

The City of Clay

Mayor Jane Anderton
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City Council
Jody Harris
Chris Nail
Orletta Rush
Nathan Thompson
Carla Youngblood

To: All Clay, AL residents
From: Mayor Jane Anderton
Date: February 2, 2026

RE: Clay-Chalkville High School 2025 State Football Championship Rings

At the Clay City Council meeting on January 27, 2026, Clay-Chalkville High School (CCHS) Principal Dr. Eugene Dallas presented a request to the city to contribute money for the purchase of championship rings for the players and coaches.

Subsequently, Councilor Jody Harris moved to transfer \$30,000 from city reserve accounts to the Clay-Pinson Chamber of Commerce. This transfer could then be paid forward to CCHS to enable the purchase of the rings.

This motion did not carry, but will be reconsidered at the next meeting.

As Mayor, I want to emphatically state that I am in full support of the CCHS football program and in recognizing our dedicated student athletes for their hard work, character, and athletic achievements. Their winning season is a source of pride for everyone in Clay, and there is no question whether our student athletes are deserving of a ring to commemorate their championship.

The question is whether this \$30K expense meets the criteria of serving the public good. As elected city officials, the Council and I have an obligation to operate in the best interest of all our residents and to do so within the bounds of state law, specifically Alabama Constitution Article IV, Section 94, which prohibits municipalities from making appropriations that benefit private individuals. As I read this statute and the corresponding Alabama League of Municipalities Doctrine of Public Purpose, and I reflect on the broader interests of our community, I do not see any way for the city to directly or indirectly fund these rings.

However, this is not an either/or proposition. There is another way to work collaboratively with our school leadership to make this recognition possible. If city officials and residents pull together and work as hard as our football team and their coaches, we can identify private donors to cover this cost. I hereby publicly commit to work with community members, CCHS alumni and boosters, local businesses and organizations to honor our championship team.

I encourage all Clay residents to share their ideas on this issue before the next meeting on February 10. This is an important community conversation, and your voice matters. Please contact me directly or reach out to your city council members. We want to hear from you. Together, we can find creative solutions that honor our champions while upholding our legal and ethical responsibilities.

All contact information for myself and city council members can be found online at <https://clayalabama.org/contact/>.

Sincerely,

Jane E. Anderton

Mayor, City of Clay

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