

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING

December 9, 2025

CONFERENCE ROOM 2

6:00 p.m.

Present: Bob Garza, Karen Dixon and Rachel Collins

Absent: None

Others Present: Mayor Jamie Clary, Jesse Eckenroth, Jason Gallo, Casey LeMarr, Keith Free, Zach Coleman, Matt Elliott (Vice-President, Fire Fighter's Association), Lance Wray, Terri Goodwin, Eddie Roberson, Mark Burgdorf, Mark Evans, Mark Skidmore, Michael Martin, Jeff Sasse, Andrew Hixson and David Luckey

Motion to Accept the Agenda

Motion: Rachel Collins

Second: Karen Dixon

Vote: Approved unanimously

Note: Chairman Garza made a motion to move number 3 in place of number 4 because the same subject is being discussed in the Finance Committee Meeting. People who need to be there are there early and will come in here later. The order will be 1, 2, 4, 3 and 5.

Motion to Approve the October 14, 2025 General Committee meeting minutes

Motion: Rachel Collins – as amended

Second: Karen Dixon

Vote: Approved unanimously as amended

Change: Karen Dixon was present. Remove her name from Absent.

Citizens Comments:

None

Ordinances and Resolutions:

Resolutions:

Reading of Resolution 2025-43, a resolution to authorize waiver of payment into the tree bank fund for qualifying nonprofit organizations

The floor was turned over to Alderman Roberson. He explained the funds have been established and in place for several years. In order to assist nonprofits, the sponsors thought that it would be a good idea to remove the requirements that nonprofits contribute to the tree bank fund when they are building a new building. This is retroactive and will go back to the beginning of the year. Rachel Collins added that Grace Place is the only location that has been identified.

Motion: Rachel Collins – Send to BOMA with a positive recommendation

Second: Karen Dixon

Vote: Approved unanimously to send to BOMA with a positive recommendation

Reading of Resolution 2025-44, a resolution to authorize a fee waiver for temporary sign permits for signs placed on city property by qualifying nonprofit organizations

Bob Garza added a line that it is being added to private property. It is not in this ordinance; but the City Attorney brought it to our attention that it will go to BOMA with public and private use and disregarding setbacks.

Alderman Dixon added that this came to her attention about a situation at Hendersonville High School with Homebound Meals. They were wanting to put out three signs. It wound up being a hefty amount which took away from their Pancake Breakfast. Bob Garza asked if we pass this tonight and at BOMA, can we refund their money? Keith Free added that he didn't think that this resolution states "retroactively". Motion: Alderman Dixon made a motion to move to BOMA with a positive recommendation understanding that it probably will have an amendment.

Second: Rachel Collins

Vote: Approved unanimously to move to BOMA with a positive recommendation

Ordinances:

Reading of Ordinance 2025-26, an ordinance amending the Hendersonville Municipal Code, Title 20 establishing credits for assessed impact fees

Chairman Garza express concern of how we vote on that at this point because it doesn't happen until number three or number five comes together. The floor was turned over to Keith Free. He explained that since we have two separate ordinances regarding development impact fees and we do not know which one or what variant that may be, the credits for the impact fees will be something we will need to focus on. As we looked at it and discussed it with the City Attorney, instead of putting it all in the ordinance not knowing which ordinance it is going to be we will have it in a separate ordinance for the credits. It doesn't exist until one of those two are passed.

Alderman Collins added that if you have impact fees, you are required to have a credit; but we do have leeway in what the credits look like and it is an important component. We need to be able to focus on getting that right and getting the impact fees right. Bob Garza added it would not exist if both failed.

Keith Free added that for credits, it is more complicated than this. The basics are that if someone makes public improvements and the project is beneficial to your project and if the other improvement that you are making have a significant impact outside your project. He gave some examples of what would be beneficial to the project versus what would be beneficial for the development.

Alderman Collins added that we anticipate having discussion at some point on the land use valuation process. There may be amendments offered by some people who did not like the way it happened in the past. That is why we wanted to pull it out and have it separate so that we could have a full conversation as individual topics.

Motion: Rachel Collins – move to BOMA with a positive recommendation

Second: Karen Dixon

Vote: Approved unanimously to send to BOMA with a positive recommendation

Reading of Ordinance 2025-25, an ordinance amending the Hendersonville Municipal Code, Title 20 establishing impact fees for the City of Hendersonville

This is only for residential. Alderman Dixon added that it has a ramp up to 2030 that the other ordinances do not have. Alderman Collins added that this is a big change for us to have impact fees; so we wanted to ease into it over time. At the end of the five-year period, we are required to re-evaluate.

There was discussion about how many houses are built in a year (250-300). It is estimated that we have approximately enough room for 2,800 houses to be built in Hendersonville. Keith Free mentioned they were in the process of updating that information. They should have the actual specific forecast by the time either one gets to BOMA. We are down to the last five to nine percent of development that doesn't already have a plan. We are looking at full build-out, depending on the rate that the development occurs, between nine and thirteen years. Presently, the City is approximately 66,500 in population. Full build-out is estimated to be between 72-73,000.

Motion: Bob Garza – move to BOMA with a neutral recommendation

Second: Rachel Collins, Karen Dixon

Vote: Approved unanimously to send to BOMA with a neutral recommendation

Reading of Ordinance 2025-23, an ordinance amending the Hendersonville Municipal Code, Title 20 establishing impact fees for the City of Hendersonville

This includes commercial and industrial with retail falling in this category. Chairman Garza explained he has very strong opinions that this would limit commercial/retail growth in the City. He would hate to lose a key retailer or key commercial company because of an impact fee. They bring in sales tax, higher property taxes than residential and jobs. Imposing an impact fee on smaller businesses could mean they look to locate in another town.

Alderman Collins asked about the square footage of Costco. Keith Free responded that there is an image showing that in the General Committee packet on pages 106 and 205 – 156,309 square feet. Alderman Collins also asked what kind of additional information we need to review before considering commercial impact fees. Jesse responded that there are financial benefits we get from commercial development that aren't as similar with residential development. Jesse also mentioned that Costco spent significantly more on off-site and infrastructure improvements. Cities can use different mechanisms. It is ideal when it is included in the project rather than collecting fees because it gets built right away with the project.

Alderman Roberson asked if the smaller developments on Main Street had to do some major side improvements. Jesse responded that they contributed toward the total cost of the traffic signal that is going at Maple and Main.

Alderman Dixon asked how you throw out one and keep the other. Mayor Clary responded that the Finance Committee voted to pass all three of these on to the Board with a neutral recommendation. Alderman Roberson added that he would like to hear debate on both ordinances from the sponsors during the next BOMA Meeting, let the staff answer and vote on either A or B. Alderman Collins suggested possibly going alphabetically with BOMA members to determine who supports which amendment.

Motion: Bob Garza – move to BOMA with a neutral recommendation

Second: Rachel Collins

Vote: Approved unanimously to send to BOMA with a neutral recommendation

Other Agenda Items:

Discussion: Request of City to demolish vacant houses

Mayor Clary explained that vacant houses in Hendersonville are kept up by the property owner. Often they are rental houses and take time to move somebody out and get a lease signed and move somebody else in. We had a resident complaint that there has been a vacant house that has not had an occupant in a long time. We have had some citations on the house; but currently it is completely in compliance. She asked if a house was vacant for so long, if it could be torn down.

Alderman Collins explained there is one in Ward 5 that has been vacant for decades that she would be fine with tearing it down. Alderman Dixon felt it was too big for government to reach in and tear someone's property down. We would definitely have to compensate them. Chairman Garza was not in favor as long as they are in compliance and all citations are paid—he didn't know how we could do that. Mayor Clary added that if you think that house needs to be torn down, you have to give us some parameters that Lance could run through and make sure it is constitutional because we would be taking someone's property.

Alderman Collins explained that the property is abandoned but the property taxes are paid and it would cost too much to tear it down. She asked if there was a way to strengthen our codes so that they are in violation or responsible for making sure that the land isn't being used inappropriately. Attorney Wray added that it would have to come through a court order declaring that it is a public nuisance because of safety or other factors. We may have to compensate the owner if there is a value. Alderman Goodwin asked if the structure could be donated as part of a controlled burn and training experience. Alderman Collins explained there is a cost to the owner to remove certain items such as insulation, etc. before they could do a controlled burn.

Other Business

Bob Garza thanked David Lucky for the letter written. City of Hendersonville is the best place to live in Tennessee!

Motion to Adjourn

Motion: Karen Dixon

Second: Rachel Collins

Vote: Approved unanimously

Upon proper motion and proper second, the meeting was adjourned at 6:36 p.m.



Bob Garza, Chairman