

STATE OF GEORGIA

CITY OF WALNUT GROVE

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-01

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF ORDINANCES, CITY OF WALNUT GROVE, GEORGIA, TO ESTABLISH A HOMETOWN HEROS PROGRAM AND THE HOMETOWN HEROS COMMITTEE.

WHEREAS, the governing authority of the City of Walnut Grove, Georgia is the Mayor and Council thereof; and

WHEREAS, sound governmental operations require the boards and authorities of the City to have rules governing their operations, and administration; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to acknowledge the service and sacrifices made by residents as military veterans and first responders; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council expressly find that this Ordinance and the regulations outlined below will effectively establish a mechanism to honor community members through an established program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Walnut Grove, Georgia, and it is hereby ordained by authority of the same, as follows:

Section 1. That the following chapter be added “Chapter 35 Hometown Heros Program” of Code of Ordinances of Walnut Grove, Georgia:

Article I – In General

Sec. 35-1. Overview

1. The Hometown Heros program is intended to be a mechanism of honoring those in the City of Walnut Grove for their service as a member of the United States military



or as a first responder. This ordinance does not confer any rights, benefits, or compensation of any kind.

Article II – Development of Program

Sec. 35-2. Program Features

1. The Hometown Heros Program will proudly recognize each approved honoree on banners throughout the City of Walnut Grove.
 - a) Each banner will display a specific honoree including his or her name, image, branch of service or type of service, service dates, and any applicable wars or operations.
 - b) An aggregate display will be established by the City showing all honorees in one location.
 - c) Honorees will be admitted into the program through an annual ceremony coordinated by the city and the Hometown Heros Committee.

Sec. 35-3. Criteria

1. Candidates for admission into the program must show proof of the following: honorable discharge, current service, proof of wars or operations, and residency or past residency of a sponsored family member if the candidate is deceased. If the candidate is a first responder an employment verification letter, certificate of retirement, or other validating proof of honorable service.
2. Candidates may be living or deceased and may be nominated by a family member or others within the community.

Sec. 35-4. Banners

1. Though no fee will be established for an application to the program, a fee set

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annually by the City of Walnut Grove will be established for the purchase of banners at the cost of creating the banner.

2. Banners will be hung from approximately May through mid-November in order to protect the banners from foul weather.
3. Banners may be sponsored by family members, individuals, businesses, or organizations. If someone would like to sponsor a banner but does not know an honoree, the committee will pair the donor with a qualified honoree.
4. Banners in need of repair or replacement will be coordinated with the committee, and the fee will be at the cost of repair to the individual or sponsor.

Article III- Hometown Heros Committee

Sec. 35-5. Creation and Purpose

1. In order to guide and accomplish the goal of this program, the Hometown Heros Committee will be established to coordinate the mandates of this ordinance, verify applications, and coordinate with sponsors and individuals.

Sec. 35-6. Membership

1. The Hometown Heros Committee shall consist of a three-member panel who shall reside within the city limits of Walnut Grove. Members shall be appointed by the mayor and city council. A minimum of one member must be a military veteran, first responder, or retired first responder. The terms of the members shall be for four (4) years and run concurrent. Members may be appointed for consecutive terms with no limit on the number of terms. Any vacancy in membership shall be filled for the unexpired term by the council who shall also have the authority to remove any member for cause, on written charges, after a public hearing. All members will

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serve as voluntary members of this committee. Members shall abide by the same ethical standards set forth in the City of Walnut Grove Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, Article II, Sec. 4.

Sec. 35-7. Organization; rules

1. The committee shall elect a chair at the first meeting of the calendar year. The chair shall remain the chair for only the calendar year unless elected by the committee the following year.
2. The committee shall create its own bylaws that must conform to this ordinance. By-laws must be formally adopted by City Council through a resolution.
3. Meetings of the committee shall be open to the public and advertised on the city website and location of the meeting one week in advance.
4. Meeting minutes must be submitted to the city clerk within 24 hours.
5. The committee shall have the right to hold executive sessions as permitted by state law.

Sec. 35-8. Staff, Finances

1. The city administrator may appoint such employees as it may deem necessary for the work of the Hometown Heros Committee.
2. The expenditures of the committee, exclusive of donations, shall be within the amounts appropriated for the purpose by the mayor and city council.

Sec. 35-9. Powers and Duties.

1. The committee shall act in an advisory capacity to the city council, and in that capacity shall prepare and recommend for adoption by the council:
 - a. Nominations of candidates into the program.

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- b. A plan for execution of the annual ceremony within the appropriate funds from council or donations received.
 - c. A duty to coordinate with all associated vendors for banners, displays, and events.
2. It shall be the duty of the committee to make such careful and comprehensive reviews of all applications to the program in an effort to maintain public trust and uphold the integrity of the program.
3. The committee shall not have the power or authority to utilize sponsored funds for an individual honoree for any other purpose than those outlined in this ordinance.
4. The committee shall have the duty to submit a monthly report of accounts, expenditures, and donations received.

Section 2. Except as provided otherwise herein, all ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 3. Pursuant to the Section 3.14 of the City Charter, authority is hereby delegated to the City Clerk to cause this Ordinance to be numbered and codified in the City Code of Walnut Grove, Georgia, in such a way as to place this Ordinance in the Code in an organized and orderly sequence to maximize the organization of the Code. The City Clerk is authorized to designate to the City Attorney or to such other Mayor and Council approved contractors to assist in the effort to codify this provision provided the decision of the City Clerk is final as to the placement of this Ordinance within the City Code of Walnut Grove, Georgia. The goal of this authorization is to codify and number this Ordinance in the Code in such a way as to be clear and orderly.

Section 4. This ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by the Mayor and

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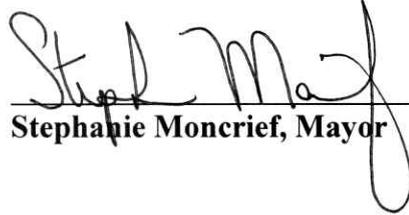
3.

Council of the City of Walnut Grove, Georgia.

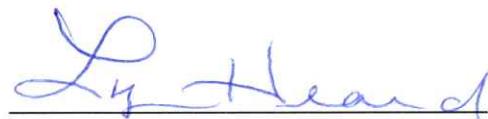
Section 5. It is hereby declared that if any phrase, sentence, or paragraph hereof shall be found or declared unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining phrases, sentences and paragraphs hereof shall remain in full force and effect as if enacted without the phrase, sentence, or paragraph declared unconstitutional or invalid.

SO ORDAINED this 12 day of February 2026.

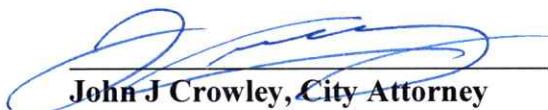
City of Walnut Grove, Georgia


Stephanie Moncrief, Mayor

ATTEST:


Lynn Heard, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


John J. Crowley, City Attorney
Powell & Crowley, LLP

