

City of Guyton, Georgia

Working Together to Make a Difference



CITY COUNCIL MEETING - October 8, 2019

MINUTES

ITEM OF BUSINESS

ACTION REQUESTED OF COUNCIL

1. Call to Order

Mayor Lariscy, 7:00pm

Mayor Lariscy called the meeting to order.

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

3. Invocation

Councilman Goldwire led the Invocation.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

Councilman Lee led the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. Approval of Agenda

Consideration to approve the Agenda

Councilman Collins made a motion to amend the agenda to move items 11E and 11F to Section 9, and allow the Fire Department report at the same time. Councilman Goldwire seconded the motion and the motion carried.

6. Approval of Minutes

Consideration and approval of the meeting minutes September 10, 2019

It was stated that there was a typo on Item E in the minutes, as well as Item I. Councilman Collins made a motion to approve the minutes once those errors are amended, seconded by Councilman Johnson. Motion carried.

7. Planning & Zoning- No report.

8. Historic Preservation

Ms. Pearl Boynes addressed Council stating that the Committee is still working on the application for the historic marker for Highland Park, and will be meeting in November at

GSU for assistance. She added that the Committee is also reigniting the program for the Memory Garden bricks.

9. Other Committee Reports

11 E. Discussion and consideration to allow temporary use of FD building and bay area by ECFR until construction of new building is complete

Mayor Lariscy stated that he has spoken with Chief Hodges regarding the use of one bay and the office/sleeping area while their new station is being constructed. Chief Hodges informed Council that there are plans to close on a property for a new ECFR station on Friday, and that they would pay the City for utilities while using the building. There was some discussion regarding the metering of utilities, and Chief Hodges stated that they pay \$500/month to Springfield. Councilman Goldwire asked what the utilities are costing us now. Councilman Johnson made a motion to table until after executive session, Councilman Goldwire seconded the motion and the motion carried.

11 F. County Administrator Mr. Tim Callanan, TSPLOST discussion

County Administrator Callanan spoke to Council regarding TSPLOST. He stated that the County did not want to move forward without the support of the cities, and that starting now and informing the public of as much information as possible was important to the success of the program. He added that this would not affect future LMIG projects, and funds could be used for not only roads, but sidewalks, bike paths, and drainage as well. There will be future meetings to continue to work on preliminary project lists.

ALL PUBLIC COMMENTS WILL BE LIMITED TO AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

10. Old Business

A. Mayor Lariscy

Employee of the Month

Interim Public Works Superintendent Jacob Ford was nominated as Employee of the Month by Councilman Johnson. All of Council was in agreement and congratulated Mr. Ford.

B. Mayor Lariscy

Consideration to employ Mr. Richard Zapal as Police Chief for the City of Guyton

Mayor Lariscy stated that Mr. Zapal is still interested in coming to Guyton as the Police Chief. He added that he sent the article on Mr. Zapal written by the Effingham Herald to all of Council to review, as it was an independent investigation into Mr. Zapal. Councilman Lee stated that as he has repeated before, when the three applicants were interviewed previously, he was the most qualified, but he was not the most qualified of the 6 individuals that had applied. He then proceeded to give an application to Mayor Lariscy and the other members of Council stating that this applicant was not interviewed and was more qualified. Mayor Lariscy thanked him for the application stating that he

wished he had been given this sooner so he would have gotten more time to review it. Councilman Collins stated that this applicant requested a \$70,000 but the position was only budgeted at \$50,000. Councilman Lee stated that the original position posted was for Director of Public Safety which includes police and fire. City Attorney Smith advised Council at this time to be aware that the application presented by Councilman Lee contains personal identifiers and needed to be handled accordingly. Councilman Collins made a motion to hire Mr. Zapal as the Police Chief for the City of Guyton. The motion was seconded by Mayor Lariscy, adding that he understands Councilman Johnson has issues with the process, and Councilman Lee has issues that the applicant requesting \$70,000 wasn't interviewed. Mayor Lariscy continued that he is asking Council to not consider their issues with the process, but to consider the applicant in front of them for the \$50,000 allotted for the position. Mayor Lariscy then called for the vote. Mayor Lariscy and Councilman Collins voted in favor of hiring Mr. Zapal, with Councilman Johnson, Councilman Lee, and Councilman Goldwire voting opposed. The motion failed. Mayor Lariscy stated that those Council members should explain to the citizens why they aren't providing a service for which the city is collecting taxes. Mrs. Tammy Stringer addressed Council at this time stating that the City only has one officer, and this applicant is willing to come to Guyton with this experience. She added that she jogs in Guyton four mornings a week around 5am. Recently she has noticed a vehicle following her and her closest option is to call the County Sheriff's Department. She concluded that unless the reservations of Council are regarding the applicant and not the process, then Council should move forward with hiring him, and asked why the application for this applicant was just now being presented. At this time, there was an argument between the citizens in attendance and Councilmembers regarding the presentation of the applicant at the meeting. Councilman Collins asked if any candidates currently running for Council positions in the upcoming municipal election would like to speak on the matter. Mr. Russell Deen, running for the Mayor seat, stated he was on the hiring committee, that Mr. Zapal was the most qualified, and he felt he would bring a lot of experience to Guyton. Mr. Andy Harville, running for Post 2 seat, stating that after reading The Herald article, he feels he is the right candidate for Guyton. He concluded that according to the Charter, the Mayor chooses whom to interview, so he would support him. Mr. Michael Garvin, running for the Mayor seat, stated that he wasn't on the hiring board, but that the PD was implemented while he was Mayor, and that a salary isn't a good reason to dismiss an applicant, and since there were only 6 applicants, that all should have been interviewed. Councilman Collins asked Mr. Garvin if he would have voted for Mr. Zapal, and Mr. Garvin stated that he did not have all of the information. Ms. Hursula Pelote, running for Post 2 seat, stated that she was not in the interview room and would like to look at all of the applicants, then present them to Council and Council could weigh-in on the salary. She concluded that there was not enough information for her to support it. A citizen then spoke stating that the Mayor followed the policy, and the issues don't appear to be about the candidate but personal issues. Mr. Russ Deen then stated that Chief Deputy Bush was also on the hiring committee and agreed with the appointment of Mr. Zapal. A citizen then asked since this has been on the previous three agendas, why this additional candidate is just now being presented. Councilman Lee stated that no one had asked him about this candidate until

now. Mayor Lariscy stated that he had emailed Councilman Lee regarding this candidate immediately following the previous Council meeting, and Councilman Lee stated he wanted to wait and give it to him in person. This caused an argument between the citizens in attendance and Councilman Lee. Councilman Johnson stated that the position needed to be reopened for applications. Mayor Lariscy stated that he hears the concerns from citizens, and asked City Attorney Smith if another motion could be made. After some discussion, Councilman Collins made a motion to hire Mr. Zapal as the police chief, with Mayor Lariscy seconding the motion. Councilman Johnson made a comment about Mayor Lariscy and Councilman Collins wanting to shut the department down. Mayor Lariscy called for a vote of the motion. Councilman Collins and Mayor Lariscy voted in favor, with Councilman Johnson, Councilman Lee, and Councilman Goldwire voting opposed. The motion failed.

C. Councilman Collins Discussion regarding Jim Young/Planter's non-payment and insurance company release

At this time, Mayor Lariscy and Councilman Goldwire left the room. There was a brief discussion regarding the release agreement and Councilman Collins, Councilman Lee, and Councilman Johnson were all in agreement regarding the release. At this time, Mayor Lariscy and Councilman Goldwire returned to the room. Councilman Collins informed them that an agreement has been reached.

D. Mayor Lariscy Consideration to approve agreement with J&T Environmental to provide licensed operator for WWTP and water system

City Attorney Smith advised he has some issues with wording in the agreement and reviewed those issues with Council. Councilman Goldwire asked about the fees, and Mayor Lariscy stated that fees were the same as what is currently in place. This is an official agreement with J&T instead of working off of the bid document that was accepted by Council. Councilman Collins asked is there was language in there to protect the city should something happen and the City needed to get them out immediately. City Attorney Smith stated that "for cause" language not in the agreement currently, but he will review. Mayor Lariscy recommended tabling until a called meeting. Councilman Collins made the motion to table, seconded by Councilman Johnson. Motion carried.

E. Mayor Lariscy Consideration and approval of plat for Phase VI of Whitesville

Mayor Lariscy stated this was tabled due to Councilman Johnson's concerns regarding the ditch. Councilman Johnson made a motion to approve the plat, seconded by Councilman Lee. Motion carried.

F. Mayor Lariscy Discussion regarding equipment purchase for Public Works, JCB and CAT

Councilman Johnson stated that a representative from both CAT and JCB are in attendance. City Attorney Smith advised Council that they could do a lease agreement for equipment, but each year the Council would have to vote to continue the lease. Mayor Lariscy asked if a lease could be funded with SPLOST, and City Attorney Smith stated he has never been asked that and would have to review. Mr. Landon Moore from CAT spoke to Council first regarding the equipment and the quote presented. Councilman Collins asked about the quote for the mini-excavator, but Mr. Moore stated that Councilman Johnson was more interested in the wheeled excavator. Councilman Collins stated that the City did not need the wheeled excavator and only needed the mini. He then asked about the cost difference, and Mr. Moore stated the mini was approximately \$70,000 verses a quarter of a million. A citizen asked what the closest city is that has this equipment, and he stated he wasn't aware of any, but that this equipment is popular in Europe. He then added that Macon has a couple. Councilman Goldwire asked if the smaller piece of equipment could do the same job, and Mr. Moore stated that it could, with the right attachments, just on a smaller scale. He added that the mini is the better option, it would just have to be towed on a trailer. Councilman Collins stated that he supports purchasing the mini-excavator. Mr. Jon Elmore from JCB then addressed Council regarding the hydradig wheeled excavator that he provided a quote for. Councilman Collins stated that he disagrees wholeheartedly with the purchase of a wheeled excavator. Councilman Johnson stated that he went to JCB to look at the equipment, and that the ditches in Guyton need to be dug out, and roads need to be cut back. Mayor Lariscy stated that yes, Guyton does need to move forward with new equipment, but the cost of the wheeled excavator and then salary for a man to operate it concerned him. He asked how much of the work could be done with the mini-excavator. A discussion between Council and Interim Public Works Superintendent Ford followed. Councilman Johnson stated that there is money in SPLOST and recommends purchasing the hydradig, then purchasing the mini-excavator at a later date. After further discussion regarding SPLOST, Councilman Collins made a motion to table the discussion, seconded by Councilman Goldwire. During the vote, Mayor Lariscy, Councilman Collins, and Councilman Goldwire voted in favor of tabling, with Councilman Johnson and Councilman Lee opposed. The motion carried.

G. Councilman Johnson Update regarding LMIG 2019 application
Submittal

Councilman Johnson stated that the LMIG application has been updated and submitted. The next areas to look at will be South Central and Powell Road.

11. New Business

A. Mayor Lariscy Consideration and approval of CDBG 2020
Resolution and Fair Housing Resolution

Mayor Lariscy reminded Council that these resolutions are required for the CDBG applications. Councilman Collins stated that last year, if he recalls correctly, this project requested approximately \$900,000.00, which would leave the city spending

approximately \$200,000.00 from SPLOST funds, and this would address the major ditches in that target area. He concluded that if the City purchases the hydradig utilizing those SPLOST funds then the money for CDBG goes away. Councilman Goldwire made a motion to approve both resolutions, seconded by Councilman Johnson. Motion carried.

B. Mayor Lariscy Discussion and approval of soft-start replacement for Well #3

Mayor Lariscy explained the need for the soft-start replacement. Councilman Collins asked if this was included in the original bid for the generator. Mayor Lariscy clarified that it was not. Councilman Collins made a motion to approve the repair up to the projected \$7,000.00, seconded by Councilman Goldwire. Motion carried.

C. ICM Bruton Discussion regarding renovation/replacement of tennis courts at Guyton Ball Park

Interim City Manager Bruton requested that Council consider requesting bids to renovate the tennis courts at the Guyton Ballfield with either new tennis courts, or replacing the tennis courts with basketball courts. She stated that she had requested an approximate bid from the contractor that replaced the basketball courts at Highland Park, and projected the cost to be between \$70-80,000 which would utilize the recreation SPLOST funds. Councilman Lee stated he wasn't aware of this request but would review.

D. ICM Bruton Discussion and consideration of contract with National Fire Services Office (Mr. Skip Starling) to inventory and list fire equipment

Interim City Manager Bruton explained the quote for services submitted by NFSO. After some discussion, Mayor Lariscy recommended moving forward with item A, which was a detailed inventory of all equipment at the Fire Department for \$2,300.00. Councilman Goldwire made a motion to approve Item A, seconded by Councilman Collins. Motion carried.

E. Mayor Lariscy Discussion and consideration to allow temporary use of FD building and bay area by ECFR until construction of new building is complete

Item was discussed in Section 9.

F. Mayor Lariscy County Administrator Mr. Tim Callanan, TSPLOST discussion

Item was discussed in Section 9.

12. Reports from Committees

Legal City Attorney Smith
City Attorney Smith advised he needed executive session.

Finance & Taxes Councilman Goldwire
Councilman Goldwire gave the finance report.

Streets & Lanes Councilman Johnson
Councilman Johnson addressed the upcoming LMIG project, and stated that limbs are being cut on the trail.

Water & Sewage Councilman Collins
Councilman Collins stated he is waiting on an updated letter from Wesley Parker regarding the WWTP.

Recreation & City Property Councilman Lee
Councilman Lee stated that the basketball court at Highland Park is finished, and there was a discussion regarding the windows for the old gym.

Police Department Interim Chief Coppola
Interim Chief Coppola gave the PD report.

Fire Department Chief Clint Hodges
Chief Hodges provided a FD report to Council.

13. Dates to Remember

Monday, October 14 - Early Voting begins
Saturday, October 19, 8am-2pm - Sale on the Trail
Saturday, October 26 - CASA Superhero Run
Thursday, October 31 - Fall Festival
Friday, November 1 - Early Voting ends
Tuesday, November 5 - Election Day!
Wednesday, November 6, 4pm - Guyton Municipal Court
Tuesday, November 12, 7pm - City Council Meeting
Thursday, November 28 - City Hall Closed, Thanksgiving
Friday, November 29 - City Hall Closed
Sunday, December 1 - Caboose Lighting Event

Mayor Lariscy requested approval from Council to remove the tree due to its condition. Councilman Goldwire made a motion to remove the tree, seconded by Councilman Johson. Motion carried.

15. Adjournment from Regular Session into Executive Session

Councilman Collins made a motion to adjourn to executive session, seconded by Councilman Lee. Motion carried.

16. Executive Session (as needed)

Executive session was held to discuss litigation.

17. Adjournment of Executive Session back into Regular Session

A motion to open the meeting to regular session was made by Councilman Goldwire, seconded by Councilman Lee, and the motion carried.

Mayor Lariscy stated there are three items to discuss.

Councilman Collins made a motion to support the use of the fire department building and one bay by the Effingham County Fire Department, not to exceed 8 months. The motion was seconded by Councilman Goldwire, and the motion carried.

Mayor Lariscy recommended denying the claim presented by the Vogeley's. Councilman Lee made the motion to deny the claim, seconded by Councilman Goldwire. Motion carried. City Attorney Smith advised he would send the proper notice.

Mayor Lariscy recommended denying the claim presented by Mr. Coppola. Mayor Lariscy made a motion to deny the claim due to no Council members offering the motion. Mayor Lariscy's motion was seconded by Councilman Goldwire, and the motion carried. City Attorney Smith advised he would send the proper notice.

18. Adjournment

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



Jeff Lariscy, Mayor



Alison Bruton, City Clerk

