

House Bill 3EX

By: Representatives Watson of the 172nd and Taylor of the 173rd

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To provide a new charter for the City of Coolidge; to provide for incorporation, boundaries,
2 and powers of the city; to provide for the exercise of powers and limitations on powers; to
3 provide for a governing authority of such city and the powers, duties, authority, prohibitions,
4 elections, terms, removal from office, method of filling vacancies, compensation, expenses,
5 and qualifications; to provide for conflict of interest and holding other offices; to provide for
6 inquiries and investigations; to provide for organization and meeting procedures; to provide
7 for ordinances; to provide for eminent domain; to provide for codes; to provide for the office
8 of mayor and certain duties and powers relative to the office of mayor; to provide for a veto;
9 to provide for a mayor pro tem; to provide for a city manager; to provide for administrative
10 responsibilities; to provide for boards, commissions, and authorities; to provide for a city
11 attorney, city clerk, and other personnel; to provide for the establishment of a municipal court
12 and the judge or judges thereof; to provide for practices and procedures; to provide for
13 indigent defense and prosecutor; to provide for taxation, permits, and fees; to provide for
14 franchises, service charges, and assessments; to provide for bonded and other indebtedness;
15 to provide for accounting and budgeting; to provide for contracting and purchasing; to
16 provide for sale of city property; to provide for bonds for officials; to provide for pending
17 matters; to provide for definitions and construction; to provide for severability; to provide
18 for related matters; to repeal specific Acts; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

H. B. 3EX

- 1 -

19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

20 **ARTICLE I**
21 **INCORPORATION AND POWERS**

22 **SECTION 1.10.**
23 **Name.**

24 This city and the inhabitants thereof are reincorporated by the enactment of this charter and
25 are hereby constituted and declared a body politic and corporate under the name and style
26 City of Coolidge, Georgia, and by that name shall have perpetual existence.

27 **SECTION 1.11.**
28 **Corporate Boundaries.**

29 (a) The boundaries of this city shall be those existing on the effective date of the adoption
30 of this charter with such alterations as may be made from time to time in the manner
31 provided by law. The boundaries of this city at all times shall be shown on a map to be
32 retained permanently in the City of Coolidge City Hall and to be identified by the city clerk
33 as the Official Map of the Corporate Limits of the City of Coolidge, Georgia. Photographic,
34 typed, or other copy of such map or description certified by the City of Coolidge shall be
35 admitted as evidence in all courts and shall have the same force and effect as with the
36 original map or description.

37 (b) The city council may provide by ordinance for the redrawing of any such map to reflect
38 lawful changes in the corporate boundaries. A redrawn map shall supersede for all purposes
39 the entire map or maps which it is designated to replace.

SECTION 1.12.**Powers and construction.**

(a) This city shall have all powers possible for a city to have under the present or future Constitution and laws of this state as fully and completely as though they were specifically enumerated in this charter. This city shall have all the powers of self-government not otherwise prohibited by this charter or by general law.

(b) The powers of this city shall be construed liberally in favor of the city. The specific mention or failure to mention particular powers shall not be construed as limiting in any way the powers of this city.

SECTION 1.13.**Specific powers.**

(a) Animal Regulations. To regulate and license or to prohibit the keeping or running at-large of animals and fowl, and to provide for the impoundment of the same if in violation of any ordinance or lawful order; to provide for the disposition by sale, gift, or humane destruction of animals and fowl when not redeemed as provided by ordinance; and to provide for punishment for violation of ordinances enacted hereunder.

(b) Appropriations and Expenditures. To make appropriations for the support of the government of the city; to authorize the expenditure of money for any purposes authorized by this charter or for municipalities by the laws of the State of Georgia; and to provide for the payment of expenses of the city.

(c) Building Regulation. To regulate and to license the erection and construction of buildings and all other structures; to adopt building, housing, plumbing, electrical, gas, and heating and air conditioning codes; and to regulate all housing and building trades.

63 (d) Business Regulation and Taxation. To levy and to provide for the collection of
64 regulatory fees and taxes on privileges, occupations, trades, and professions as authorized
65 by Title 48 of the O.C.G.A., or other such applicable laws as are or may hereafter be enacted;
66 to permit and regulate the same; to provide for the manner and method of payment of such
67 regulatory fees and taxes; and to revoke such permits after due process for failure to pay any
68 city taxes or fees.

69 (e) Condemnation. To condemn property inside or outside the corporate limits of the city
70 for present or future use and for any corporate purpose deemed necessary by the governing
71 authority, utilizing procedures provided by the O.C.G.A. as the same shall exist from time
72 to time.

73 (f) Contracts. To enter into contracts and agreements with other governmental entities and
74 with private persons, firms, and corporations.

75 (g) Emergencies. To establish procedures for determining and proclaiming that an
76 emergency situation exists within or without the city, and to make and carry out all
77 reasonable provisions deemed necessary to deal with or meet such an emergency for the
78 protection, safety, health, or well-being of the citizens of the city.

79 (h) Environmental Protection. To protect and preserve the natural resources, environment,
80 and vital areas of the city through the preservation and improvement of air quality, the
81 restoration and maintenance of water resources, the control of erosion and sedimentation, the
82 management of solid and hazardous waste, and other necessary actions for the protection of
83 the environment.

84 (i) Fire Regulations. To fix and establish fire limits and from time to time to extend,
85 enlarge, or restrict the same; to prescribe fire safety regulations not inconsistent with general
86 law relating to fire prevention and detection and to fire fighting; and to prescribe penalties
87 and punishment for violations thereof.

88 (j) Garbage Fees. To levy, fix, assess, and collect a garbage, refuse, and trash collection and
89 disposal, and other sanitary service charge, tax, or fee for such services as may be necessary

in the operation of the city from all individuals, firms, and corporations residing in or doing business therein benefiting from such services or to whom such services are available; to enforce the payment of such charges, taxes, or fees; and to provide for the manner and method of collecting such service charges.

(k) General Health, Safety, and Welfare. To define, regulate, and prohibit any act, practice, conduct, or use of property which is detrimental to health, sanitation, cleanliness, welfare, and safety of the inhabitants of the city, and to provide for the enforcement of such standards.

(l) Gifts. To accept or refuse gifts, donations, bequests, or grants from any source for any purpose related to powers and duties of the city and the general welfare of its citizens, on such terms and conditions as the donor or grantor may impose.

(m) Health and Sanitation. To prescribe standards of health and sanitation and to provide for the enforcement of such standards.

(n) Jail Sentences. To provide that persons given jail sentences in the city's court may work out such sentences in any public works or on the streets, roads, drains, and other public property in the city; to provide for commitment of such persons to any jail; or to provide for commitment of such persons to any county work camp or county jail by agreement with the appropriate county officials.

(o) Motor Vehicles. To regulate the operation of motor vehicles and exercise control over all traffic, including parking upon or across the streets, roads, alleys, and walkways of the city.

(p) Municipal Agencies and Delegation of Power. To create, alter, or abolish departments, boards, offices, commissions, and agencies of the city, and to confer upon such agencies the necessary and appropriate authority for carrying out all the powers conferred upon or delegated to the same.

(q) Municipal Debts. To appropriate and borrow money for the payment of debts of the city and to issue bonds for the purpose of raising revenue to carry out any project, program, or venture authorized by this charter and the laws of the State of Georgia.

- 117 (r) Municipal Property Ownership. To acquire, dispose of, lease, option, and hold in trust
118 or otherwise, any real, personal, or mixed property, in fee simple or lesser interest, inside or
119 outside the property limits of the city.
- 120 (s) Municipal Property Protection. To provide for the preservation and protection of
121 property and equipment of the city and the administration and use of same by the public, and
122 to prescribe penalties and punishment for violations thereof.
- 123 (t) Municipal Utilities. To acquire, lease, construct, operate, maintain, sell, and dispose of
124 public utilities, including, but not limited to, a system of waterworks, sewers and drains,
125 sewage disposal, gas works, electric light plants, cable television, and other
126 telecommunications, transportation facilities, public airports, and any other public utility; and
127 to fix the taxes, charges, rates, fares, fees, assessments, regulations, and penalties, and to
128 provide for the withdrawal of service for refusal or failure to pay the same.
- 129 (u) Nuisance. To define a nuisance and provide for its abatement whether on public or
130 private property.
- 131 (v) Penalties. To provide penalties for violation of any ordinances adopted pursuant to the
132 authority of this charter and the laws of the State of Georgia.
- 133 (w) Planning and Zoning. To provide comprehensive city planning for development by
134 zoning; and to provide subdivision regulations and the like as the city council deems
135 necessary and reasonable to ensure a safe, healthy, and aesthetically pleasing community.
- 136 (x) Police and Fire Protection. To exercise the power of arrest through duly appointed
137 police personnel; and to establish, operate, or contract for police and fire fighting agencies.
- 138 (y) Removal of Public Hazards. To provide for the destruction and removal of any building
139 or other structure which is or may become dangerous or detrimental to the public.
- 140 (z) Public Improvements. To provide for the acquisition, construction, building, operation,
141 and maintenance of public ways, parks and playgrounds, recreational facilities, cemeteries,
142 markets and market houses, public buildings, libraries, public housing, airports, hospitals,
143 terminals, docks, parking facilities, or charitable, cultural, educational, recreational,

144 conservation, sport, curative, corrective, detentional, penal, and medical institutions,
145 agencies, and facilities; and to provide any other public improvements, inside or outside the
146 corporate limits of the city; to regulate the use of public improvements; and for such
147 purposes property may be acquired by condemnation under procedures provided by the
148 O.C.G.A. as the same shall exist from time to time.

149 (aa) Public Peace. To provide for the prevention and punishment of drunkenness, riots, and
150 public disturbances.

151 (bb) Public Transportation. To organize and operate such public transportation systems as
152 are deemed beneficial.

153 (cc) Public Utilities and Services. To grant franchises or make contracts for, or impose taxes
154 on, public utilities and public service companies; and to prescribe the rates, fares, regulations
155 and standards, and conditions of service applicable to the service to be provided by the
156 franchise grantee or contractor, insofar as not in conflict with valid regulations of the Public
157 Service Commission.

158 (dd) Regulation of Roadside Areas. To prohibit or regulate and control the erection,
159 removal, and maintenance of signs, billboards, trees, shrubs, fences, buildings, and any and
160 all other structures or obstructions upon or adjacent to the rights-of-way of streets and roads
161 or within view thereof, within or abutting the corporate limits of the city; and to prescribe
162 penalties and punishment for violation of such ordinances.

163 (ee) Retirement. To provide and maintain a retirement plan for officers and employees of
164 the city.

165 (ff) Roadways. To lay out, open, extend, widen, narrow, establish, or change the grade of,
166 abandon or close, construct, pave, curb, gutter, provide drainage for, adorn with shade trees,
167 or otherwise improve, maintain, repair, clean, prevent erosion of, and light the roads, alleys,
168 and walkways within the corporate limits of the city; and to grant franchises and
169 rights-of-way throughout the streets and roads and over the bridges and viaducts for the use

170 of public utilities; and to require real estate owners to repair and maintain in a safe condition
171 the sidewalks adjoining their lots or lands; and to impose penalties for failure to do so.

172 (gg) Sewer Fees. To levy a fee, charge, or sewer tax as necessary to ensure the acquiring,
173 constructing, equipping, operating, maintaining, and extending of a sanitary sewage disposal
174 plant and sewerage system; and to levy on those to whom sewers and sewerage systems are
175 made available a sewer service fee, charge, or sewer tax for the availability or use of the
176 sewers; to provide for the manner and method of collecting such service charges and for
177 enforcing payment of the same; and to charge, impose, and collect a sewer connection fee
178 or fees to those connected with the system.

179 (hh) Solid Waste Disposal. To provide for the collection and disposal of garbage, rubbish,
180 and refuse, and to regulate the collection and disposal of garbage, rubbish, and refuse by
181 others; and to provide for the separate collection of glass, tin, aluminum, cardboard, paper,
182 and other recyclable materials.

183 (ii) Special Areas of Public Regulation. To regulate or prohibit junk dealers; pawn shops;
184 the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors; and the use and sale of
185 firearms; to regulate the transportation, storage, and use of combustible, explosive, and
186 inflammable materials; the use of lighting and hearing equipment; and any other business or
187 situation which the city may deem to be dangerous to persons or property; to regulate and
188 control the conduct of peddlers and itinerant traders; theatrical performances, exhibitions,
189 and shows of any kind, by taxation or otherwise; and to license, tax, regulate, or prohibit
190 professional fortune-telling, palmistry, adult bookstores, and massage parlors.

191 (jj) Special Assessments. To levy and provide for the collection of special assessments to
192 cover the costs for any public improvements.

193 (kk) Taxes: Ad Valorem. To levy and provide for the assessment, valuation, revaluation,
194 and collection of taxes on all property subject to taxation.

195 (ll) Taxes: Other. To levy and collect such other taxes as may be allowed now or in the
196 future by law.

197 (mm) Taxicabs. To regulate and license vehicles operated for hire in the city; to limit the
198 number of such vehicles; to require the operators thereof to be licensed; to require public
199 liability insurance on such vehicles in the amounts to be prescribed by ordinance; and to
200 regulate the parking of such vehicles.

201 (nn) Urban Redevelopment. To organize and operate an urban redevelopment program.

202 (oo) Other Powers. To exercise and enjoy all other powers, functions, rights, privileges, and
203 immunities necessary or desirable to promote or protect the safety, health, peace, security,
204 good order, comfort, convenience, or general welfare of the city and its inhabitants; and to
205 exercise all implied powers necessary or desirable to carry into execution all powers granted
206 in this charter as fully and completely as if such powers were fully stated herein; and to
207 exercise all powers now or in the future authorized to be exercised by other municipal
208 governments under other laws of the State of Georgia; and no listing of particular powers in
209 this charter shall be held to be exclusive of others, nor restrictive of general words and
210 phrases granting powers, but shall be held to be in addition to such powers, unless expressly
211 prohibited to municipalities under the Constitution or applicable laws of the State of Georgia.

212 **SECTION 1.14.**

213 **Exercise of powers.**

214 All powers, functions, rights, privileges, and immunities of the city, its officers, agencies, or
215 employees shall be carried into execution as provided by this charter. If this charter makes
216 no provisions, such shall be carried into execution as provided by ordinance or as provided
217 by pertinent laws of the State of Georgia.

218 **ARTICLE II**
219 **GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE**

220 **SECTION 2.10.**

221 City council creation; number; election.

222 The legislative authority of the government of this city, except as otherwise specifically
223 provided in this charter, shall be vested in a city council to be composed of a mayor and six
224 councilmembers. The city council established shall in all respects be a successor to and
225 continuation of the governing authority under prior law. The mayor and councilmembers
226 shall be elected in the manner provided by general law and this charter.

227 **SECTION 2.11.**

228 City council terms and qualifications for office.

229 The members of the city council shall serve for terms of four years and until their respective
230 successors are elected and qualified. No person shall be eligible to serve as mayor or
231 councilmember unless that person shall have been a resident of the city for 12 months prior
232 to the date of election of mayor or members of the council; each shall continue to reside
233 therein during that member's period of service and to be registered and qualified to vote in
234 municipal elections of this city.

SECTION 2.12.

Vacancy; filling of vacancies.

(a) Vacancies - The office of mayor or councilmember shall become vacant upon the occurrence of any event specified by the Constitution of the State of Georgia, Title 45 of the O.C.G.A., or such other applicable laws as are or may hereafter be enacted.

(b) Filling of Vacancies - A vacancy in the office of mayor shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term by the mayor if less than 12 months remain in the unexpired term, and shall be otherwise filled by an election as provided for in Section 5.14 of this charter and in accordance with Titles 21 and 45 of the O.C.G.A. or such other laws as are or may hereafter be enacted. A vacancy in the office of councilmember shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term, if any, by appointment of less than 12 months remain in the unexpired term, and shall be otherwise filled by an election as provided for in Section 5.14 of this charter and Titles 21 and 45 of the O.C.G.A. or such other laws as are or may hereafter be enacted.

(c) Suspension - Upon the suspension from office of mayor or councilmember in any manner authorized by the general laws of the State of Georgia, the city council or those remaining shall appoint a successor for the duration of the suspension. If the suspension becomes permanent, then the office shall become vacant and shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term, if any, as provided for in this charter.

SECTION 2.13.

Compensation and expenses.

The mayor and councilmembers shall receive compensation and expenses for their services as provided by ordinance.

SECTION 2.14.

Holding other office; voting when financially interested.

(a) Fiduciary Capacity - Elected and appointed officers of the city are trustees and servants of the residents of the city and shall act in a fiduciary capacity for the benefit of such residents.

(b) Conflict of Interest - No elected official, appointed officer, or employee of the city or any agency or political entity to which this charter applies shall knowingly:

(1) Engage in any business or transaction, or have a financial interest or other personal interest, direct or indirect, which is incompatible with the proper discharge of that person's official duties or which would tend to impair the independence of that person's judgment or action in the performance of that person's official duties;

(2) Engage in or accept private employment, or render services for private interests when such employment or service is incompatible with the proper discharge of that person's official duties or would tend to impair the independence of that person's judgment or action in the performance of that person's official duties;

(3) Disclose confidential information, including information obtained at meetings which are closed pursuant to Chapter 14 of Title 50 of the O.C.G.A., concerning the property, government, or affairs of the governmental body by which that person is engaged without proper legal authorization; or use such information to advance the financial or other private interest of that person or others;

(4) Accept any valuable gift, whether in the form of service, loan, thing, or promise, from any person, firm, or corporation which to that person's knowledge is interested, directly or indirectly, in any manner whatsoever, in business dealings with the governmental body by which that person is engaged; provided, however, that an elected official who is a candidate for public office may accept campaign contributions and services in connection with any such campaign;

283 (5) Represent other private interests in any action or proceeding against this city or any
284 portion of its government; or

285 (6) Vote or otherwise participate in the negotiation or in the making of any contract with
286 any business or entity in which that person has a financial interest.

287 (c) Disclosure - Any elected official, appointed officer, or employee who shall have any
288 financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any contract or matter pending before or within
289 any department of the city shall disclose such interest to the city council. The mayor or any
290 councilmember who has a financial interest in any matter pending before the city council
291 shall disclose such interest and such disclosure shall be entered on the records of the city
292 council, and that person shall disqualify himself or herself from participating in any decision
293 or vote relating thereto. Any elected official, appointed officer, or employee of any agency
294 or political entity to which this charter applies who shall have any financial interest, directly
295 or indirectly, in any contract or matter pending before or within such entity shall disclose
296 such interest to the governing body of such agency or entity.

297 (d) Use of Public Property - No elected official, appointed officer, or employee of the city
298 or any agency or entity to which this charter applies shall use property owned by such
299 governmental entity for personal benefit, convenience, or profit except in accordance with
300 policies promulgated by the city council or the governing body of such agency or entity.

301 (e) Contracts Voidable and Rescindable - Any violation of this section which occurs with
302 the knowledge, express or implied, of a party to a contract or sale shall render said contract
303 or sale voidable at the option of the city council.

304 (f) Ineligibility of Elected Official - Except where authorized by law, neither the mayor nor
305 any councilmember shall hold any other elective or compensated appointive office in the city
306 or otherwise be employed by said government or any agency thereof during the term for
307 which that person was elected. No former councilmember and no former mayor shall hold
308 any compensated appointive office in the city until two years after the expiration of the term
309 for which that official was elected.

310 (g) Political Activities of Certain Officers and Employees - No appointed officer of the city
311 shall continue in such employment upon qualifying as a candidate for nomination or election
312 to any public office. No employee of the city shall continue in such employment upon
313 qualifying for any public office in this city or upon qualifying for any other public office
314 which is inconsistent, incompatible, or in conflict with the duties of the city employee. Such
315 determination shall be made by the mayor and council either immediately upon qualifying
316 or at any time such conflict may arise.

317 (h) Penalties for Violation:

318 (1) Any city officer or employee who knowingly conceals such financial interest or
319 knowingly violates any of the requirements of this section shall be guilty of malfeasance
320 in office or position and shall be deemed to have forfeited that person's office or position;
321 and

322 (2) Any city officer or employee who shall forfeit that person's office or position as
323 described in paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be ineligible for appointment or
324 election to or employment in a position in the city government for a period of five years
325 thereafter.

326 **SECTION 2.15.**

327 **Inquiries and investigations.**

328 Following the adoption of an authorizing resolution, the city council may make inquiries and
329 investigations into the affairs of the city and the conduct of any department, office, or agency
330 thereof, and for this purpose may subpoena witnesses, administer oaths, take testimony, and
331 require the production of evidence. Any person who fails or refuses to obey a lawful order
332 issued in the exercise of these powers by the city council shall be punished as provided by
333 ordinance.

SECTION 2.16.

General power and authority of the city council.

(a) Except as otherwise provided by law or this charter, the city council shall be vested with all the powers of government of this city.

(b) In addition to all other powers conferred upon it by law, the council shall have the authority to adopt and provide for the execution of such ordinances, resolutions, rules, and regulations, not inconsistent with this charter and the Constitution and the laws of the State of Georgia, which it shall deem necessary, expedient, or helpful for the peace, good order, protection of life and property, health, welfare, sanitation, comfort, convenience, prosperity, or well-being of the inhabitants of the City of Coolidge and may enforce such ordinances by imposing penalties for violation thereof.

SECTION 2.17.

Eminent domain.

The city council is hereby empowered to acquire, construct, operate, and maintain public ways, parks, public grounds, cemeteries, markets, market houses, public buildings, libraries, sewers, drains, sewage treatment, waterworks, electrical systems, gas systems, airports, hospitals, and charitable, educational, recreational, sport, curative, corrective, detentional, penal, and medical institutions, agencies and facilities, and any other public improvements inside or outside the city, and to regulate the use thereof, and for such purposes, property may be condemned under procedures established under general law applicable now or as provided in the future.

SECTION 2.18.**Organizational meetings.**

The city council shall hold an organizational meeting at the first regularly scheduled meeting in January following the regular election, as provided in Section 5.11. The meeting shall be called to order by the city clerk, and the oath of office shall be administered to the newly elected members as follows:

"I _____ do solemnly swear or affirm that I will properly perform the duties of the office of _____ in and for the City of Coolidge, to the best of my knowledge, skill, and ability; that I am not the holder of any unaccounted for public money due to the State of Georgia or any political subdivision or authority thereto; that 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 by the laws of the State of Georgia prohibited from holding; that I am qualified to hold the office which I am about to enter according to the Constitution and laws of Georgia; that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the State of Georgia; that I have been a resident of the City of Coolidge for the time required by the Constitution and laws of the State of Georgia and the charter of the City of Coolidge, so help me God."

SECTION 2.19.**Regular and special meetings.**

(a) The city council shall hold regular meetings at such times and places as shall be prescribed by ordinance.

(b) Special meetings of the city council may be held on call of the mayor or three members of the city council. Notice of such special meetings shall be served on all other members personally, or by telephone personally, at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. Such

379 notice to councilmembers shall not be required if the mayor and all councilmembers are
380 present when the special meeting is called. Such notice of any special meeting may be
381 waived by a councilmember in writing before or after such a meeting, and attendance at the
382 meeting shall also constitute a waiver of notice on any business transacted in such council
383 member's presence. Only the business stated in the call may be transacted at the special
384 meeting.

385 (c) All meetings of the city council shall be public to the extent required by law, and notice
386 to the public of special meetings shall be made fully as is reasonably possible as provided by
387 Code Section 50-14-1 of the O.C.G.A., or other such applicable laws as are or may hereafter
388 be enacted.

389 **SECTION 2.20.**

390 Rules of procedure.

391 (a) The city council shall adopt its rules of procedure and order of business consistent with
392 the provisions of this charter and shall provide for keeping a journal of its proceedings, which
393 shall be a public record.

394 (b) All committees and committee chairs and officers of the city council shall be appointed
395 by the mayor and shall serve at the pleasure of the mayor. The mayor shall have the power
396 to appoint new members to any committee at any time.

397 **SECTION 2.21.**

398 Quorum; voting.

399 (a) Four councilmembers other than the mayor or the mayor and three councilmembers shall
400 constitute a quorum and shall be authorized to transact business of the city council. Voting
401 on the adoption of ordinances shall be by voice vote, and the vote shall be recorded in the

402 journal, but any member of the city council shall have the right to request a roll call vote and
403 such vote shall be recorded in the journal. Except as otherwise provided in this charter, the
404 affirmative vote of four councilmembers shall be required for the adoption of any ordinance,
405 resolution, or motion. The mayor shall vote only in the event of a tie or when an affirmative
406 or negative vote by the mayor constitutes a majority of four votes. An abstention shall not
407 be counted as either an affirmative or negative vote.

408 (b) Every ordinance, resolution, or motion passed by the city council may be subject to veto
409 by the mayor in the following manner: The mayor, within three days may write out his or her
410 objection to such ordinance, resolution, or motion, the objection shall be presented to the city
411 council at the next regularly scheduled meeting. Said objection shall be entered into the
412 minutes, and the city council shall vote on the question as to whether said ordinance,
413 resolution, or motion shall become adopted over said veto. Should as many as four members
414 of the city council at the next regularly scheduled meeting following the mayor's veto vote
415 in the affirmation, said ordinance, resolution, or motion shall stand affirmed and become
416 effective without the approval of the mayor; otherwise the veto will stand.

417 **SECTION 2.22.**

418 Ordinance form; procedures.

419 (a) Every proposed ordinance should be introduced in writing and in the form required for
420 final adoption. No ordinance shall contain a subject which is not expressed in its title. The
421 enacting clause shall be "It is hereby ordained by the governing authority of the City of
422 Coolidge," and every ordinance shall so begin.

423 (b) An ordinance may be introduced by any councilmember and be read at a regular or
424 special meeting of the city council. Ordinances shall be considered and adopted or rejected
425 by the city council in accordance with the rules which it shall establish. Except for
426 emergency ordinances, all ordinances shall have two separate readings; provided, however,

427 that the council may dispense with the second reading with the unanimous consent of the
428 members present. Upon introduction of any ordinance, the clerk shall as soon as possible
429 distribute a copy to the mayor and each councilmember and shall file a reasonable number
430 of copies in the office of the clerk and at such other public places as the city council may
431 designate.

432 **SECTION 2.23.**

433 Action requiring an ordinance.

434 Acts of the city council which have the force and effect of law shall be enacted by
435 ordinance.

436 **SECTION 2.24.**

437 Emergencies.

438 (a) To meet a public emergency affecting life, health, property, or public peace, the city
439 council may convene on call of the mayor or two councilmembers and promptly adopt an
440 emergency ordinance, but such ordinance may not levy taxes; grant, renew, or extend a
441 franchise; regulate the rate charged by any public utility for its services; or authorize the
442 borrowing of money except for loans to be repaid within 30 days. An emergency ordinance
443 shall be introduced in the form prescribed for ordinances generally, except that it shall be
444 plainly designated as an emergency ordinance and shall contain, after the enacting clause,
445 a declaration stating that an emergency exists and describing the emergency in clear and
446 specific terms. An emergency ordinance may be adopted, with or without amendment, or
447 rejected at the meeting at which it is introduced, but the affirmative vote of at least three
448 councilmembers shall be required for adoption. It shall become effective upon adoption or
449 at such later time as it may specify. Every emergency ordinance shall automatically stand

450 repealed 30 days following the date upon which it was adopted, but this shall not prevent
451 reenactment of the ordinance in the manner specified in this section if the emergency still
452 exists. An emergency ordinance may also be repealed by adoption of a repealing ordinance
453 in the same manner specified in this section for adoption of emergency ordinances.

454 (b) Such meetings shall be open to the public to the extent required by law, and notice to the
455 public of emergency meetings shall be made as fully as is reasonably possible in accordance
456 with Code Section 50-14-1 of the O.C.G.A., or such other applicable laws as are or may
457 hereafter be enacted.

458 **SECTION 2.25.**

459 Codes of technical regulations.

460 (a) The city council may adopt any standard code of technical regulations by reference
461 thereto in an adopting ordinance. The procedures and requirements governing such adopting
462 ordinance shall be as prescribed for ordinances generally except that:

463 (1) The requirements of subsection (b) of Section 2.22 for distribution and filing of
464 copies of the ordinance shall be construed to include copies of any code of technical
465 regulations, as well as the adopting ordinance; and

466 (2) A copy of each adopted code of technical regulations, as well as the adopting
467 ordinance, shall be authenticated and recorded by the clerk pursuant to Section 2.22.

468 (b) Copies of any adopted code of technical regulations shall be made available by the city
469 clerk for inspection by the public.

470

SECTION 2.26.

471

Signing; authenticating; recording; codification; printing.

472

(a) The city clerk shall authenticate by his or her signature and record in full, in a properly indexed book kept for that purpose, all ordinances adopted by the city council.

474

(b) The city council shall provide for the preparation of a general codification of all the ordinances of the city having the force and effect of law. The general codification shall be adopted by the city council by ordinance and shall be published promptly, together with all amendments thereto and such codes of technical regulations and other rules and regulations as the city council may specify. This compilation shall be known and cited officially as "The Code of the City of Coolidge, Georgia." Copies of the code shall be furnished to all officers, departments, and agencies of the city and made available for purchase by the public at a reasonable price as fixed by the city council.

482

(c) The city council shall cause each ordinance and each amendment to this charter to be printed promptly following its adoption, and the printed ordinances and charter amendments shall be made available for purchase by the public at reasonable prices to be fixed by the city council. Following publication of the first code under this charter and at all times thereafter, the ordinances and charter amendments shall be printed in substantially the same style as the code currently in effect and shall be suitable in form for incorporation therein. The city council shall make such further arrangements as deemed desirable with reproduction and distribution of any current changes in or additions to codes of technical regulations and other rules and regulations included in the code.

490

491 **SECTION 2.27.**

492 Election of mayor; forfeiture; compensation.

493 The mayor shall be elected and serve for a term of four years and until a successor is elected
494 and qualified. The mayor shall be a qualified elector of this city and shall have been a
495 resident of the city for 12 months preceding the election. The mayor shall continue to reside
496 in this city during the period of service. The mayor shall forfeit the office on the same
497 grounds and under the same procedure as for councilmembers. The compensation of the
498 mayor shall be established in the same manner as for councilmembers.

499 **SECTION 2.28.**

500 Powers and duties of mayor.

501 The mayor shall:

- 502 (1) Preside at all meetings of the city council;
503 (2) Be the head of the city for the purpose of service of process and for ceremonial
504 purposes, and be the official spokesperson for the city and the chief advocate of policy;
505 (3) Have power to administer oaths and to take affidavits;
506 (4) Sign as a matter of course on behalf of the city all written and approved contracts,
507 ordinances, and other instruments executed by the city which by law are required to be
508 in writing;
509 (5) Vote in the event of a tie;
510 (6) Fulfill such other executive and administrative duties as the city council shall by
511 ordinance establish not in conflict with the provisions of this charter; and
512 (7) Veto any ordinance, resolution, or motion as provided in subsection (b)
513 of Section 2.21.

514 **SECTION 2.29.**

515 Mayor pro tem; selection; duties.

516 By a majority vote, the city council shall elect a councilmember to serve as mayor pro tem.
517 In the mayor's absence, the mayor pro tem shall preside at meetings of the city council and
518 shall assume the duties and powers of the mayor upon the mayor's physical or mental
519 disability, provided that the mayor pro tem shall vote as a member of the council at all times
520 when serving as herein provided.

521 **SECTION 2.30.**

522 City manager; appointment; qualifications; compensation.

523 The city council shall appoint a city manager for an indefinite term and shall fix the city
524 manager's compensation. The city manager shall be appointed solely on the basis of
525 executive and administrative qualifications.

526 **SECTION 2.31.**

527 Duties of the city manager.

528 The city manager shall be the chief executive and administrative officer of the city. The
529 manager shall be responsible to the city council for the administration of all city affairs
530 placed in his or her charge by or under this charter. As the chief executive and administrative
531 officer, the manager shall:

532 (1) Appoint and, when the manager deems it necessary for the good of the city, suspend
533 or remove all city employees and administrative officers the manager appoints, except
534 as otherwise provided by law or personnel ordinances adopted pursuant to this charter.
535 The manager may authorize any administrative officer who is subject to the manager's

direction and supervision to exercise these powers with respect to subordinates in that officer's department, office, or agency;

(2) Direct and supervise the administration of all departments, offices, and agencies of the city, except as otherwise provided by this charter or by law;

(3) Attend all city council meetings except for closed meetings held for the purposes of deliberating on the appointment, discipline, or removal of the city manager and have the right to take part in discussion but not vote;

(4) See that all laws, provisions of this charter, and acts of the city council, subject to enforcement by the manager or by officers subject to the manager's direction and supervision, are faithfully executed;

(5) Consult with the mayor in the preparation of the annual operating budget and capital budget to the city council;

(6) Submit to the city council and make available to the public a complete report on the finances and administrative activities of the city as of the end of each fiscal year;

(7) Make such other reports as the city council may require concerning the operations of city departments, offices, and agencies subject to the manager's direction and supervision;

(8) Keep the city council fully advised as to the financial condition and future needs of the city and make such recommendations to the city council concerning the affairs of the city as the manager deems desirable; and

(9) Perform other such duties as are specified in this charter or as may be required by the city council.

SECTION 2.32.**Removal of city manager.**

(a) The city manager is employed at will and may be summarily removed from office at any time by the city council. The city council may remove the manager from office in accordance with the following procedures:

(1) The city council shall adopt by affirmative vote of a majority of all its members a preliminary resolution which must state the reasons for removal and may suspend the manager from duty for a period not to exceed 45 days. A copy of the resolution shall be delivered promptly to the manager;

(2) Within five days after a copy of the resolution is delivered to the manager, the manager may file with the city council a written request for a public hearing. This hearing shall be held within 30 days after the request is filed. The manager may file with the council a written reply not later than five days before the hearing; and

(3) If the manager has not requested a public hearing within the time specified in paragraph (2) of this subsection, the city council may adopt a final resolution for removal, which may be made effective immediately, by an affirmative vote of a majority of all its members. If the manager has requested a public hearing, the city council may adopt a final resolution for removal, which may be made effective immediately, by an affirmative vote of a majority of all its members at any time after the public hearing.

(b) The manager may continue to receive a salary until the effective date of a final resolution of removal.

SECTION 2.33.

Council interference with administration.

Except for the purpose of inquiries and investigations under Section 2.15, the city council or its members shall deal with city officers and employees who are subject to the direction and supervision of the city manager solely through the city manager, and neither the city council nor its members shall give orders to any such officer or employee, either publicly or privately.

ARTICLE III**ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS****SECTION 3.10.**

Administrative and service departments.

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this charter, the city council, by ordinance, shall prescribe the functions of duties, and establish, abolish, alter, consolidate, or leave vacant all nonelective offices, positions of employment, departments, and agencies of the city as necessary for the proper administration of the affairs and government of this city.

(b) Except as otherwise provided by this charter or by law, the directors of city departments and other appointed officers of the city under the supervision of the city manager shall be appointed by the city manager solely on the basis of their respective administrative and professional qualifications. Except those appointed by the city council, all appointed officers, directors, and department heads shall be employees at will and subject to removal or suspension at any time by the city manager.

(c) All appointive officers and directors of departments shall receive such compensation as prescribed by ordinance.

602 (d) There shall be a director of each department or agency who shall be its principal officer.
603 Each director shall, subject to the direction and supervision of the city manager, be
604 responsible for the administration and direction of the affairs and operations of that director's
605 department or agency.

606 **SECTION 3.11.**

607 Boards, commissions, and authorities.

608 (a) The city council shall create by ordinance such boards, commissions, and authorities to
609 fulfill any investigative, quasi-judicial, or quasi-legislative function the city council deems
610 necessary and shall by ordinance establish the composition, period of existence, duties, and
611 powers thereof.

612 (b) All members of boards, commissions, and authorities of the city shall be appointed by
613 the city council for such terms of office and in such manner as shall be provided by
614 ordinance, except where other appointing authority, terms of office, or manner of
615 appointment is prescribed by this charter or by law.

616 (c) The city council, by ordinance, may provide for the compensation and reimbursement
617 for actual and necessary expenses of the members of any board, commission, or authority.

618 (d) Except as otherwise provided by this charter or by law, no member of any board,
619 commission, or authority shall hold any elective office in the city.

620 (e) Any vacancy on a board, commission, or authority of the city shall be filled for the
621 unexpired term in the manner prescribed herein for original appointment, except as otherwise
622 provided by this charter or by law.

623 (f) No member of a board, commission, or authority shall assume office until that person has
624 executed and filed with the clerk of the city an oath obligating himself or herself to faithfully
625 and impartially perform the duties of that member's office, such oath to be prescribed by
626 ordinance and administered by the mayor.

627 (g) All board members serve at-will and may be removed at any time by a vote of four
628 members of the city council, unless otherwise provided by law.

629 (h) Except as otherwise provided by this charter or by law, each board, commission, or
630 authority of the city shall elect one of its members as chair and one member as vice chair and
631 may elect as its secretary one of its own members or may appoint as secretary an employee
632 of the city. Each board, commission, or authority of the city government may establish such
633 bylaws, rules, and regulations not inconsistent with this charter or ordinances of the city or
634 law as it deems appropriate and necessary for the fulfillment of its duties or the conduct of
635 its affairs. Copies of such bylaws, rules, and regulations shall be filed with the city clerk.

636 **SECTION 3.12.**

637 City attorney.

638 (a) The city council shall appoint a city attorney, together with such assistant city attorneys
639 as may be authorized, and shall provide for the payment of such attorney or attorneys for
640 services rendered to the city. The city attorney shall be responsible for providing for the
641 representation and defense of the city in all litigation in which the city is a party; may be the
642 prosecuting officer in the municipal court; shall attend the meetings of the council as
643 directed; shall advise the city council, mayor, and other officers and employees of the city
644 concerning legal aspects of the city's affairs; and shall perform such other duties as may be
645 required by virtue of the person's position as city attorney.

646 (b) The city attorney is not a public official of the city and does not take an oath of office.
647 The city attorney shall at all times be an independent contractor. A law firm, rather than an
648 individual, may be designated as the city attorney.

649 **SECTION 3.13.**

650 City clerk.

651 The city council shall appoint a city clerk who shall not be a councilmember. The city clerk
652 shall be custodian of the official city seal and city records; maintain city council records
653 required by this charter; and perform such other duties as may be required by the city
654 council. The city clerk shall be under the supervision of the city manager.

655 **SECTION 3.14.**

656 Personnel policies.

657 The city council shall adopt by ordinance a personnel policy and procedure manual. All
658 employees serve at-will and may be removed from office at any time, unless otherwise
659 provided by ordinance.

660 **ARTICLE IV**

661 **JUDICIAL BRANCH**

662 **SECTION 4.10.**

663 Municipal court creation.

664 There shall be a court to be known as the Municipal Court of the City of Coolidge.

SECTION 4.11.

Chief judge; associate judge.

(a) The municipal court shall be presided over by a chief judge and such part-time, full-time, or stand-by judges as shall be provided by ordinance.

(b) No person shall be qualified or eligible to serve as a judge on the municipal court unless that person shall have attained the age of 21 years and shall possess all qualifications required by law. All judges shall be appointed by the city council and shall serve until a successor is appointed and qualified.

(c) Compensation of the judges shall be fixed by ordinance.

(d) Judges serve as provided in Code Section 36-32-2 of the O.C.G.A., and may be removed from office in accordance with Code Section 36-32-2.1, or other such applicable laws as are or may hereafter be enacted. Judges serve at-will and may be removed from office at any time by the city council, unless otherwise provided by ordinance.

(e) Before assuming office, each judge shall take an oath, given by the mayor, that the judge will honestly and faithfully discharge the duties of the office to the best of that person's ability and without fear, favor, or partiality. The oath shall be entered upon the minutes of the city council journal required in Section 2.20.

SECTION 4.12.

Convening.

The municipal court shall convene at regular intervals as provided by ordinance.

SECTION 4.13.

Jurisdiction; powers.

(a) The municipal court shall try and punish violations of this charter, all city ordinances, and such other violations as provided by law.

(b) The municipal court shall have authority to punish those in its presence for contempt, provided that such punishment shall not exceed \$200.00 or ten days in jail.

(c) The municipal court may fix punishment for offenses within its jurisdiction not exceeding a fine of \$1,000.00 or imprisonment for 180 days, or other such fine and imprisonment, or may fix punishment by fine, imprisonment, or alternative sentencing as now or hereafter provided by law.

(d) The municipal court shall have authority to establish a schedule of fees to defray the cost of operation and shall be entitled to reimbursement of the cost of meals, transportation, and caretaking of prisoners bound over to superior courts for violations of state law.

(e) The municipal court shall have authority to establish bail and recognizance to ensure the presence of those charged with violations before said court and shall have discretionary authority to accept cash or personal or real property as surety for the appearance of persons charged with violations. Whenever any person shall give bail for that person's appearance and shall fail to appear at the time fixed for trial, the bond shall be forfeited by the judge presiding at such time, and an execution issued thereon by serving the defendant and the defendant's sureties with a rule nisi, at least two days before a hearing on the rule nisi. In the event that cash or property is accepted in lieu of bond for security for the appearance of a defendant at trial, and if such defendant fails to appear at the time and place fixed for trial, the cash so deposited shall be on order of the judge declared forfeited to the city or the property so deposited shall have a lien against it for the value forfeited, which lien shall be enforceable in the same manner and to the same extent as a lien for city property taxes.

(f) The municipal court shall have the same authority as superior courts to compel the production of evidence in the possession of any party; to enforce obedience to its orders, judgments, and sentences; and to administer such oaths as are necessary.

(g) The municipal court may compel the presence of all parties necessary to a proper disposal of each case by the issuance of summonses, subpoenas, and warrants which may be served as executed by any officer as authorized by this charter or by law.

(h) Each judge of the municipal court shall be authorized to issue warrants for the arrest of persons charged with offenses against any ordinance of the city, and each judge of the municipal court shall have the same authority as a magistrate of the state to issue warrants for offenses against state laws committed within the city.

SECTION 4.14.

Certiorari.

The right of certiorari from the decision and judgment of the municipal court shall exist in all criminal cases and ordinance violation cases, and such certiorari shall be obtained under the sanction of a judge of the Superior Court of Thomas County under the laws of the State of Georgia regulating the granting and issuance of writs of certiorari.

SECTION 4.15.

Rules for court.

With the approval of the city council, the judge of municipal court shall have full power and authority to make reasonable rules and regulations necessary and proper to secure the efficient and successful administration of the municipal court; provided, however, that the city council may adopt in part or in toto the rules and regulations applicable to municipal courts. The rules and regulations made or adopted shall be filed with the city clerk, shall be

733 available for public inspection, and, upon request, a copy shall be furnished to all defendants
734 in municipal court proceedings at least 48 hours prior to said proceedings.

735 **SECTION 4.16.**

736 Indigent defense and prosecutor.

737 The mayor and council shall have the power to provide for a system of defense for indigent
738 persons charged in the municipal court of the City of Coolidge with violations of ordinances
739 or state laws, and for the prosecution of such cases by a prosecutor, and to provide for and
740 require the expense of same to be prorated over all criminal cases disposed of by the court,
741 and all bond forfeitures in said cases to be imposed by the municipal court judge and
742 collected in all criminal cases and in bond forfeitures in such cases as costs in addition to
743 fines, penalties, and all other costs.

744 **ARTICLE V**

745 **ELECTIONS AND REMOVAL**

746 **SECTION 5.10.**

747 Applicability of general law.

748 All elections shall be held and conducted in accordance with Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the
749 O.C.G.A., the "Georgia Election Code," as now or hereafter amended.

750 **SECTION 5.11.**

751 Regular elections; time for holding.

752 (a) The mayor and councilmembers serving on the effective date of this charter shall serve
753 out the remainder of their terms of office.

754 (b) Elections for mayor and city council shall be held on the Tuesday following the first
755 Monday in November of each election year. Beginning in 2023, there shall be an election
756 for three councilmembers, and they shall serve for four-year terms, and their successors shall
757 be elected to four-year terms. At the 2025 election, the mayor plus three councilmembers
758 shall be elected for four-year terms.

759 **SECTION 5.12.**

760 Nonpartisan elections.

761 Political parties shall not conduct primaries for city offices, and all names of candidates for
762 city offices shall be listed without party designations.

763 **SECTION 5.13.**

764 Election by plurality.

765 The person receiving a plurality of the votes cast for the office of mayor shall be elected.
766 The persons receiving the highest number of votes cast for city council positions shall be
767 elected.

768

SECTION 5.14.

769

Special elections; vacancies.

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In the event that the office of mayor or councilmember shall become vacant as provided in

771

Section 2.12 of this charter, the city council or those remaining shall order a special election

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to fill the balance of the unexpired term of such official; provided, however, that if such

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vacancy occurs within 12 months of the expiration of the term of that office, the city council

774

or those members remaining shall appoint a successor for the remainder of the term. In all

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other respects, the special election shall be held and conducted in accordance with Chapter

776

2 of Title 21 of the O.C.G.A., the "Georgia Election Code," as now or hereafter amended.

777

SECTION 5.15.

778

Other provisions.

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Except as otherwise provided by this charter, the city council shall, by ordinance, prescribe

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such rules and regulations as it deems appropriate to fulfill any options and duties under

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Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the O.C.G.A., the "Georgia Election Code," as now or hereafter

782

amended.

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SECTION 5.16.

784

Removal of officers.

785

(a) The mayor, councilmembers, or other appointed officers provided for in this charter shall

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be removed from office for any one or more of the causes provided in Title 45 of the

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O.C.G.A., or such other applicable laws as are or may hereafter be enacted.

788

(b) Removal of an officer pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall be accomplished

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by one of the following methods:

(1) Following a hearing at which an impartial panel shall render a decision. In the event an elected officer is sought to be removed by the action of the city council, such officer shall be entitled to a written notice specifying the ground or grounds for removal and to a public hearing which shall be held not less than ten days after the service of such written notice. The city council shall provide by ordinance for the manner in which such hearings shall be held. Any elected officer sought to be removed from office as provided in this section shall have the right of appeal from the decision of the city council to the Superior Court of Thomas County. Such appeal shall be governed by the same rules as govern appeals to the superior court from the probate court; or

(2) By an order of the Superior Court of Thomas County following a hearing on a complaint seeking such removal brought by any resident of the City of Coolidge.

ARTICLE VI

FINANCE

SECTION 6.10.

Property tax.

The city council may assess, levy, and collect an ad valorem tax on all real and personal property within the corporate limits of the city that is subject to such taxation by the state and county. This tax is for the purpose of raising revenues to defray the costs of operating the city government, of providing governmental services, for the repayment of principal and interest on general obligations, and for any other public purpose as determined by the city council in its discretion.

811 **SECTION 6.11.**

812 Millage rate; due dates; payment methods.

813 The city council by ordinance shall establish a millage rate for the city property tax, a due
814 date, and the time period within which these taxes must be paid. The city council, by
815 ordinance, may provide for the payment of these taxes by installments or in one lump sum,
816 as well as authorize the voluntary payment of taxes prior to the time when due.

817 **SECTION 6.12.**

818 Occupation and business taxes.

819 The city council by ordinance shall have the power to levy such occupation or business taxes
820 as are not denied by law. The city council may classify businesses, occupations, or
821 professions for the purpose of such taxation in any way which may be lawful and may
822 compel the payment of such taxes as provided in Section 6.18.

823 **SECTION 6.13.**

824 Regulatory fees; permits.

825 The city council by ordinance shall have the power to require businesses or practitioners
826 doing business within this city to obtain a permit for such activity from the city and pay a
827 reasonable regulatory fee for such permit as provided by general law. Such fees shall reflect
828 the total cost to the city for regulating the activity and, if unpaid, shall be collected as
829 provided in Section 6.18.

SECTION 6.14.**Franchises.**

(a) The city council shall have the power to grant franchises for the use of this city's streets and alleys for the purposes of railroads, street railways, telephone companies, electric companies, electric membership corporations, cable television, and other telecommunications companies, gas companies, transportation companies, and other similar organizations. The city council shall determine the duration, terms, whether the same shall be exclusive or nonexclusive, and the consideration for such franchises; provided, however, that no franchise shall be granted for a period in excess of 35 years, and no franchise shall be granted unless the city receives just and adequate compensation therefor. The city council shall provide for the registration of all franchises with the city clerk in a registration book kept by the clerk. The city council may provide by ordinance for the registration within a reasonable time of all franchises previously granted.

(b) If no franchise agreement is in effect, the city council has the authority to impose a tax on gross receipts for the use of this city's streets and alleys for the purposes of railroads, street railways, telephone companies, electric companies, electric membership corporations, cable television, and other telecommunications companies, gas companies, transportation companies, and other similar organizations.

SECTION 6.15.**Service charges.**

The city council by ordinance shall have the power to assess and collect fees, charges, and tolls for sewers, sanitary and health services, or any other services provided or made available within and without the corporate limits of the city for the total cost to the city of

853 providing or making available such services. If unpaid, such charges shall be collected as
854 provided in Section 6.18.

855 **SECTION 6.16.**
856 Special assessments.

857 The city council by ordinance shall have the power to assess and collect the cost of
858 constructing, reconstructing, widening, or improving any public way, street, sidewalk,
859 curbing, gutters, sewers, or other utility mains and appurtenances from the abutting property
860 owners under such terms and conditions as are reasonable. If unpaid, such charges shall be
861 collected as provided in Section 6.18.

862 **SECTION 6.17.**
863 Construction; other taxes and fees.

864 The city shall be empowered to levy any other tax or fee allowed now or hereafter by law,
865 and the specific mention of any right, power, or authority in this article shall not be construed
866 as limiting in any way the general powers of this city to govern its local affairs.

867 **SECTION 6.18.**
868 Collection of delinquent taxes and fees.

869 The city council by ordinance may provide generally for the collection of delinquent taxes,
870 fees, or other revenue due the city under Sections 6.10 through 6.17 by whatever reasonable
871 means as are not precluded by law. This shall include providing for the dates when the taxes
872 or fees are due, late penalties or interest, issuance and execution of any fi.fa., creation and
873 priority of liens, making delinquent taxes and fees the personal debts of the persons required

874 to pay the taxes or fees imposed, revoking city permits for failure to pay city taxes or fees,
875 and providing for the assignment or transfer of tax executions.

876 **SECTION 6.19.**

877 General obligation bonds.

878 The city council shall have the power to issue bonds for the purpose of raising revenue to
879 carry out any project, program, or venture authorized under this charter or the laws of the
880 state. Such bonding authority shall be exercised in accordance with the laws governing bond
881 issuance by municipalities in effect at the time said issue is undertaken.

882 **SECTION 6.20.**

883 Revenue bonds.

884 Revenue bonds may be issued by the city council as state law now or hereafter provides.
885 Such bonds are to be paid out of any revenue produced by the project, program, or venture
886 for which they were issued.

887 **SECTION 6.21.**

888 Short-term loans.

889 The city may obtain short-term loans and must repay such loans not later than December 31
890 of each year, unless otherwise provided by law.

891 **SECTION 6.22.**

892 Lease-purchase contracts.

893 The city may enter into multiyear lease, purchase, or lease-purchase contracts for the
894 acquisition of goods, materials, real and personal property, services, and supplies, provided
895 that the contract terminates without further obligation on the part of the municipality at the
896 close of the calendar year in which it was executed and at the close of each succeeding
897 calendar year for which it may be renewed. Contracts must be executed in accordance with
898 the requirements of Code Section 36-60-13 of the O.C.G.A., or other such applicable laws
899 as are or may hereafter be enacted.

900 **SECTION 6.23.**

901 Fiscal year.

902 The city council shall set the fiscal year by ordinance. This fiscal year shall constitute the
903 budget year and the year for financial accounting the reporting of each and every office,
904 department, agency, and activity of the city government, unless otherwise provided by state
905 or federal law.

906 **SECTION 6.24.**

907 Preparation of budgets.

908 The city council shall provide an ordinance on the procedures and requirements for the
909 preparation and execution of an annual operating budget, a capital improvement plan, and
910 a capital budget, including requirements as to the scope, content, and form of such budgets
911 and plans.

912 **SECTION 6.25.**

913 Submission of operating budget to city council.

914 On or before a date fixed by the city council, but not later than 60 days prior to the beginning
915 of each fiscal year, the mayor upon consultation with the city manager shall submit to the
916 city council a proposed operating budget for the ensuing fiscal year. The budget shall be
917 accompanied by a message from the mayor containing a statement of the general fiscal
918 policies of the city, the important features of the budget, explanations of major changes
919 recommended for the next fiscal year, a general summary of the budget, and such other
920 pertinent comments and information. The operating budget and the capital budget
921 hereinafter provided for, the budget message, and all supporting documents shall be filed in
922 the office of the city clerk and shall be open to public inspection.

923 **SECTION 6.26.**

924 Action by city council on budget.

925 (a) The city council may amend the operating budget proposed by the mayor, except that the
926 budget as finally amended and adopted must provide for all expenditures required by state
927 law or by other provisions of this charter and for all debt service requirements for the ensuing
928 fiscal year, and the total appropriations from any fund shall not exceed the estimated fund
929 balance, reserves, and revenues.

930 (b) The city council by ordinance shall adopt the final operating budget for the ensuing fiscal
931 year not later than the first day of the ensuing fiscal year. If the city council fails to adopt
932 the budget by this date, the amounts appropriated for operation for the current fiscal year
933 shall be deemed adopted for the ensuing fiscal year on a month-to-month basis, with all items
934 prorated accordingly until such time as the city council adopts a budget for the ensuing fiscal
935 year. Adoption of the budget shall take the form of an appropriations ordinance setting out

936 the estimated revenues in detail by sources and making appropriations according to fund and
937 by organizational unit, purpose, or activity as set out in the budget preparation ordinance
938 adopted pursuant to Section 6.24.

939 (c) The amount set out in the adopted operating budget for each organizational unit shall
940 constitute the annual appropriation for such, and no expenditure shall be made or
941 encumbrance created in excess of the otherwise unencumbered balance of the appropriations
942 or allotment thereof to which it is chargeable.

943 **SECTION 6.27.**

944 Tax levies.

945 The city council shall levy by ordinance such taxes as are necessary. The taxes and tax rates
946 set by such ordinance shall be such that reasonable estimates of revenues from such levy
947 shall at least be sufficient, together with other anticipated revenues, fund balances, and
948 applicable reserves, to equal the total amount appropriated for each of the several funds set
949 forth in the annual operating budget for defraying the expenses of the general government
950 of this city.

951 **SECTION 6.28.**

952 Changes in appropriations.

953 The city council by ordinance may make changes in the appropriations contained in the
954 current operating budget at any regular, special, or emergency meeting called for such
955 purpose, but any additional appropriations may be made only from an existing unexpended
956 surplus.

957 **SECTION 6.29.**

958 Independent audit.

959 There shall be an annual independent audit of all city accounts, funds, and financial
960 transactions by a certified public accountant selected by the city council. The audit shall be
961 conducted according to generally accepted auditing principles. Any audit of any funds by
962 the state or federal governments may be accepted as satisfying the requirements of this
963 charter. Copies of annual audit reports shall be available at printing costs to the public.

964 **SECTION 6.30.**

965 Contracting procedures.

966 No contract with the city shall be binding on the city unless:

- 967 (1) It is in writing;
- 968 (2) It is drawn by or submitted and reviewed by the city attorney and, as a matter of
969 course, is signed by the city attorney to indicate such drafting or review; and
- 970 (3) It is made or authorized by the city council, and such approval is entered in the city
971 council journal of proceedings pursuant to Section 2.21.

972 **SECTION 6.31.**

973 Centralized purchasing.

974 The city council by ordinance shall prescribe procedures for a system of centralized
975 purchasing for the city.

976

SECTION 6.32.

977

Sale and lease of city property.

978 (a) The city council may sell and convey or lease any real or personal property owned or
979 held by the city for governmental or other purposes as now or hereafter provided by law.

980 (b) The city council may quitclaim any rights it may have in property not needed for public
981 purposes upon report by the mayor and adoption of a resolution, both finding that the
982 property is not needed for public or other purposes and that the interest of the city has no
983 readily ascertainable monetary value.

984 (c) Whenever in opening, extending, or widening any street, avenue, alley, or public place
985 of the city a small parcel or tract of land is cut off or separated by such work from a larger
986 tract or boundary of land owned by the city, the city council may authorize the mayor to sell
987 and convey said cut off or separated parcel or tract of land to an abutting or adjoining
988 property owner or owners where such sale and conveyance facilitates the enjoyment of the
989 highest and best use of the abutting owner's property. Included in the sales contract shall be
990 a provision for the rights-of-way of said street, avenue, alley, or public place. Each abutting
991 property owner shall be notified of the availability of the property and given the opportunity
992 to purchase said property under such terms and conditions as set out by ordinance. All deeds
993 and conveyances heretofore and hereafter so executed and delivered shall convey all title and
994 interest the city has in such property, notwithstanding the fact that no public sale after
995 advertisement was or is hereafter made.

996 **ARTICLE VII**
997 **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

998 **SECTION 7.10.**
999 Bonds for officials.

1000 The officers and employees of this city, both elective and appointive, shall execute such
1001 surety or fidelity bonds in such amounts and upon such terms and conditions as the city
1002 council shall from time to time require by ordinance or as may be provided by law.

1003 **SECTION 7.11.**
1004 Prior ordinances.

1005 All ordinances, resolutions, rules, and regulations now in force in the city and not
1006 inconsistent with this charter are hereby declared valid and of full force and effect until
1007 amended or repealed by the city council.

1008 **SECTION 7.12.**
1009 Existing personnel and officers.

1010 Except as specifically provided otherwise by this charter, all personnel and officers of the
1011 city and their rights, privileges, and powers shall continue beyond the time this charter takes
1012 effect for a period of 180 days before or during which the existing city council shall pass a
1013 transition ordinance detailing the changes in personnel and appointive officers required or
1014 desired and arranging such titles, rights, privileges, and powers as may be required or desired
1015 to allow a reasonable transition.

SECTION 7.13.

Pending matters.

Except as specifically provided otherwise by this charter, all rights, claims, actions, orders, contracts, and legal or administrative proceedings shall continue, and any such ongoing work or cases shall be completed by such city agencies, personnel, or offices as may be provided by the city council.

SECTION 7.14.

Construction.

(a) Section captions in this charter are informative only and are not to be considered as a part thereof.

(b) The word "shall" is mandatory, and the word "may" is permissive.

(c) The singular shall include the plural, and the masculine shall include the feminine, and vice versa.

SECTION 7.15.

Severability.

If any article, section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, or part thereof of this charter shall be held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect nor impair other parts of this charter unless it clearly appears that such other parts are wholly and necessarily dependent upon the part held to be invalid or unconstitutional, it being the legislative intent in enacting this charter that each article, section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, or part thereof be enacted separately and independent of each other.

SECTION 7.16.

Specific repealers.

(a) An Act to create a new charter for the City of Coolidge, approved June 2, 2010 (Ga. L. 2010, p. 3828), is hereby repealed in its entirety; and all amendatory acts thereto are likewise repealed in their entirety.

(b) An Act to provide a new charter for the City of Coolidge, approved May 3, 2021 (Ga. L. 2021, p. 3869), is hereby repealed in its entirety.

SECTION 7.17.

General repealer.

All other laws and parts of laws in conflict with this charter are hereby repealed.