

The Lyerly Town Council met for their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, January 5, 2026 at Lyerly Town Hall. Those in attendance were:

Jim Ferguson
Phil Brooks
Gwen Fisher
Lindsay Peace
Eric Brown

January 5, 2026

Mayor Ferguson called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Swearing in of Newly Elected Officials – Mayor said that he would like to welcome the newly elected council members, Eric Brown and Lindsay Peace. He appreciates them running and volunteering your time to help run Lyerly. He said the first order of business is getting them sworn in and he has to do it again as well. Probate Judge Gary Woods asked the mayor to repeat the oath of office, “I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will well and truly perform the duties of Mayor of the Town of Lyerly and that I will support and defend the charter thereof as well as the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia and of the United States of America.” Judge Woods then asked him to print his name and sign the oath. Judge Woods then asked Lindsay and Eric to repeat the oath of office, “I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will well and truly perform the duties of Council Member of the Town of Lyerly and that I will support and defend the charter thereof as well as the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia and of the United States of America.” He then asked them to both print their name and sign the oaths.

Mayor Ferguson said that he just wants to go over everything that we have going on to fill in the new council members. He said from a staffing standpoint, we are doing great. We don't need anyone and everyone that we have is awesome and does a great job. Our equipment is also in a great position. Both work trucks are relatively new, the mowers are brand new, the tractor is brand new, small digger is in great shape. The one exception would be the track hoe. The cost of operating it, because it has gotten so old, is ridiculous. It stays more being worked on than used. He thinks maybe later this year or early next year, we may look at replacing it. He asked Michael Cabe what he said a replacement would cost. Michael Cabe said about \$40,000. Phil Brooks asked if we could use SPLOST for that and Mayor Ferguson said yes. He said that we can wait about halfway through the year and see how SPLOST is looking and address it then. Phil Brooks asked Michael Cabe if it would make it that long. Micheal Cabe said yes. Mayor Ferguson said that he looked at trading in the work truck that we bought in 2020. It has about 105,000 miles on it. A new one is \$72,000. He thinks we can put a few more miles on the one we have.

He said that our Fire Department is fully staffed with 16 certified firefighters and their equipment is fine. They don't need anything major, just small things.

He said that they passed the 2026 budget last month and we operated inside the 2025 budget that was passed in 2024. We took over ownership and management of Lyerly Cemetery from the Baptist Church. Papers have been signed and deed should be transferred. We should have 10 years of operating funds that they will hand over to us to pay for the mowing and upkeep. We will continue with the current company that does that. We have about 250 graves that can be sold, and if his math is correct, that should put us around 25 years of operating cost/maintenance covered.

He said that some of the pressing issues that we have is PFAS in the water. Basically, what happened is the Georgia EPD changed the allowable amount of PFAS in a water sample from something that we were below to zero. And so now it has to be non-detectable and ours isn't. It is only one of our two wells that has PFAS in it, but it is a well that we can't operate without. So at the moment, we have hired an engineering firm that has installed a filter system at that well and we are trying to determine what the best filter system would be for us long term. Gwen Fisher asked if the home

refrigerator filters filter out PFAS. Phil Brooks said that some do. Lindsay Peace said that they just installed an under the counter industrial filter because of that. Mayor Ferguson asked how much that cost. Lindsay Peace said it was about \$450. Mayor Ferguson then asked how long the filters last. Lindsay Peace said she isn't sure yet because they just did it, but she thinks about 6 months, and they cost about \$150. Mayor Ferguson said that \$300 a year to operate isn't too bad. He added that we have sued, independently, not as part of a class action, all the carpets companies that could be responsible for PFAS. Hopefully that will settle this year. He was hoping it would settle last year but it should be close. He can't begin to guess what that settlement may be, but it should be more than enough to pay for the filter system that we need.

He said that the Ragland Building, we refurbished the outside but honestly, he is at a loss for what it could be used for. So, if anyone has any suggestions at any point, please let him know. He added that we just had the small building attached to the community center donated to us by the Tanner estate. He said we will probably use that as storage for the community center. Michael Cabe said that it is probably ¾ of the way finished. GDOT used it as an office years ago and they may be coming back into town for the work on the culvert replacements on Highway 114 so they may need it again. Mayor Ferguson said that would be great.

Clerk Sally Kerce said that someone came in today and asked if they rented the old Lucky's, could they turn it into a dance hall. We have no ordinance against that, so I told them yes. Mayor Ferguson said that he would need a definition of what they consider a dance hall. Clerk Sally Kerce said that he is supposed to talk to the owner about renting it and then let her know if they do. Mayor Ferguson said in its current condition, there is no way. You would have to spend a lot of money on it. The ceiling is falling in and the roof leaks.

Gwen Fisher asked if we still have fluoride in our water. Michael Cabe said yes. We had to ask for a modification to our permit and until that permit is in our hand, we have to continue adding it. Clerk Sally Kerce said that they emailed and asked for proof that 10% of our registered voters did vote on the question. She said that she sent the paperwork showing that we have 318 registered voters and we had 48 votes. 16 voted to Yes to continue adding fluoride and 32 voted No to not continue adding it.

Mayor Ferguson said that the only other thing he has is, and maybe we won't have to face it during our terms, but the sewer pond is going to have to be replaced. Mayor Ferguson said we may need to be thinking where we would put it. Phil Brooks said that is right. We can't put it back where it already is. Mayor Ferguson said that we have to have one operating while the new one is being constructed.

Mayor Ferguson asked if anyone has anything else or any questions. Lindsay Peace said that when the mayor brought up the Ragland building, she had been thinking about it being empty. She knows people have set up out in the parking lot selling produce and things before. Has anyone thought about renting spaces inside for an indoor flea market or trade day on a certain day of the week. Mayor Ferguson said that is a temporary possibility to get some kind of money coming in. He said the only issue he can think of is it might be hot in there in the summertime. Eric Brown said we would also be liable if something happened. We could get them to sign a waiver. Mayor Ferguson said yes, they would have to sign something.

Phil Brooks made a motion to adjourn. Gwen Fisher seconded. All in favor.
Meeting was adjourned at 6:21pm.

Mayor

Town Clerk