy, ensuring follow-up items are tracked, documented, and addressed without diminishing public access or input.

Public Comment

1. Julie Martinez – 3722 Majestic Cir.
2. Kathy Kingsbury – 817 Stratford Rd
3. Bill Hover – 89 Berkeley Rd.
4. Jan Hover – 89 Berkeley Rd.

Adjournment

Commissioner Lyda Steadman motioned to adjourn the Work Session. Mayor Pro Tem Graham Reiney seconded the motion. The motion was APPROVED unanimously. The Work Session adjourned at 6:56 pm.

Karina Reyna, City Clerk