



**CITY OF RICHMOND HILL
MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

**Tuesday, January 6, 2026
6:00 PM**

**Richmond Hill City Center
520 Cedar Street
Richmond Hill, Georgia 31324**

Present from City Council: Russ Carpenter, Outgoing Mayor, Kristi Cox, Incoming Mayor; Councilmembers: Van Hunter (Post 3) and Steve Scholar (Post 4); and incoming councilmembers Cindy Hatala (Post 1) and Kevin Bowes (Post 2)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 P.M. by City Clerk Dawnne Greene.

Invocation

The invocation was delivered by Ryan Purvis, CEO of the Development Authority of Bryan County.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Fort Stewart Garrison Commander Col. Gabe Weaver.

Acknowledgment of Guests

Special guests in attendance for the inaugural ceremony were acknowledged.

Special Recognition

Special recognition was given to outgoing Mayor Russ Carpenter for his years of service to the City of Richmond Hill.

Swearing-In Ceremony

The following newly elected officials were sworn into office by Bryan County Probate Judge Billy Reynolds on January 6, 2026:

Councilmember Cindy Hatala (Post 1):

Oath: "I, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the laws of the State of Georgia; I am qualified to hold the office of Councilmember for the City of Richmond Hill according to the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia; I am not the holder of any office of trust under the government of the United States, any other state, or any foreign state which I am prohibited from holding by the laws of the State of Georgia; I am not the holder of any unaccounted for public money due this state of any political subdivision or authority thereof; and that I will well and truly perform the duties of Councilmember of the City of Richmond Hill to the best of my skill and ability, without favor or affection, so help me God."

Councilmember Kevin P. Bowes (Post 2):

Oath: "I, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the laws of the State of Georgia; I am qualified to hold the office of Councilmember for the City of Richmond Hill according to the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia; I am not the holder of any office of trust under the government of the United States, any other state, or any foreign state which I am prohibited from holding by the laws of the State of Georgia; I am not the holder of any unaccounted for public money due this state of any political subdivision or authority thereof; and that I will well and truly perform the duties of Councilmember of the City of Richmond Hill to the best of my skill and ability, without favor or affection, so help me God."

Mayor Kristi Cox:

Oath: "I, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the laws of the State of Georgia; I am qualified to hold the office of Mayor for the City of Richmond Hill according to the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia; I am not the holder of any office of trust under the government of the United States, any other state, or any foreign state which I am prohibited from holding by the laws of the State of Georgia; I am not the holder of any unaccounted for public money due this state of any political subdivision or authority thereof; and that I will well and truly perform the duties of Mayor of the City of Richmond Hill to the best of my skill and ability, without favor or affection, so help me God."

Inaugural Address

Following the swearing-in, Mayor Kristi Cox delivered her inaugural address to the city, outlining her vision for the future of Richmond Hill, focusing on community unity, transparency, and sustainable growth.

Election and Swearing-In of Mayor Pro-Tem

Councilmember Bowes made a motion to table the election and swearing-in of Mayor Pro-Tem to the next meeting. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Hatala. Councilmember Hunter shared guidance from the City Attorney regarding the timing of the Mayor Pro-Tem election. He stated that while city protocol dictates the election should take place at the first meeting in January following a general election, the City Attorney confirmed the Council maintains the legal authority to table the matter until the next scheduled meeting. The motion carried by Councilmembers Hatala, Bowes, and Scholar. Councilmember Hunter was opposed.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:26 p.m.