

# City of Guyton, Georgia

*Working Together to Make a Difference*



**SPECIAL CALLED CITY COUNCIL MEETING - July 17, 2019**

## **MINUTES**

***ITEM OF BUSINESS***

***ACTION REQUESTED OF COUNCIL***

**1. *Call to Order***

Mayor Lariscy, 6:00 PM

City Attorney Smith was late to the meeting.

**2. *Moment of Repose for Those Who Practice Some Other Faith***

**3. *Invocation***

Councilman Goldwire led the Invocation.

**4. *Pledge of Allegiance***

Mayor Lariscy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**5. *Approval of Agenda***

Consideration to approve the Agenda

Councilman Collins made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Councilman Goldwire. Motion carried.

***ALL PUBLIC COMMENTS WILL BE LIMITED TO AGENDA ITEMS ONLY***

**A. *Discussion regarding the City of Guyton Fire Department***

Mayor Lariscy stated that Commissioner Jamie Deloach and Chief Clint Hodges are in attendance. He added that the issues to how to best provide fire protection for the City of Guyton. The department is in need of personnel resources, and the County can provide those resources. Currently the City has one paid firefighter on staff and a few volunteers with limited training. Councilman Collins stated that a letter was received which indicated the City would drop to an ISO 10 if more personnel don't respond to calls, and the City Manager also proposed a budget increasing fire fees and property taxes to support the department. The merge with the County would cost nothing additional to the citizens.

At this time in the meeting, City Attorney Smith arrived. The time was 6:10pm.

Mayor Lariscy stated that the City receives an annual Insurance Premium Tax payment that historically has been added to the general fund. Currently, the budget has \$63,000 being transferred to the fire department budget. The City would not be selling the FD equipment or building to the County, and the County is only requesting the fire fees that are currently collected by the City. Councilman Collins said he believed the fee would come to Guyton to maintain the equipment. Mayor Lariscy stated he understood the fee to be paid to the County. Commissioner Deloach approached Council and stated the fire fees would be given to the County. He added they have 6 full-time, class 1 certified employees ready to work in Guyton. The County could agree to a lease agreement if necessary, if Guyton ever wanted to end the agreement, that way the equipment and building still belong to Guyton. Councilman Lee stated the reason we were in this situation is because the County owes money to the City. This led to a brief discussion of the SDS payments. Commissioner Deloach stated he wasn't aware of money owed and that these were serious allegations. Councilman Johnson stated that he hasn't spoken to current fire fighters about the agreement, but that we just need to add to the budget if people are leaving, and handle in-house.

Pastor and former Interim Chief Scott Stringer approached Council to speak about the FD. He spoke about the budget needs of the department, training needs of staff/volunteers, and equipment maintenance and replacement needs of the department. He stated the best option would be to merge with the County. They are able to give the fire fighters the training needed. He continued stating they inquired about the insurance coverage for their local church, Liberty Christian Fellowship. Should the City ISO rating drop to a 10, the church would see a minimum 60% increase. Additional citizens came forward and spoke to Council about their concerns.

Councilman Johnson asked Chief Hodges if he can guarantee 4 certified personnel to every fire call in Guyton. Chief Hodges stated that was correct and gave examples of calls in the area. There was then discussion regarding the location of our department in conjunction with the County response area. Currently, the County plans to build on HWY 119. Council then discussed past budgets for the Guyton Fire Department. Councilman Johnson stated the budget had been over \$200,000 in the past, and Councilman Collins stated he didn't believe that was correct. It was stated that a majority of that budget came from County payments. Mayor Lariscy stated the County is using "payments in lieu of taxes" to help fund their department, which is based off agreements made by the IDA, and these funds have not been made available to the City by the County.

After further discussion regarding the departments, Councilman Johnson stated he would need to see the agreement. There was further discussion that spanned several minutes and involved several citizens, including Marshall Reiser who, along with commenting about the FD, also made a comment about Guyton not being business friendly.

Councilman Collins stated the City needs firefighters on call tonight and asked about a temporary agreement to supply employees. He then asked Mr. Reiser how Guyton is not business friendly. Mr. Reiser responded stating that the city has the highest water/sewer rates, Council issues, and wastewater issues. Councilman Collins asked Mr. Reiser to meet with him in the near future to discuss concerns.

The discussion returned to the FD. Councilman Collins asked Commissioner Deloach if they had already sent an agreement for the City to review. Commissioner Deloach stated the County Attorney will send the agreement once he returns home, and that the agreement is modeled after Springfield's agreement.

Councilman Collins made a motion to move forward with reviewing the agreement with the County, and if received tonight, meet again tomorrow at 6pm to review and move forward. Councilman Lee seconded the motion, and the motion carried.


**6. Adjournment from Regular Session into Executive Session**


**7. Executive Session (as needed)**

No Executive Session was needed.

**8. Adjournment**

Councilman Goldwire made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Johnson. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned.

  
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Jeff Lariscy, Mayor

  
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Alison Bruton, City Clerk

