



City of Guyton
City Council Meeting
March 10, 2020 – 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES OF MEETING

Call to Order

The March 10, 2020 City of Guyton City Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Russ Deen at approximately 7:00 p.m. Mayor Russ Deen, Mayor Pro Tem Michael Johnson, Sr., Council Member Joseph Lee, Council Member Hursula Pelote, and Council Member T. Marshall Reiser were present at this meeting.

Others Present - Interim City Manager Brett Bennett, City Attorney Ray Smith and City Clerk Tina Chadwick were present.

Guest Present - The guests sign-in sheets are filed in the office of the City Clerk.

Moment of Repose for Those Who Practice Some Other Faith

Mayor Deen asked all present to take a brief repose for those who practice some other faith.

Invocation

Pastor Lon Harden of Macedonia Baptist Church gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Deen.

Consideration to approve the amended Agenda

Reiser made a motion to approve the amended Agenda, as presented. Pelote seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consideration to approve Minutes of Meetings

Pelote made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 11, 2020 City Council Meeting held at 7:00 p.m., February 21, 2020 Workshop held at 9:00 a.m., and the March 3, 2020 Special Called Meeting at 7:00 p.m. Reiser seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Agenda Request

Travis Bazemore – EMC Engineering Services, Inc. – Request for water and sewer service for a proposed subdivision to be located off 4th Street Extension

Mr. Bazemore presented that this is a very preliminary sketch and that they have done a concept plan and they are just requesting water and sewer service from the City. They will annex into the City. Bennett stated that they are in a due diligence period. Mayor Deen would like any property that is receiving City water and sewer be annexed into the City. Mayor Deen stated that the City is excited about this proposition. Bazemore stated that this layout has 32 Lots.

Travis Bazemore – EMC Engineering Services, Inc. – Request for water service for six (6) proposed lots on Archer Road

Mr. Bazemore presented that this is his Grandma's property and that this is a little personal for him. She has 6 acres and has an existing house on the lot and that there is development all up and down Archer Road. There will be 7 lots. There is water along Archer Road and he believes all of the lots starting past Archer Place, all along the road is City water and not sewer. They are just asking for City water in this case because that is what is available. Mayor Deen asked if they would be open to Annexation. Mr. Bazemore stated that he didn't think that it would be a problem. Mayor Deen does not see any issue with providing them water. He stated that we just need to have a discussion about how we are going to do it. Mr. Bazemore stated that he just needs clarification on what he will be required to do. Mayor Deen stated that they would take it under advisement.

ALL PUBLIC COMMENTS WILL BE LIMITED TO AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

NEW BUSINESS

Consideration to adopt Ordinance 2020-01 to Amend the Official Zoning Map by rezoning 706 Central Blvd from present zoning classification of C-1 to proposed zoning classification of R-1

Mayor Deen read for the record Ordinance 2020-01 to Amend the Official Zoning Map by rezoning 706 Central Blvd from present zoning classification of C-1 to proposed zoning classification of R-1

Johnson made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2020-01 to Amend the Official Zoning Map by rezoning 706 Central Blvd from present zoning classification of C-1 to proposed zoning classification of R-1. Pelote seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consideration to adopt Ordinance 2020-02 to Amend the Official Zoning Map by rezoning 540 Brogdon Rd from current county zoning classification of AR-1 to proposed city classification of R-1

Mayor Deen read for the record Ordinance 2020-02 to Amend the Official Zoning Map by rezoning 540 Brogdon Rd from current county zoning classification of AR-1 to proposed city classification of R-1

Lee made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2020-02 to Amend the Official Zoning Map by rezoning 540 Brogdon Rd from current county zoning classification of AR-1 to proposed city classification R-1. Johnson seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consideration to approve Scott Thompson of 4 Hidden Creek Drive approval for homes on 4 Hidden Creek Dr. Paul Cribbs is the home builder, 2.98 acres

Bennett stated that this has come through the Planning and Zoning Board Committee several times and that they have an approval letter from the Engineer. The Engineer verifies that the swale elevations are in general conformance to the latest grading and drainage plan per his letter in the Agenda packet. Mr. Cribbs approached the podium and asks if the 6 lots are to have sewer taps and running sewer to the property. Mr. Cribbs needs 5 sewer taps. Bennett stated that what was on the plans was for Cribbs to construct it and we inspect it and that Cribbs is building all the taps.

Reiser made a motion to approve Scott Thompson of 4 Hidden Creek Drive approval for homes on 4 Hidden Creek Dr. Paul Cribbs is the home builder, 2.98 acres. Johnson seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consideration to approve the Child Advocacy Services Group (CASA) 8th Annual Superhero Run on Saturday, October 24, 2020

Lee made a motion to approve the Child Advocacy Services Group (CASA) 8th Annual Superhero Run on Saturday, October 24, 2020. Reiser seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consideration to approve Resolution Number R2020-01 RE: Ethics Pledge

Mayor Deen stated that we are reupping our city of ethics requirements which includes a number of things including this Resolution. Mayor Deen proceeds to read the Resolution for the record.

Johnson made a motion to approve Resolution Number R202-01 RE: Ethics Pledge. Pelote seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Introduction of an Ordinance regarding City of Ethics for the City of Guyton

Mayor Deen read the Ordinance for the record. Linsey Ronk approached the podium and asked if the ordinance required an Ethics Committee. Mayor Deen replied, yes.

Consideration to appoint the City Manager to approve adjustments to sewer accounts for water leaks with the appropriate documentation

Bennett stated that this would only apply to leaks where there has been a repair and we get documentation from a plumber or there has been some other clear evidence that there has been a leak this would only apply to adjustment on sewer charges for water leaks above and beyond their average usage.

Pelote made a motion to appoint the City Manager to approve adjustments to sewer accounts for water leaks with the appropriate documentation. Reiser seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consideration to approve to waive the online payment fees for customers paying utility bills online

Mayor Deen would like to table this. Bennett stated that he expected to have more information, before tonight, but he doesn't have it. Mayor Deen said that he will bring information to the public on this. He would like to make this an easier process for citizens, and we want to make this a cheaper process for citizens. This is one of the reasons that he doesn't use the online payment service. We are going to go back and get figures and see what it would cost the City on our end. Most businesses and including mine at the Pet Lodge eats the cost of credit card charges. It is the part of doing business at the same time we are going to research it further.

Reiser made a motion to table the approval to waive the online payment fees for customers paying utility bills online. Johnson seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consideration to approve the LED Lighting Conversion agreement from Georgia Power for the Walking Trail on Simmons Street in Guyton

Bennett reached out to Georgia Power regarding our roundabout and we also discussed the walking trail around Simmons Street. This would cost the City no additional money. It would actually convert the existing lights to LED. It would also reduce the monthly cost due to the power savings. It will cost the City no additional money and will actually save money going forward. Delores Williamson came to the podium and stated that the light was out at 723 Central. Reiser informed the public that they could go online to the Georgia Power website and they are pretty quick in coming out and replacing those lights. Johnson asked if this includes our roundabout lights. Bennett stated it does not include roundabout lights. Mayor said that it will save the City money and it is being done on Georgia Power's end and it is not costing us anything to do it and the LED's will actually burn less energy making it a lower power bill.

Reiser made a motion to approve the LED Lighting Conversion agreement from Georgia Power for the Walking Trail on Simmons Street in Guyton. Pelote seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consideration to approve the agreement from Resource & Land Consultants regarding Environmental Consulting Services for the +/- 169 Acre Riverside Drive Tract

Bennett stated that this a continuation from the report from last month. One of the requirements from EPD is that we submit a site analysis report for the initial spray field site. Where the wetlands are. This and the report that you approved last month are the two requirements. This is the additional work that they are asking us to do. This is as far as it has gone at this point. Mayor Deen stated that this is the next step in the spray fields at the new site.

Johnson made a motion to approve the agreement from Resource & Land Consultants regarding Environmental Consulting Services +/- 169 Acre Riverside Drive Tract. Lee seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consideration to approve a proposal from Georgia Technologies for IT Support Services

Bennett stated that Georgia Technologies is a group that he has worked with for years. We are currently with Sophicity. This proposal is substantially cheaper and will save us about \$15,000 a year about \$800 a month as opposed to \$2,200 a month. This will provide us everything that we need in IT Support. Mayor Deen stated that they have two proposals from them. Mayor Deen recommends the simple rate - Option 2 unlimited IT and Support.

Linsey Ronk approached the podium and asked if we put it out for a bid. Mayor Deen stated that this is a very specialized service and there are limited people who offer what we need for a government. Mayor Deen stated that this does not have to go out for public bid. Attorney Smith stated this does not have to go out for a bid for specialized services. Mayor Deen stated that we did get multiple quotes and discuss this with multiple vendors in the area.

Johnson made a motion to approve a savings for the citizens of Guyton for the proposal of Option 2 from Georgia Technologies for IT Support Services. Pelote seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consideration to authorize the Mayor to establish a new City Website

Mayor Deen stated that one of reasons that we did not continue with Sophicity is that he has had zero luck working with them to get access to the City's website. The City website has not been updated. Mayor Deen has offered his services and he has done a little bit of web development and there are amazing services online that are significantly cheaper than what we are paying and Sophicity quoted us a price \$530 a month to operate a website and everywhere else the lowest rate he found was \$375 to start and then it is a monthly maintenance fee of \$70. Mayor Deen stated that he wants to get the Minutes and Agendas regularly updated.

Reiser made a motion to authorize the Mayor to establish a new City Website. Johnson seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consideration to approve an engagement with Caines Hodges for ongoing financial services

Bennett said as we discussed in the last meeting the situation that the City is in financially and we are behind on reconciliations and financial reports. Bennett has a proposal from Caines Hodges for that work and for a proposal for ongoing services beyond that. Bennett is attempting to set up the City of Guyton to not get in the position that you were in several months ago. So that you have a sustainable setup and that is potentially cheaper than hiring someone in house and do it. This is \$2,300 a month which is less than \$30,000. As you know Caines has done the City audit so if they get this work they will not be performing the audit and we will need to hire another auditing firm. Matthew Caines approached the podium and stated that a number of services that we would anticipate are just standard services. We would preparing a number of the schedules that we as your auditors would have looked at. This should save you a tremendous amount of fees as well. The City could be saving \$7,000 to \$9,000 in audit fees for the year as well. Reiser stated that he was involved in some of these meetings as well and he thinks it is a great idea to hire our former auditors to help us get things moving in the right direction. Caines stated that they will start the second half of this month.

Reiser made a motion to approve an engagement with Caines Hodges for ongoing financial services. Johnson seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consideration of establishing a committee for the purposes of establishing a project list for the upcoming T-SPLOST referendum

Mayor Deen stated that we will be voting on T-SPLOST this year in November. Part of that is presenting a list of projects for Guyton specifically. We would like to establish a committee for the purposes of establishing a project list for the upcoming T-SPLOST referendum. Bennett stated that this Agreement needs to get approved sooner than later. Pelote will run point on this. Johnson would like to serve on the Committee. Deen stated that it needs to be projects that are transportation based. Linsey Ronk came to the podium and stated that she would like Central Avenue to be put on the list. Bennett replied that has already been proposed by one of the members here.

Reiser made a motion to approve establishing a committee for the purposes of establishing a project list for the upcoming T-SPLOST referendum. Lee seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Consideration of Nominations to the Planning and Zoning Board to serve as Alternatives

Bennett stated that this is on here because they are requesting alternates. Bennett believes the Planning and Zoning Board is filled but they need some alternates just in case others are not able to attend. I know we may not be prepared tonight. This can be considered at a future meeting. Bennett states that if any members of the public are interested in serving they can reach out to us. Reiser stated that he has served on that Board and they usually have one alternate. Mayor states no alternates at the moment. No motions.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Discussion of the Adopt a Road Program for Guyton

Bennett and Lee were discussing about how people wanted to keep the roads clean and to put it on the Agenda for Council to discuss. Mayor Deen thinks it is a great idea. Bennett doesn't think there is a formal process other than recognition by Council. Lee stated that Samuel Small Funeral Home will take Samuel Small all the way down to Magnolia Street. Lee said that he is going to ask his church to take Samuel Small all the way to Cherry Street. Lee said just pick trash up on the street. Bennett will look into this and reach out to a couple other cities to see if there is anything formal that we need to do.

Discussion of Monthly Workshops

Mayor Deen presented that he, Hursula and Marshall just got back from GMA training for newly elected officials. The one idea that they thought that we needed are monthly workshops. The end of each month, we are going to set up a workshop here at City Hall more than likely and we want the public to come. It will be an open meeting. We will have an Agenda. Resier stated the benefit of it is that you get more involvement from the community which is a good thing. Constructive criticism and constructive comments, but it also has the impact of making these meetings more productive because you are responding to what you have already heard. It will make this meeting more efficient and it gives the community another opportunity to speak and to get to discuss these issues that we are acting on.

Reports from Staff or Committees

Diane Hicklin approached the podium and stated that she had some flooding in her yard and her house. Mr. Lee and Mr. Ford and she is not sure who else, but that they dug the drainage ditch. She just wanted to thank you guys so very much for coming and doing that for them.

Police Department – Chief James Breletic – Chief Breletic does not have a formal report to give as he is still in the transition period. You will have a report next month.

Public Works – Jacob Ford - Mayor Deen reported that Jacob Ford is not here tonight, but we have a report from public works. Bennett stated that Jacob has had a few late nights this week with a few water leaks and was out until 11:00 p.m. a couple of nights and he was falling asleep talking to him today and I encouraged him to go home and get some rest and that I would pass out these reports to you guys. Mayor Deen stated that praise in private is important, but praise in public is even more so and he was hoping he would be here as we had citizens coming out in droves to tell me that they didn't have water and we couldn't find him until we did and he was in a hole in the rain in the ditch trying to get a water line repaired and could not get to his phone and he and Brantley one of our newest public works department employee and they both deserve your praise and if you see them, thank them as they are assets to the City.

Fire Department - Chief Clint Hodges – Chief Hodges presented that they had 296 calls county wide – within the City average numbers. No major wrecks.

Dates to Remember

Mayor Deen reminded Council Members and those present of the following dates to remember:

Mrs. Seabrooks approached the podium and presented that there will be Parent University at Effingham Middle School on April 25th. That this will be the last Parent University. She also stated that the Easter Egg Hunt will be on April 13th from 4 pm to 6 pm.

April 25, 2020 – Sale on the Trail

Consideration to move from the Regular Meeting into an Executive Session, if needed

Johnson made a motion at approximately 8:02 p.m. to move from the regular meeting into an Executive Session referencing Personnel and Litigation. Pelote seconded the motion, **Motion passed unanimously.**


Consideration to move from the Executive Session back into the Regular Meeting

Reiser made a motion at approximately 8:17 p.m. to move from the Executive Session back into the Regular Meeting. Johnson seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

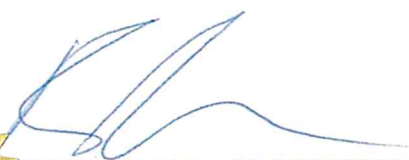
Mayor Deen presented that City Attorney Ray Smith would not be representing the City of Guyton any longer. Jessica Szilagyι inquired as to how the City Attorney left. Mayor Deen stated that he just left. The members of the City Council agreed.

Adjournment

Johnson made a motion at approximately 8:22 p.m. to adjourn this meeting. Lee seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**


Tina Chadwick, City Clerk




Russ Deen, Mayor