



City of Jasper
 200 Burnt Mountain Road
 Jasper, GA 30143
 MINUTES | REGULAR MEETING
 Monday, September 11, 2023, 6:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Steve Lawrence
 Mayor Pro Tem Kirk Raffield
 Councilmember Jim Looney
 Councilmember John Foust
 Councilmember Anne Sneve
 Councilmember Folsom C. Proctor

MEMBERS ABSENT

LEGAL COUNSEL

David Syfan

STAFF

Sonia Jammes
 Tara Benson
 Kim Goldener
 Lindsey Williams
 Mary Elizabeth Burgess
 John Sherrer
 Matt Dawkins
 Mike Davis
 Stacy Johnson
 Houston Adams
 Erica Schrader
 Chris Knight

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE

See Attached

PRESS

Mari Livsey – KnowPickens
 Angela Reinhardt – Pickens Progress

AGENDA ITEM: Call Meeting to Order/Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance	PRESENTER: Mayor Lawrence
<p>Mayor Lawrence, recognizing a quorum present called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Mayor Lawrence called on Reverend Max Caylor to provide the Invocation. Frank Leist with Pickens County Veterans Memorial Park led the Pledge of Allegiance.</p>	
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
None	N/A
	DEADLINE
	N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Adopt Agenda	PRESENTER: Mayor Lawrence
<p>Result: Approved Mover: Councilmember Sneve Second: Councilmember Foust Ayes: Councilmember Sneve, Councilmember Foust, Councilmember Proctor, Mayor Pro Tem Raffield, and Councilmember Looney</p>	
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Approved	N/A
	DEADLINE
	N/A

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:	PRESENTER: Mayor Lawrence
<p>Minutes Regular Council Meeting July 10, 2023 Minutes Regular Council Meeting August 7, 2023 Minutes Special Called Meeting August 14, 2023 Financial Report Fire Report Police Report Design Schedule for Lee Newton Park Electrical Upgrade Job Description and PayScale for Planner Position Appalachian Mountain Service Agreement</p>	
<p>Result: Approved with removal of Job Description & Payscale for Planner Position Mover: Mayor Pro Tem Raffield Second: Councilmember Sneve Ayes: Councilmember Sneve, Councilmember Foust, Mayor Pro Tem Raffield, Councilmember Proctor and Councilmember Looney</p>	
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Approved	N/A
	DEADLINE
	N/A

AGENDA ITEM: #1 Swearing in of Jasper Police Officers Houston Adams & Erica Schrader			PRESENTER: Chief Matt Dawkins
<p>Chief Dawkins stated that both officers have completed and/or are completing the department Field Training Program, which ranges from a minimum of four weeks to 14 weeks. Chief Dawkins swore in Officer Houston Adams and Officer Erica Schrader.</p>			
ACTION ITEM: N/A	PERSON RESPONSIBLE N/A	DEADLINE N/A	

AGENDA ITEM: #2 Proclamation for Jasper Home Depot Day			PRESENTER: Mayor Steve Lawrence
<p>Mayor Lawrence read and presented the Home Depot Day proclamation to many of the Home Depot staff in attendance. The proclamation declared September 18, 2023, as Jasper Home Depot Day.</p>			
ACTION ITEM: N/A	PERSON RESPONSIBLE N/A	DEADLINE N/A	

AGENDA ITEM: #3 Consideration of Amending the Wine Specialty Shop Ordinance			PRESENTER: Sonia Jammes-City Manager
<p>Ms. Jammes presented a request from First Mountain Tasting Room to amend or to allow a variance to the specialty wine shop ordinance to allow for sales of beer from a can and by the glass for on-premise consumption, as well as to sell by the package for off-premise consumption. By the current ordinance, they are able to sell wine by the glass for consumption, as well as by the bottle for off-premise consumption, but this has caused confusion for some patrons of their establishment, and they would like to amend the ordinance to also sell beer by the can and the package. Staff asked for direction from Council on whether they would like to explore this amendment or variance to the ordinance. If Council were open to the idea, Staff would then work with City Attorney Syfan for the necessary changes, and then bring this back to Council for a vote at an upcoming meeting.</p>			
<p>DISCUSSION: Councilmember Looney asked for clarification that cans would not be able to be consumed outside during Downtown events as the ordinance says that alcohol must be in cups, and Ms. Jammes stated that this was correct. Mr. Syfan advised that Council established an Entertainment District in the Downtown area, so in theory if a customer opened a can in the shop and then poured the beer into a container, then they could walk outside of the establishment within the Entertainment District and drink the beer. Councilmember Sneve stated that the current ordinance allows them to sell draft beer, as well as beer in growlers. Mr. Syfan advised that the original concept was that Council was allowing a wine package store to also be a wine specialty shop and give the shop additional avenues to make money, but they still have to have 60% of wine package sales or wine related merchandise. Mr. Syfan reminded Council that once the rules were loosened, this could cause additional shops to ask to come in as wine specialty shops thinking they would not have to have a food component with the beer and wine sales. It was his understanding that Council didn't want to have a pure bar that only sells beer, wine and distilled spirits, and for all other shops we are requiring them to be a restaurant. The wine specialty shop is already an exception, so it's a question of where Council would draw the line. Councilmember Proctor stated that he was uncomfortable having much discussion without a formal motion on the table; however, he didn't feel that he had enough information about what First Mountain Tasting Room is requesting. He indicated that there should be a process that protects all of our businesses, and that one of Council's committees may be best for working through this process. The process could be citizen driven or Council driven. Ms. Jammes advised that this request came before the Finance and Administration Committee, and that committee chose to move it up to Council for discussion. Councilmember Sneve asked where other Central Business District business ordinances came to, and Ms. Jammes advised that if it involved alcohol, they come to Finance and Administration. Mayor Pro Tem Raffield indicated that the long process Council had recently completed regarding reviewing ordinances and putting ordinances in place focused more on development, which came out of the moratorium. He suggested that this be moved back to the Development Committee for a standard process to be created with the help of legal, and if the request then needed to go before a different Committee for review, it can do so. Councilmember Looney recommended that Council send this back to the Finance and Administrative Committee, and they would work with Staff to develop</p>			

the process as they had requested this be brought before Council; however, after discussion on the potential for amendments to an ordinance or a variance to the ordinance being a zoning issue, Councilmember Looney advised that it sounded like this needed to go to the Development Committee for work.

ACTION ITEM	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Moved to Development Committee for creation of process	N/A	N/A

AGENDA ITEM: New Business PRESENTER: Sonia Jammes-City Manager
 #4 Consideration & Approval of Main Street Streetscape Lighting

Ms. Jammes presented an option for upgrading the lighting along Main Street through a program offered by Georgia Power that assists local governments and communities with their downtown lighting. The City has 33 poles along Main Street. After meeting with Georgia Power and reviewing the condition of all 33 poles, instead of replacing all of the poles, they advised that the City could keep the poles, and Georgia Power would paint them, upgrade the electrical outlets, and then assume the maintenance of all light poles under 1 of 2 options, depending on whether the City would be able to contribute towards the cost. The first option would not require a prepayment and would just increase the monthly electric bill for the downtown light poles from the current approximate monthly amount of \$500 to \$1,987.59. Option 2 would require a prepayment of \$31,000 from the City, and then the monthly power bill would increase from approximately \$500 to \$781.00. All lighting fixtures would be changed out, the electrical outlets would be upgraded, and then Georgia Power would assume maintenance responsibility. Staff recommend that if Council were interested in proceeding with the program that the City proceed with Option 2 as that was a more economical route to take, and that the City may be able to partner with other organizations to make the initial payment amount.

DISCUSSION: Councilmember Foust excused himself from discussion and voting. Councilmember Looney asked if this could be paid for out of SPLOST funding, and Finance Director Williams advised that it would not qualify. Councilmember Sneve asked where the prepayment amount would come from, and Ms. Williams advised that it would be General Fund. There was discussion whether hotel-motel tax may be able to cover the prepayment, and whether this would meet the criteria for the Chamber’s portion of hotel-motel tax. Ms. Jammes advised that she was waiting for the Chamber to let her know whether this is an allowable expense; however, the maximum amount the City would pay would be \$31,000, and any amount contributed would bring that price tag down. Councilmember Proctor asked to see some of the options lit up at night so the brightness could be evaluated. Ms. Jammes explained that the model included in the packet was the one that gives off the most ambient light because it isn’t covered by a crystalized globe, and this model is the one that Georgia Power has recommended as it would send out more light for the pathways. Councilmember Proctor asked if Council could see this light to evaluate it before making a decision on style, and Ms. Jammes said that they could; however, the only request Staff has this evening is to approve the recommendation to go with Georgia Power’s program, specifically option 2, and then the decision of the style of light could be taken care of later. Councilmember Sneve asked what type of maintenance was covered by Georgia Power, and Ms. Jammes explained that they will take care of any electrical issues, replacing bulbs when they go out, aesthetics of the poles when the paint fades, etc. The poles would be painted black.

Result: Approved - Option 2 to prepay \$31,000 to Georgia Power and then increase the monthly bill to \$781.00.
Mover: Councilmember Looney
Secunder: Mayor Pro Tem Raffield
Ayes: Councilmember Sneve, Mayor Pro Tem Raffield, Councilmember Proctor and Councilmember Looney.
 Councilmember Foust excused himself from voting.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Approved	N/A	N/A

AGENDA ITEM: New Business PRESENTER: Lindsey Williams-Finance Director
 #5 Consideration & Approval to Amend Public Utility Franchise Tax- Ordinance 2023-16

Ms. Williams advised Council that the City collects Franchise Tax from utility companies, and that Staff is requesting to make an amendment to Article 6, Public Utility Franchise Tax, Section 74.151. The State of Georgia allows municipalities to collect up to 5% on franchise fees, and with this recommended amendment, the compensation collected would be increased from the current 3% to 5% of the annual gross income received from or on the account of said franchise.

DISCUSSION: N/A

Result: Approved
Mover: Councilmember Proctor
Second: Councilmember Sneve
Ayes: Councilmember Sneve, Councilmember Foust, Mayor Pro Tem Raffield, Councilmember Proctor and Councilmember Looney

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Approved	N/A	N/A

AGENDA ITEM: New Business
 #6 Consideration & Approval of Resolution 2023-12 for GEFA Lead Service Line Inventory Grant Funding
PRESENTER: Kim Goldener-Assistant City Manager

Ms. Goldener stated that at the July 10, 2023, Council meeting, Council approved Task Order 1 with Kimley-Horn which authorized them to assist the City with development and submittal of the City’s Lead Service Line Inventory, which is due prior to the EPA mandated deadline of October 16, 2024. The Task Order also authorized Kimley-Horn to complete the process the City started when we filed our Notice of Intent through GEFA’s Drinking Water State Revolving Funding program for assistance in paying for this work. The City was tentatively awarded \$63,525 through GEFA, and now needs to submit the official application to finalize that award. Kimley-Horn has been working on this application on behalf of the City and prior to submitting, the City must adopt Resolution 2023-12 which commits funding over and above any amount that the City receives in grant funding through GEFA to ensure that our inventory is completed. Ms. Goldener advised that GEFA may award additional funding over the initial amount; however, they require the City’s acknowledgement that whatever funding is needed will be taken care of by the City.

DISCUSSION: Mayor Lawrence asked if Staff had any idea of what the total dollar amount might be to complete Jasper’s inventory, and Ms. Goldener advised that when Staff and Kimley-Horn were originally pulling together the numbers based on the number of service lines in the City, as well as a very conservative number of service lines that the City may not be able to determine the composition of prior to submitting, the total dollar amount was \$357,000 to complete our inventory. Staff has been working on pulling together record data that can be used to rule out lead being used, as well as compiling information from the AMI meter changeout, as Consolidated took good pictures during this process. The more information that can be provided to Kimley-Horn, and the more work that Staff can handle in-house will help to drive those costs down. The initial application submitted to GEFA was extremely conservative because Staff wanted to ask for as much money as possible in aid in this work. There was discussion on potential funding sources for any overages, with 2020 SPLOST funds as a possibility, as well as fund balance in the Enterprise fund.

Result: Approved
Mover: Councilmember Raffield
Second: Councilmember Sneve
Ayes: Councilmember Sneve, Councilmember Foust, Mayor Pro Tem Raffield, Councilmember Proctor, and Councilmember Looney

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Approved	N/A	N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Committee Reports

DISCUSSION:
 The council provided a brief update. No action was taken from the committee reports.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
N/A	N/A	N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Executive Session- Personnel & Real Estate		
<p>At 7:03PM, Mayor Lawrence called to enter into Executive Session for Real Estate & Legal. Mayor Pro Tem made a motion, and Councilmember Sneve seconded. The motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>Mayor Lawrence at 8:00 PM called for a motion to enter back into the Regular Council Meeting. Councilmember Raffield made the motion and Councilmember Looney provided a second. The motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>There was a motion to amend the Agenda to add New Business Item 7 by Mayor Pro Tem Raffield, and this was seconded by Councilmember Sneve. The motion passed unanimously.</p>		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
N/A	N/A	N/A

AGENDA ITEM: New Business	PRESENTER: Sonia Jammes-City Manager
#7 Consideration & Approval to advertise for millage	
<p>Ms. Jammes advised Council that Staff has reviewed the tax digest information received from the County and recommends that the City roll back the millage rate to 5.221. If approved, Ms. Williams will advertise in the paper of the City's intent to roll back the millage rate. Currently, the millage rate is 5.467.</p> <p>DISCUSSION: Mayor Pro Tem Raffield stated that in previous years, the City has called a Special Meeting for adopting the millage rate. Ms. Williams advised that the City has done that; however, she reached out to the Tax Commissioner's Office, and it is acceptable to adopt the millage rate at a regular Council meeting. With a roll back, the City does not have to hold Public Hearings.</p> <p>Councilmember Sneve made a motion to approve the recommendation of the City Manager and Finance Director to advertise our intent to roll back the millage rate to 5.221. Councilmember Looney provided the second.</p> <p>Result: Approved Mover: Councilmember Sneve Second: Councilmember Looney Ayes: Councilmember Sneve, Councilmember Foust, Mayor Pro Tem Raffield, Councilmember Proctor and Councilmember Looney</p>	
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Approved	N/A

AGENDA ITEM: Adjourn	PRESENTER: Mayor Steve Lawrence	
<p>Mayor Pro Tem made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05PM, and Councilmember Sneve seconded. Motion passed unanimously.</p>		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Adjourn	N/A	N/A



 Mayor



 City Clerk