

CITY OF BESSEMER, ALABAMA

REGULAR SESSION

The Council of the city of Bessemer, Alabama met in regular session at the City Hall in said City on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 9:38 a.m. Central Standard Time. The meeting was called to order by Council President Jarvis Collier.

The invocation was given by Councilor Chester W. Porter and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilor Teco Stephens.

Upon roll call, the following council members were found to be present; Councilors Cleophus King, Teco Stephens, Donna Thigpen, Chester W. Porter, and Jarvis Collier. Absent: Councilors Carla F. Jackson and Sarah B. Person. City Clerk Wanda D. Taylor stated that a quorum was present and the meeting was opened for the transaction of business.

The minutes from the December 16, 2025 meeting were presented to the Council by City Clerk Wanda D. Taylor.

Councilor King made a motion to approve the minutes. Councilor Stephens seconded the motion. Upon roll call, the following votes were recorded: Ayes: Councilors Cleophus King, Teco Stephens, Donna Thigpen, Chester W. Porter, and Jarvis Collier. Nays: None. The motion carried.

Presentation, Awards, Announcements, and Recognition:

City of Bessemer Mayor Kenneth E. Gulley greeted the Council and all those in attendance. The Mayor welcomed everyone to the first City Council meeting of the new year.

City Clerk Wanda D. Taylor presented Item#6: Jefferson County Family Resource Center requesting use of the parking lot located at 2023 1st Avenue North for 2026 Food Box Distribution Dates.

RESOLUTION NO:001-26

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE PARKING LOT LOCATED AT 2023 FIRST AVENUE NORTH, BESSEMER, ALABAMA FOR USE BY JEFFERSON COUNTY FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

WHEREAS, Jefferson County Family Resource Center is a non-profit organization located at 120 2nd Court North Birmingham, Alabama which provides intake, assessment, and planning services to families in Jefferson County, Alabama; and

WHEREAS, Jefferson County Family Resource Center has requested use of the parking lot located at 2023 1st Avenue North, Bessemer, Alabama to distribute Food Boxes to families in the Bessemer area in accordance with the dates and times on the attached 2026 schedule 'Exhibit A', or on alternate dates upon notice to the city; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Bessemer finds and determines that allowing the use of the parking lot located at 2023 First Avenue North, Bessemer, Alabama, Bessemer by Jefferson County Family Resource Center to distribute Food Boxes to Bessemer residents at no charge has as its objective the promotion of the public health, safety, morals, security, prosperity, contentment and the general welfare of the community and, as such, serves a public purpose.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Bessemer, at a regularly scheduled meeting duly assembled, with a quorum being present:

1. That the governing body of the City of Bessemer hereby declares the use of the parking lot located at 2023 First Avenue North, Bessemer, Alabama by Jefferson County Family Resource Center, at no charge, has as its objective the promotion of the public health, safety, morals, security, prosperity, contentment, and the general welfare of the community and, as such, serves a public purpose.
2. That Mayor, Kenneth E. Gulley is authorized to take the necessary action to carry out the intent of this resolution and to alternate the distribution dates, if necessary, upon the request of Jefferson County Family resource Center.
3. That this resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption as required by law.

ADOPTED this the 13th day of January 2026.

Attorney Killings stated that the Jefferson County Family Resource Center is requesting permission to use the parking area located at 2023 1st Avenue North, Bessemer, Alabama, to distribute food boxes to the community. He explained that, in the event of inclement weather, the organization would notify the city if it is necessary to change the date of the service, rather than returning before the Council for approval.

Councilor King made a motion to approve the item. Councilor Porter seconded the motion. Upon roll call, the following votes were recorded: Ayes: Councilors Cleophus King, Teco Stephens, Donna Thigpen, Chester W. Porter, and Jarvis Collier. Nays: None. The motion carried.

City Clerk Wanda D. Taylor presented Item#7: A Resolution authorizing the mayor to enter into an agreement with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and accept a stipend for Youth Coach Training.

RESOLUTION NO. 002-26

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION (NRPA) AND ACCEPT A STIPEND FOR YOUTH COACH TRAINING

WHEREAS, the City of Bessemer Parks and Recreation Department is committed to ensuring that staff and volunteers working with youth possess the necessary skills and confidence to support positive youth development; and

WHEREAS, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), with support from ESPN, Inc., has offered the City of Bessemer in-kind training through the Positive Coaching Alliance and a stipend in the amount of \$2,500.00 to support the implementation of said training; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bessemer desires to participate in this program to provide up to twenty-five (25) complimentary training seats for its staff and volunteer coaches, with all training and reporting to be completed by July 31, 2026.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Bessemer, Alabama, as follows:

1. **Authorization:** The Mayor of the City of Bessemer is hereby authorized to execute the agreement with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and take all necessary actions to accept the \$2,500.00 stipend.
2. **Purpose:** The funds and in-kind services shall be used exclusively for the implementation of the coach training program as outlined in the agreement dated December 12, 2025.
3. **Compliance:** The Bessemer Parks and Recreation Department is directed to maintain all necessary records, submit required reports to the NRPA, and ensure compliance with the program terms through the four-year record retention period.
4. **ADOPTED** this the 13th day of January 2026.

Attorney Killings stated that the National Recreation and Park Association has offered a grant in the amount of \$2,500 to the City of Bessemer's Kenneth E. Gulley Recreation Center to provide coach training through the Positive Coaching Alliance.

Councilor King asked how many coaches would participate in the training and which sports would be included.

Kenneth E. Gulley Recreation Center Director, Mrs. Makeda Smith, stated that all sports programs would be included in the training and that up to 25 coaches would attend.

Councilor Stephens asked which sports are currently offered at the Recreation Center.

Mrs. Smith stated that the Recreation Center currently offers football, baseball, and basketball, and they are exploring other sports programs.

Councilor Thigpen asked where the training would take place.

Mrs. Smith stated that the training would be conducted both online and at the Recreation Center.

Councilor Thigpen made a motion to approve the item. Councilor Stephens seconded the motion. Upon roll call, the following votes were recorded: Ayes: Councilors Cleophus King, Teco Stephens, Donna Thigpen, Chester W. Porter, and Jarvis Collier. Nays: None. The motion carried.

City Clerk Wanda D. Taylor presented Item#8: Resolution appropriating funds from District 1 Discretionary funds budget line item to Latch and Live Warming Station.

RESOLUTION NO.: 003-26

A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING FUNDS FROM DISTRICT ONE (1) JARVIS COLLIER DISCRETIONARY FUND BUDGET LINE ITEM TO LATCH & LIVE WARMING PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Bessemer, Alabama, “City” appropriated funds in its fiscal year 2025-2026 budget for use by each council district. Councilor Jarvis Collier has requested that the City appropriate funds in the amount of Five Hundred Dollars and no/100 Cents (\$500.00) from District one (1) Discretionary Fund Line-Item number 001-10000-021-527067 for the purpose of providing support to Latch & Live to assist those in need of shelter from the cold weather as temperatures drop in central Alabama; and

WHEREAS, the Latch & Live Foundation whose address is 2015 10th Avenue North is a nonprofit Foundation formed in 2015 by Mara Ruffin Allen with the goal to help end homelessness by providing food and shelter; and

WHEREAS, the City Council hereby determines that providing support to Latch & Live serves a public purpose in that it has for its objective the promotion of public health, safety, morals, security, prosperity, contentment, and the general welfare of the community and, as such, serves a public purpose; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Bessemer, Alabama, at a regularly scheduled meeting duly assembled, with a quorum being present, as follows:

1. That the Sum of Five Hundred Dollars and no/100 Cents (\$500.00) is hereby appropriated in District One (1) Discretionary Fund Line-Item number 001-10000-021-527067 in the General Fund Budget for the City of Bessemer for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 is hereby approved to be paid to Latch & Live Foundation.

ADOPTED this the 13th day of January 2026.

Attorney Killings stated that Councilor Collier requested that \$500 be allocated from his discretionary funds line-item budget to the Latch and Live Foundation in support of its warming station program.

Councilor King made a motion to approve the item. Councilor Stephens seconded the motion. Upon roll call, the following votes were recorded: Ayes: Councilors Cleophus King, Teco Stephens, Donna Thigpen, and Jarvis Collier. Nays: None. Abstention: Councilor Chester W. Porter. The motion carried.

City Clerk Wanda D. Taylor presented Item#9: Resolution appropriating funds from District 3 Discretionary funds budget line item to Latch and Live for Senior Circle on February 4, 2026.

RESOLUTION NO.: 004-26

**A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING FUNDS FROM DISTRICT THREE
(3) DISCRETIONARY FUND BUDGET LINE ITEM**

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Bessemer, Alabama, “City” appropriated funds in its fiscal year 2025-2026 budget for use by each council district. Councilor Sarah Person has requested that the City appropriate funds in the total amount of One Thousand Dollars and no/100 Cents (\$1000.00) from District Three (3) Discretionary Fund line-item number 001-10000-23-527067 to collaborate with the non-profit Latch & Live Foundation for a Senior Circle meeting to promote social interaction, health awareness, and community engagement in District 3; and

WHEREAS, the City Council hereby determines that providing support to Latch & Live Foundation for the purposes stated herein serves a public purpose in that it has for its objective the promotion of public health, safety, morals, security, prosperity, contentment, and the general welfare of the community and, as such, serves a public purpose; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Bessemer, Alabama, at a regularly scheduled meeting duly assembled, with a quorum being present, as follows:

1. That the city council hereby approves the expenditure of municipal funds from District #3 Discretionary Fund line-item number 001-10000-23-527067 to Latch & Live Foundation in the Amount of One Thousand Dollars (\$1000.00),

That this resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by the City Council of the City of Bessemer, Alabama as required by law.

ADOPTED this the 13th day of January 2026.

Attorney Killings stated that Councilor Person requested that \$1,000 be allocated from the discretionary funds line-item budget to the Latch and Live Foundation to support the Senior Circle meeting scheduled for February 4, 2026.

Councilor Thigpen made a motion to approve the item. Councilor Stephens seconded the motion. Upon roll call, the following votes were recorded: Ayes: Councilors Cleophus King, Teco Stephens, Donna Thigpen, and Jarvis Collier. Nays: None. Abstention: Councilor Chester W. Porter. The motion carried.

City Clerk Wanda D. Taylor presented Item#10: Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to enter into those Agreements to perform required Water Tank Maintenance on 11 tanks of Bessemer Water Service.

RESOLUTION NO. 005-26

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF BESSEMER, ALABAMA, TO EXECUTE ELEVEN (11) WATER STORAGE TANK MAINTENANCE AND INSPECTION AGREEMENTS ON BEHALF OF BESSEMER WATER SERVICE/BESSEMER UTILITIES WITH AMERICAN TANK MAINTENANCE, LLC

WHEREAS, the City of Bessemer, Alabama (the “City”), through Bessemer Water Service/Bessemer Utilities, owns and operates multiple water storage tanks that are part of its public water system; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (“ADEM”) has promulgated regulations governing water storage tank maintenance, including ADEM Administrative Code Rule 335-7-7-.04, entitled *Water Storage Tank Maintenance*; and

WHEREAS, ADEM Administrative Code Rule 335-7-7-.04 establishes comprehensive requirements for the inspection, cleaning, maintenance, disinfection, documentation, reporting, and return to service of water storage tanks owned or operated by public water systems; and

WHEREAS, the detailed requirements of ADEM Administrative Code Rule 335-7-7-.04, including all subsections, standards, definitions, inspection and cleaning intervals, disinfection protocols, deficiency classifications, reporting obligations, record retention requirements, and professional qualification standards, are attached hereto and incorporated herein for reference and compliance (the “Maintenance Standards”); and

WHEREAS, Bessemer Water Service/Bessemer Utilities has determined that it is necessary and in the best interest of the City and its water customers to engage a qualified professional contractor to perform inspection and maintenance services in strict accordance with the Maintenance Standards; and

WHEREAS, American Tank Maintenance, LLC is a qualified tank inspection and maintenance contractor with experience inspecting and maintaining water storage tanks of similar design and size in accordance with generally recognized water utility industry standards and applicable ADEM regulations; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to enter into separate agreements with American Tank Maintenance, LLC for inspection and maintenance services for the following water storage tanks: Woodland Hills; Maxwell; 15th Street; Hueytown Tank No. 1; Hueytown Tank No. 2; Lipscomb Tank No. 1; Lipscomb Tank No. 2; Sparks Gap; Red Ore; Holbrook; and Ross Bridge (collectively, the “Water Tank Agreements”); and

WHEREAS, the cost of such services shall be as set forth in each individual agreement approved in connection with this Resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BESSEMER, ALABAMA, AS FOLLOWS:

1. Authorization of Agreements.

The Mayor of the City of Bessemer, Alabama, is hereby authorized and directed to execute, on behalf of the City and Bessemer Water Service/Bessemer Utilities, eleven (11) separate Water Storage Tank Maintenance and Inspection Agreements with American Tank Maintenance, LLC for the following water storage tanks: Woodland Hills; Maxwell; 15th Street; Hueytown Tank No. 1; Hueytown Tank No. 2; Lipscomb Tank No. 1; Lipscomb Tank No. 2; Sparks Gap; Red Ore; Holbrook; and Ross Bridge.

2. Incorporation of Maintenance Standards by Reference.

The Maintenance Standards set forth in ADEM Administrative Code Rule 335-7-7-.04, *Water Storage Tank Maintenance*, as attached hereto, are hereby expressly incorporated by reference into this Resolution and into each of the Water Tank Agreements as if fully set forth therein. All inspection, cleaning, maintenance, disinfection, reporting, corrective action, and recordkeeping services performed pursuant to the Water Tank Agreements shall strictly comply with the Maintenance Standards, as amended from time to time, and all other applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

3. Scope and Standards of Work.

All services performed pursuant to the Water Tank Agreements shall be performed in accordance with the terms and conditions of the respective agreements and in full compliance with the Maintenance Standards, including, without limitation, requirements relating to inspection and cleaning schedules, coating evaluation, disinfection in accordance with AWWA C652 (latest edition), identification and correction of significant deficiencies prior to returning a tank to service, reporting to ADEM, documentation, and record retention.

4. Costs.

The cost for services under each Water Tank Agreement shall be as set forth in the respective agreement and shall be paid from lawfully available funds of Bessemer Water Service/Bessemer Utilities.

5. Further Acts Authorized.

The Mayor, City Clerk, and other appropriate City officials are hereby authorized to take such further actions and to execute such additional documents as may be necessary or convenient to carry out the intent and purpose of this Resolution and the Water Tank Agreements.

6. Effective Date.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED this 13th day of January, 2026.

Attorney Killings stated that, during a previous planning session, Attorney Shan Paden proposed providing maintenance services for eleven water tanks owned by Bessemer Water Service. He explained that each tank requires a separate agreement due to its individual service needs. He noted that, pursuant to Alabama Administrative Code 335-7-7-.04, water storage tanks are required to be maintained on a consistent schedule.

Councilor Stephens asked if there would be scheduled maintenance for the water tank located on 15th Street.

Mayor Gulley stated that the water tank located on 15th Street is fairly new and doesn't require service at the moment.

Councilor Stephens asked why each water tank has a different contract term.

Attorney Killings stated that the water tanks are separated based on the individual maintenance needs of each tank. He explained that older tanks may need to be drained, cleaned internally, painted, or have ladders installed. He noted that each tank's service needs are determined by its age and condition.

Councilor Stephens asked whether the price would change from year to year based on the condition of each water tank.

Attorney Killings stated that it is a possibility; however, the city has an extended service contract and retains the option to opt out of the agreement at any time.

Councilor Stephens asked whether the Woodland Hills water tank would be painted since it was not included in the maintenance contract.

Bessemer Utilities Director Jerry Yarbrough stated that the Woodland Hills water tank is scheduled to be fully rehabilitated this year.

Councilor Stephens made a motion to approve the item. Councilor Porter seconded the motion. Upon roll call, the following votes were recorded: Ayes: Councilors Cleophus King, Teco Stephens, Donna Thigpen, Chester W. Porter, and Jarvis Collier. Nays: None. The motion carried.

City Clerk Wanda D. Taylor presented Item#11: Council member's comments, statements, or motions:

Councilor Porter announced that he is partnering with School Board President Terry Dawson and Tina Hamilton to host a Human Trafficking Symposium on January 26, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. at the Kenneth E. Gulley Recreation Center. He also announced that the Latch and Live Foundation will open tomorrow, as temperatures are expected to drop below 32 degrees, at Triumph the Church and Kingdom of God in Christ, located at 1431 13th Avenue North.

Councilor Porter thanked the Bessemer Public Improvements Department and the Bessemer Police Department for their response to recent dumping in his district.

Councilor King asked Mayor Gulley if additional surveillance cameras could be installed in areas prone to dumping.

Mayor Gulley stated that the city would explore other options for those areas, as some cameras have been recently destroyed.

Councilor King asked how many Environmental Officers the city currently employs.

Mayor Gulley stated that there is currently one Environmental Officer and noted that the Council would need to meet soon to discuss updating existing ordinances.

Councilor King asked Attorney Killings for an update on the matter he and Councilor Porter had begun reevaluating.

Attorney Killings stated that they have been reviewing the ordinances and working with various departments to revise them. He explained that they have discussed different aspects of the ordinances with the City Engineers, the Building Department, and the Regional Planning Commission over several months.

Councilor King asked whether the city's current system assists with updating and revising current ordinances.

Mayor Gulley stated that the system allow changes; however, the ordinances must be physically updated first.

Councilor King asked everyone to pray for students within the Bessemer City School System and surrounding areas.

Councilor Stephens suggested that the council review ordinances with the most violations first and work their way down.

Councilor Thigpen stated that, when revising the ordinances, the Council should also consider updating the fees associated with them.

Attorney Killings stated that last month the rezoning for Project Marvel was approved, and concerns were raised regarding potential interference with the Northern Belt Line, residential property lines, and environmental wildlife. He explained that, as of yesterday, the developers submitted an application with the Building & Inspections Department to acquire an additional 900 acres adjacent to the recently rezoned property. He noted that the developers are working on solutions to ensure adequate space for the

Northern Belt Line, to maintain distance from nearby property lines, and to address environmental concerns. Attorney Killings further stated that the additional rezoning process would involve open communication with the public without non-disclosure agreements.

City Clerk Wanda D. Taylor presented Item#12: Citizens Participation:

Heidi Colpo, 637 Oak Street, Bessemer, Alabama, asked the Council if there was a plan in place to address households with consistent delinquent utility accounts.

Mayor Gulley stated that delinquent residents are required to pay half of their utility balance at Bessemer Utilities and are given three months to have the account paid in full.

Councilor Porter stated that the City of Bessemer set aside one million dollars in ARPA funding last year to assist citizens experiencing hardship with utility services.

Rickey Levens, 542 Brewer Drive, Bessemer, Alabama, stated that he owns a commercial corner store in district two and expressed interest in making the property of use to the city.

City Clerk Wanda D. Taylor presented Item#13: Motion to Adjourn:

Councilors King and Thigpen made the motion to adjourn. Councilor Stephens seconded the motion. Councilor Collier adjourned the meeting.

Wanda D. Taylor

City Clerk

Presiding Officer