

City of Santa Claus, Georgia

Regular Monthly Council Meeting

August 18, 2026

The regular meeting of the Santa Claus City Council was held August 18, 2026. Those present were Mayor Donita Bowen, Councilmembers Monte Powell, Marcie Rogers and Matt Lynn, Secretary Sue Grisham, Eddie Wright and Elaine Wright. Councilman Walter Wright was present via his phone due to his discharge from the hospital earlier in the day. The meeting began with the group reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Minutes of July 21, 2026, meeting were read. Marcie made a motion second by Matt to accept the minutes. Council agreed unanimously to accept the minutes as read.

Old Business: The financial reports were reviewed by the Council & discussed. The Gardens: No issues at the Gardens nor at the Park. Community Center: Walter will erect the new wooden toy soldiers at the Community Center. Roads: The mayor asked what the status is on getting the lines painted for placement of the luminaries on Christmas Eve. Matt stated he would be working on that when the time comes. Donita asked Sue to contact Luis Nino, the landscaper, and request that all shrubs at city properties be trimmed as they are too high. The frequent rains have made them grow faster than usual.

The mayor texted Brenda of ER Assist learning that the Hurricane Helene documents for FEMA/GEMA were in the Grants Portal. The city is required to keep them for the state for 5 years and for FEMA for 3 years. Donita will print a copy for storage. She informed the council that the signed Resolution for the 2026 Toombs County Hazard Mitigation Plan has been sent to C.J. Worden.

Akins & Sons has completed spraying the rights-of-way, cleared and removed the dead tree in the Garden and removed tree limbs hanging over Candy Cane ST. The funds for the Safety Grant was received on August 11th and on 8/12, the mayor contacted Clay Herrin about proceeding with the CCTV camera to check the sewer line on December DR previously discussed. This is estimated to cost about \$3,000. Hopefully, he would be here for the project within 2 weeks after notification. Donita asked Eddie to meet with them when they come out to use the camera.

Donita has contacted Ms. Lynn Ashcroft of DCA requesting information on the CDBG grant's status stating that she needs to register for the training but needs funds for the registration and is awaiting information from Lynn.

New Business: The mayor informed the council that she had received an email from Facundo Parra asking if the City of Santa Claus (Toombs County) GA issues building permits for residential construction and are the state building codes enforced. After she failed to reach him by phone, she responded with an email informing him the information he was requesting can be located on the city website.

Tindall has informed us that there are repairs needed on the well house due to rust. After an inspection of the area, to remove and replace faulty piping and using the existing F.D. connection on the new pipe, the estimate is \$3,169.77. Residents and Mobley Well Drilling will be notified when the repair is scheduled. Eddie suggested replacing the cutoff at the 2" line at the north of the water tank also.

August 18, 2026, - page 2 – The mayor completed the required 2026 Biennial Survey on August 12 and had a ZOOM meeting with Remarcus Steele with Vigilante concerning government topics. She has also repaired and updated 2025 Payroll issues with QuickBooks. Also, Donita has contacted GDOT concerning signage for U.S. # 1 as the new bypass will not come thru Santa Claus and we need signs on the new highway to direct travelers to our city. Jeremy Barwick has furnished her with the contacts she will need to discuss details for this.

Marcie and Donita have registered to attend a free Elected Officials Workshop in Dublin on August 24 offered by the Georgia State Ethics Commission Staff. Also, Artiffany Stanley with GMA emailed Donita concerning upcoming training. She will be contacting Donita back with the final details. She has signed up for a webinar 8/20 on Social Media & the Law giving practical strategies on engaging with the public.

Due to open records requirements, Donita sent data requested to Abbas Khan (Civic IQ) concerning public purchasing, etc. The mayor has sent the 2026 Tax Package to Harris to prepare the Property Taxes. On August 13, the application with GDOT for the 2027 LMIG Grant Program for \$5,313.27 was submitted.

Some council members have received a letter of Notice to Toombs County Water Authority Officials Who Are Not Immune From Cases From Federal Statutes. This appears to be referring to issues concerning Data Centers which will not include the City of Santa Claus.

The subject of Air B&Bs in the city was discussed again. Donita contacted Josh Beck, City Manager of Vidalia who provided her with their guidelines for Air B&B's. She has modified it to fit our city. She also presented an ordinance for review in favor of it and one against it. An ordinance prohibiting Air B&Bs in the city was also drawn up for review. After discussion, this was tabled for the next meeting.

The mayor brought up the city ordinances and City Charter for discussion. Both seem to be outdated due to changes in the state laws being added or changed. The Charter is dated 1984 and the Ordinances last dated in 1999. She emailed Artiffany Stanley, GMA, but hasn't gotten a response on this.

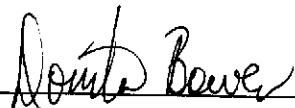
Donita added that she feels this should be reviewed by someone with expertise in this field and asked if the council objected. Matt said that he will investigate the issue and suggested it be tabled at this time. All agreed to table for further investigation.

Donita asked the council for a date to review the Personnel Handbook she has drawn up. No date set.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted, Sue Grisham

Donita Bowen, Mayor

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Donita Bowen", is written over a horizontal line.