

Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on November 18, 2025 6:00 PM, Mayor Rusty Paul presiding.

I. Call to Order

Mayor Rusty Paul called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call and General Announcements

Members Present: Mayor Rusty Paul, Councilmember John Paulson, Councilmember Melody Kelley, Councilmember Melissa Mular, Councilmember Jody Reichel, Councilmember Tibby DeJulio, Councilmember Andrew Bauman

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Rusty Paul led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

V. Approval of Meeting Agenda

Motion and vote. A motion was made by **Councilmember Tibby DeJulio**, seconded by **Councilmember John Paulson**, to approve the meeting agenda. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

VI. Consent Agenda

Motion and vote. A motion was made by **Councilmember Melissa Mular**, seconded by **Councilmember Melody Kelley**, to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

- A. **2025-264** Meeting Minutes
November 4, 2025 City Council Meeting
- B. **2025-265** Request for Mayor and City Council Consideration of a Resolution to Approve an Agreement to Purchase Fee Simple Right of Way and Temporary Construction Easement from Sunnykay & Company LLC on Property Located at 6340 Peachtree Dunwoody Road in Land Lot 19 of the 17th District, City of Sandy Springs, Fulton County, Georgia (Tax ID #17-0019- LL-128-3) in Relation to the TS131 Last Mile Connectivity Project

Resolution No. 2025-11-164

VII. Presentations

There were no presentations.

VIII. Public Hearing

- A. **2025-266** Request for Mayor and City Council Consideration of a Resolution to Approve a Metropolitan River Protection Act Certificate for River Corridor Review RC-25-05SS for 215 Huntcliff Terrace

Michele McIntosh-Ross, Planning & Zoning Manager, presented a recommendation to Approve a Metropolitan River Protection Act Certificate for River Corridor Review RC-25- 05SS for 215 Huntcliff Terrace.

Properties within 2,000 feet of the Chattahoochee River are subject to the Chattahoochee River Corridor Protection Act. The regulations call for review and approval by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), public hearing and approval by the local governing authority, and issuance of a Metropolitan River Protection Act Certificate. The review focuses on whether the project is consistent with the Chattahoochee Corridor Plan, which limits clearing and impervious surface within the corridor.

There being no public comment, **Mayor Rusty Paul** closed the public hearing.

Motion and vote. A motion was made by **Councilmember Melody Kelley**, seconded by **Councilmember John Paulson**, to Approve a Metropolitan River Protection Act Certificate for River Corridor Review RC-25-05SS for 215 Huntcliff Terrace. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Resolution No. 2025-11-165

IX. New Business

- A. **2025-267** Request for Mayor and City Council Consideration of a Resolution to Approve Change Order #1 to the Contract with East Coast Grading, Inc. for Additional Resurfacing Work and to Authorize the City Manager to Execute the Change Order

William H. Martin, Jr., AIA, Public Works Director, presented a recommendation to Approve Change Order #1 to the Contract with East Coast Grading, Inc. for Additional Resurfacing Work and to Authorize the City Manager to Execute the Change Order.

On May 20, 2025, the Mayor and City Council approved the award of a contract with East Coast Grading, Inc. in the amount of \$6,466,760.00 for the FY2025 Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (“LMIG”) Resurfacing Project (Project No.: T-3000) (the “Project”). Following contract award, the City of Sandy Springs (the “City”) received an LRA distribution from the GDOT in the amount of \$1,276,784.86, which allows the City to extend ongoing resurfacing efforts.

Based on the 2023 Pavement Condition Index (“PCI”) study prepared by MDS Technologies, Inc., the City identified further street segments for repaving and requested a quote from East Coast Grading Inc. for that work. The proposed Change Order #1 adds the LRA-funded resurfacing, striping, and related improvements to the existing LMIG project. East Coast Grading Inc. submitted a proposal for the additional work in the amount of \$1,319,562.70, which slightly exceeds the LRA distribution. The City has funds available in Project T-3000 to cover the remaining cost.

Staff has reviewed the pricing and determined that it is consistent with the unit rates established under the current contract and is reasonable for the scope of work. East Coast Grading Inc. has performed satisfactorily on the current Project and indicates they have the capability to complete the additional resurfacing work. This additional work would extend the contract performance period by sixty (60) calendar days, establishing a new project completion date of June 20, 2026.

The majority of Change Order #1 will be funded through the GDOT LRA distribution of \$1,276,784.86, with the remaining balance of \$42,777.84 to be covered by funds available in Project T-3000. Approval of this change order will increase the total contract value from \$6,466,760.00 to \$7,786,322.70.

Motion and second. A motion was made by **Councilmember Tibby DeJulio**, seconded by **Councilmember John Paulson**, to Approve Change Order #1 to the Contract with East Coast Grading, Inc. for Additional Resurfacing Work and to Authorize the City Manager to Execute the Change Order.

Councilmember Andy Bauman asked will this be extended without bidding?

Public Works Director Martin said a stipulation within the LRA is the City completes this paving work by the end of June. With this timetable, we selected the more expedient route and East Coast Grading, the lowest bidder, rather than bidding into February or March next year.

Councilmember Bauman asked is this not a policy exception to do a no bid contract with this kind of change order?

Public Works Director Martin said it is the additional scope on top of the original scope for the project bid out last year. That included asphalt repaving and more.

Councilmember Bauman said the precedent this sets is uncomfortable for me. Is the timing the reason?

Public Works Director Martin said yes, primarily. We received the lowest bid pricing and the unit prices were extended.

Councilmember Bauman asked when was the process that yielded the current basis of the pricing?

Public Works Director Martin said the contract was awarded on May 20, 2025.

Councilmember Bauman asked is the money specifically for paving or can something else be done?

Public Works Director Martin said the City can pursue sidewalk or other roadway projects for instance. Though LMIG offers a few options like pursuing projects, that money has to be expended by the end of June.

Councilmember Bauman asked where is the list of streets to be paved?

Public Works Director Martin said it is listed on the document.

Councilmember Bauman said if this body decides to table this until December 2, what would be the speediest timetable to bid it?

Public Works Director Martin said the City may not get bids in and review bidders if relying on known bidders that have good references, and can be awarded. It may be about sixty additional days to execute.

Councilmember Bauman asked will they pave in December and January?

Public Works Director Martin said this work is expected to commence late January after the contractor is mobilized, and more, to do that work. It depends on the temperature when paving can be done. This may be early spring as historically done.

Councilmember Paulson asked is the contractor using the same unit prices for the original work in May?

Public Works Director Martin said yes. There are miscellaneous mobilization costs but the cost for asphalt, striping, and repairs remains the same.

Councilmember Paulson said construction work is priced per square foot. Is the price per square foot the same as what the City received from the contractor in May?

Public Works Director Martin said yes. The price is the same for the key elements of the work.

Councilmember Paulson said some people complain about receiving notice of paving the night before. My request is that the contractor provide as much notice as possible.

Public Works Director Martin said this was also discussed with Staff. We tried to improve visibility on the paving schedule. Updates are provided on Inside Sandy Springs every two weeks within the capital projects tab.

Councilmember Paulson said this is not the same as going out to the neighborhood to let people know their street will be paved.

Public Works Director Martin said A-frame signs are also placed.

Councilmember Paulson said the signs are not very big. Let us do what we can to provide more notice.

Councilmember Melody Kelley asked how were the additional projects chosen?

Public Works Director Martin said by the PCI score and the finite dollars to work with. We tried to find those segments that fit together to create a collection of streets to repave within the three-year program.

Councilmember Kelley asked what is the PCI score ranges for these added projects?

Public Works Director Martin said low sixties at the highest and into the upper fifties across the board.

Councilmember Kelley asked what is the most efficient way for a member of the public to know how a segment is scored?

Public Works Director Martin said we can give them a forecast. For instance, if the PCI score did not put a street in the three-year program, we will give them their score that went along with their street. Also, a predictive method of degrading the street over time can be used and Staff can advise when it is due for repaving. It is usually about a point to a point and a half per year degradation on the PCI score. There are other variables such as traffic and more that can also influence that normal progression.

Councilmember Kelley asked where is the City currently in the three-year cycle?

Public Works Director Martin said this is the first year of the three year cycle.

Councilmember Melissa Mular echoed **Councilmember Paulson's** comments. Several people have also complained that the signage was small. Better notice would help the neighbors a lot.

Vote on the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Resolution No. 2025-11-166

- B. **2025-268** Request for Mayor and City Council Consideration of a Resolution to Authorize the City Manager to Execute the Proposal for Plan Year 2026 and Approve the City of Sandy Springs' Payment of Health Benefits

Elizabeth Awbrey, Human Resources & Risk Management Director, presented a recommendation to Authorize the City Manager to Execute the Proposal for Plan Year 2026 and Approve the City Springs' Payment of Health Benefits.

The City of Sandy Spring received a health benefit plan cost proposal in September 2025 for \$9,732,120.00 depending on the enrollment decisions of employees with Cigna, which is under budget. The City's 2025 costs totaled \$9,305,325.00. Cigna has been the City's health insurance provider since 2014. The 2026 projections incorporate an introduction of a third high deductible health plan and reflects an overall increase of 4.9% covering the 479 employees and dependents for a total of 1,127 people. This rate is highly competitive. We are not recommending an increase to employee premiums for the seventh consecutive year, preserving the City's competitiveness in attracting and retaining top talent.

Multiple providers declined to quote. This includes Aetna, Anthem, Captive Resources, and Kaiser Permanente. We also looked at United Healthcare for a fully insured rate, Health EZ, which was level funded, Benecon for self-insured, and had quotes ranging between 17% to 29% higher than the City's 2025 rates. This year, staff conducted a self- insurance feasibility review. One study through the City's broker returned neutral results. An independent study concluded that with the Cigna renewal at 4.9%, the City was better off fully insured for 2026. Despite that, self-insurance remains a long-term opportunity for improved controlled costs. Staff recommends re-evaluating this option next year. We are transitioning our dental plan to a self-insured model for 2026, allowing us to test our approach with minimal financial exposure.

Motion and second. A motion was made by **Councilmember John Paulson**, seconded by **Councilmember Tibby DeJulio**, to Authorize the City Manager to Execute the Proposal for Plan Year 2026 and Approve the City of Sandy Springs' Payment of Health Benefits.

Councilmember Paulson said the insurance is changing dynamically but glad the City is exploring alternatives for health benefits. I support the City saving money while covering employees. Looking forward to more details.

Councilmember DeJulio asked is it for a seventh year in a row that employees have not had an increase in their cost?

Human Resources & Risk Management Director Awbrey said yes.

Councilmember DeJulio said this is great because the City wants to retain the best employees and provide the best benefits.

Human Resources & Risk Management Director Awbrey said the City's new high deductible health plan will make the City more competitive in the marketplace because other municipalities offer this option as an employee only cost that will be at no cost. The deductible is higher but it is a great option to bring the City of Sandy Springs more into the marketplace.

Councilmember DeJulio asked does the City currently offer one of those plans?

Human Resources & Risk Management Director Awbrey said in 2026. There is a plan now, and for the new plan, the employee will not have to contribute a premium amount every paycheck which will make the City even more competitive.

Councilmember DeJulio said there are significant tax benefits to employees over the long term as they can eventually withdraw money tax-free.

Vote on the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Resolution No. 2025-11-167

- C. **2025-269** Request for Mayor and City Council Consideration of a Resolution to Approve an Increase to the Confiscated Assets Fund Budget

Eden Freeman, City Manager, presented a recommendation to Approve an Increase to the Confiscated Assets Fund Budget.

Seized assets confiscated by law enforcement agencies through forfeitures are referred to as Confiscated Assets. Governmental agencies may use these funds to cover costs associated with the forfeiture process. Remaining funds are distributed by court order for use by law enforcement agencies in support of law enforcement-related activities.

The portion allotted to the City of Sandy Springs is housed in the City's Confiscated Assets Fund, which contains both restricted and unrestricted funds. Historically, the Sandy Springs Police Department has utilized these funds to purchase equipment, technology, and training that directly support law enforcement operations, in compliance with applicable legal requirements. The Police Department has identified a need to allocate a portion of available unrestricted Confiscated Assets Fund budget to purchase lightweight shields to enhance officer safety and operational readiness.

The Police Department has fully utilized the FY26 appropriations for the Confiscated Assets Fund budget for activities such as training and uniform purchases. The proposed budget amendment of \$100,000, including \$64,000 for lightweight shields and \$36,000 for other police operations, will be funded from the Confiscated Assets Fund Balance.

Motion and second. A motion was made by **Councilmember Melody Kelley**, seconded by **Councilmember Melissa Mular**, to Approve an Increase to the Confiscated Assets Fund Budget.

Councilmember Kelley asked what is the best way to track the Confiscated Assets Fund balance?

City Manager Freeman said this may be in the monthly financial reports. **Toni Carlisle, Chief Financial Officer**, is attending the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Leadership Academy in Charleston and can provide more information when she returns.

Vote on the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Resolution No. 2025-11-168

X. Reports

- A. **2025-270** Mayor and Council Report

Mayor Rusty Paul said this Saturday at City Green, the City will have another opportunity to celebrate twenty years of Sandy Springs with Picnic in the Park. Everyone attending can bring their own food or acquire it here.

The City had Veteran's Day celebration and a good crowd of people were here. Frank Weisser, U.S. Navy Commander and Blue Angels aviator, did a phenomenal job in the program and combined high-speed flying in Hollywood. Following the program, there was a dedication of a blue star plaque in Veterans Park to recognize the service of all veterans. This is also an important day for **Councilmember John Paulson** and **Councilmember Tibby DeJulio**. Thank you to them for their hard work and everyone who participated.

The City's biggest Sparkle Parade is coming on December 7. It has become the highlight of the winter season. Looking forward to the event. Everyone is invited to participate.

Councilmember John Paulson said the GA-400 Managed Lanes project is starting and trees are being cleared in Sandy Springs now. The contractor left a hanging door sign for some houses alongside GA-400. There has not been much fanfare about this project. Can the contractor provide an update to the City and the community on the progress of what is happening?

Eden Freeman, City Manager, said GDOT and their contractor were not available to present during work session tonight. They will provide an update to Council and the public on the work they are doing after the first of the year.

Councilmember Paulson said they gave a high-level briefing at the last Perimeter Center Community Improvement District (PCID) meeting and can do the same here.

City Manager Freeman said we will follow up with them to see if they can provide an update before the end of the year.

Councilmember Melody Kelley said I attended an enjoyable fundraiser by Sandy Springs Arts Foundation which does great work in the City's public schools.

There was also a massive food distribution event in District 2, led by the Link at North Springs High School. Thank you to all the organizations involved.

District 2 is invited to have lunch with me next week Thursday at noon, at the Bistro at River Ridge in the North End. It will be Thanksgiving themed.

B. 2025-271 Staff Reports

1. September 2025 Unaudited Financials

Eden Freeman, City Manager, reviewed the September 2025 unaudited financials.

The City is at 25% of the fiscal year. Revenues are at 9.85% and expenditures are at 20.97% of the budget. The City is starting to receive funds from core revenues such as property taxes, Motor vehicle TAVT & Business Occupational. The departmental/general fund expenses are in the packet. Overall, the operating expenses are trending as projected by the approved budget. The remaining pages cover special revenue, capital projects, debt service and enterprise funds.

XI. Adjournment

Motion and vote. A motion was made by **Councilmember Tibby DeJulio**, seconded by **Councilmember**

John Paulson, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.