

MINUTES
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
IN PERSON & ZOOM
MONDAY, May 3, 2021

Members Present:

Mayor Steve Lawrence
Dr. Sonny Proctor
Kirk Raffield-Zoom
Anne Sneve
Jim Looney
John Foust

Staff:

Brandon Douglas
Beverly Ragland
Lindsey Williams
Shauna Coleman
David Hall
Lonnie Waters-Zoom
Greg Lovell
Steve Roper

Guests in Attendance:

Green Suttles-zoom
Guery Bruner
Grant Schmock
June Ash

Members Absent:

Legal Counsel:

R. David Syfan

Press:

Mari Livsey-Know Pickens
Dan Pool-Pickens Progress-zoom

Mayor Steve Lawrence asked Councilmember Anne Sneve if she recognized a quorum. See a quorum, Mayor Lawrence recognized meeting as opening. He requested Development Director Lonnie Waters to provide the invocation. He requested Councilmember Jim Looney to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Lawrence advised that an agenda is in front of them and entertained a motion to adopt the agenda. Councilmember John Foust made a motion to adopt the agenda with Councilmember Sneve providing a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence stated that Council has the minutes from the March 25, 2021 Work Session/Public Hearing, April 5th 2021 Regular Council Meeting, and April 29, 2021 Work Session/Public Hearing. Mayor Lawrence entertained a motion to adopt all as presented. Councilmember Sneve provided a motion with Councilmember Dr. Sonny Proctor providing a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence Read the Proclamation for National Day of Prayer.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the first item under old business (Item A) Final consideration and approval of Ordinance No. 2021-06 and Ordinance No. 2021-07 for text amendments to Zoning Ordinance and Sign Ordinance. Mayor Lawrence called on City Manager Brandon Douglas. Mr. Douglas stated that this is the obligatory second reading and favorably considered at the last meeting. Mayor Lawrence called for a motion. Councilmember Foust made a motion to approve. Councilmember Sneve provided a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under old business (Item B) Final consideration and approval of Ordinance No. 2021-08 as amended for discounted water and sewer rate. Councilmember Jim Looney provided background information. Councilmember Proctor made a motion to approve the final consideration and approval of Ordinance No.2021-08 for discounted water and sewer rate. Councilmember Sneve provided a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under old business (Item C) Final consideration and approval of Ordinance No. 2021-09 for the request to de-annex Parcel No. 029A 064 005 located off Burnt Mountain Road from the City of Jasper. Mayor Lawrence called on Mr. Waters. Mr. Waters stated that this is the second reading. The property currently has no services provided and there is no access from Burnt Mountain. The applicant has no immediate plans for development. Councilmember Looney made a motion to approve. Councilmember Sneve provided a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under old business (Item D) Consideration and approval of the purchase of (3) generators for Hickory Cove and Hill City at an expense not to exceed \$30,000. Mayor Lawrence called on Water Waste-Water Director David Hall. Mr. Hall approached Mayor and council stating that the department has obtained two quotes. The low bid was from D Wilson Electric LLC in the amount of \$21,435.00. Mayor Lawrence called for a motion to approve the low bid. Councilmember Sneve provided a motion to approve. Councilmember Foust provided a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under old business (Item E) Consideration and discussion of Mowing Maintenance Services BID. Mayor Lawrence called on Finance Director/City Clerk Beverly Ragland. Ms. Ragland stated that at council's direction from a previous meeting staff has put together a mowing maintenance services bid. Staff worked on a list of roadways, 70 miles of mowing on both sides of the street which ends up being 50 acres of land to be mowed. People had the opportunity to bid on just one section or both, meaning just the roadways or just

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the locations. Staff only received one bid for the locations portion in the amount of \$165,597, which is not including the roadside. Mr. Douglas spoke to Mayor and council. Mr. Douglas asked council to recall when the pandemic hit, we had just finished the retreat with the new administration and the opportunity for us to become more efficient in terms of personnel in such not fund certain positions. The mowing bid is not a viable option. Staff will continue to work on some more options to bring back next month. Mayor Lawrence asked if council had any questions. Councilmember Proctor thanked staff for the effort in trying to have a solution. Mayor Lawrence made a motion to reject this bid. Council member Looney motioned to reject the Bid. Councilmember Foust provided a second. All of council was in favor to reject the bid.

At the conclusion of Old Business, Mayor Lawrence recognized the first item under new business (item A) Consideration of Ordinance No. 2021-10 – Request of rezone Parcel # 014015 from R-3 Residential and C-2 General Commercial to a Planned Unit Development (PUD) located at 1317 West Church Street, Jasper, Georgia. Mayor Lawrence called on Mr. Waters to provide background information on the property located behind Ingles. He stated that the requirements were met for advertising in the paper for 8 weeks with signs on site. He reported that no inquires, complaints or comments have been submitted regarding the proposed development. He stated that the Planning Commission favorably approved. Councilmember Proctor asked if this is the first or second reading. Mayor Lawrence stated this is our first reading. Mayor Lawrence called on Grant Schmock. Mr. Schmock did not have anything more to add. Mr. Douglas added for the public to recap that the February 1st zoning ordinance approval had slight modifications to procedurally how we do business when someone requests for an exaction or rezoning or something to do with land use or zoning. It goes through the process of an application and development checklist with an obligatory public hearing before the Planning Commission along with a public hearing before Council. He went on to explain that those measures are called out in the Zoning ordinance to enable the community to know that there is a potential land use. Mayor Lawrence asked for any further questions. No questions were presented. Mayor Lawrence asked for a motion to approve Request of rezone Parcel # 014015 from R-3 Residential and C-2 General Commercial to a Planned Unit Development (PUD) located at 1317 West Church Street. Councilmember Sneve made a motion to approve. Councilmember Looney provided a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under new business (Item B) Consideration of special event for July 4, 2021. Mayor Lawrence called on Leslie Miller with the Jasper Lions Club. Ms. Miller provided information on the upcoming event. The Peachtree Rides fair will be at Lee Newton park beginning Thursday, July 1 through Sunday, July 4th. The parade will be held on Saturday the 3rd at 1pm. The fireworks display is scheduled for 6pm on Sunday July 4th with a band performing as well in hopes to draw more of a crowd. Mayor Lawrence called for a motion. Councilmember Sneve made a motion to approve. Councilmember Foust provided a second. Motion to approve carried unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under new business (Item C) Consideration of special event for camping at Lee Newton Park for September 2-5, 2021. Mayor Lawrence called on June Ash with North Georgia Family Partners. June provided background information explaining that for the last 5 years (excluding 2020) the organization has managed the camping at Lee Newton Park in the past. The money that is raised from the campers will go to the North Georgia Family Partners. Councilmember Proctor asked if she was asking for the city to provide security to the park. Ms. Ash replied with no that she is just asking permission to use the park. Mayor Lawrence called for a motion. Councilmember Sneve made a motion to approve. Councilmember Looney provided a second. Motion to approve carried unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under new business (Item D) Discussion of City of Jasper Pay Scale. Mayor Lawrence called on Councilmember Looney. Councilmember Looney stated that discussion was previously presented about the possibility of using the American Relief act funding to correct deficiencies in our Pay Scale. Staff is waiting on final guidance from the United States Treasury on eligibility of these funds. He went on to say that staff is proposing making the base rate of \$13 an hour and possibility of raising hourly positions by one dollar. Councilmember Looney requested that the staff look at having a bi-weekly payroll. Currently employees are paid weekly. He understands that this could be a burden on employees going from a weekly to bi-weekly and would like to look at the possibility of moving toward a retention advancement bonus for employees to help transition. Councilmember Proctor asked Looney if we hired a consultant costing hundreds of thousands of dollars to go through and determine our pay scales and job descriptions. Councilmember Looney stated no that he did that himself. No consultant was hired. Councilmember Proctor went on to say this was all done internally by Looney and staff. This project was given to Looney when he was interim City Manager and still on the list when the new City Manager, Mr. Douglas started. This is something that has been in the works for several years. Councilmember Proctor thanked Looney and staff for all the hard work they have done on this project. Mayor Lawrence asked council for any further discussion. Mayor Lawrence stated that staff will be bringing this back to Council. He asked that this be considered as a recommendation. Councilmember Looney said this is a request and for council to study and report back. Mr. Douglas added that this has been a priority since February of 2019. Staff recognizes that this will be several, if not more than hundreds of thousands of dollars, however this is something that has needed to be done for quite some time. As City Manager he is tasked with making sure that staff levels are appropriate and

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hopefully be able to encourage others to join the team. Councilmember Proctor added that employee satisfaction is tremendously important to this Mayor and Council.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under new business (Item E) Consideration and Approval of Printing Contract with Arista. Finance Director Ragland provided background information on the printing contract with Arista. Arista was one of the vendors recommended by Tyler Technologies and the service fee is better than what we are currently paying. Deputy Finance Director Lindsey Williams added that we will also be able to email bills to customers and that is something we were not able to do in the past. Councilmember Looney made a motion to approve. Councilmember Sneve provided a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under new business (Item F) Consideration and Approval of Ordinance No. 2021-011 to amend the Malt Beverage portion of the City of Jasper Alcohol Excise Tax. Mayor Lawrence called on Deputy Finance Director Williams. Mrs. Williams provided background information that staff determined an inconsistency between O.C.G.A and the City Ordinance regarding Malt Beverage Alcohol Excise tax. This ordinance will bring the City ordinance into compliance with State regulations. Mayor Lawrence called for a motion to approve. Councilmember Sneve made a motion to approve. Councilmember Proctor provided a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under new business (Item G) Discussion of Weather-Related Event / Impact. Mayor Lawrence called on Mr. Douglas to provide a brief update on Gennett Drive and Long Swamp Creek. The water line and bridge on Gennett Drive should be completed by the engineer within 60 to 90 days. Bids are currently being submitted for the work at Long Swamp. The cost for this is unknown at this time. Staff will have something for the June 7th council meeting.

Mayor Lawrence recognized Committee Reports.

Development Committee – Councilmember Proctor is continuing to meet with potential development projects and applicants.

Street/Parks Committee – Councilmember Foust stated that we are continuing with the concept plan at Doris Wigington Park.

Administration Committee – nothing further to add.

Water/Waste-Water Committee – commended staff on a great job continuing to progress forward with the generators.

Beverly Ragland provided the Finance report.

Lonnie Waters provided the Development report.

Police Chief Greg Level provided the Police report.


Fire Chief Steve Roper provided the Fire report. Mr. Roper updated Mayor and council on the mold issue at JFD. The mold situation has been remediated; an independent test done to confirm that we are clean. All of staff have moved back into the building.

Councilmember Loony invited everyone to Stella Brewer's retirement party on Thursday from 1 to 3 pm. Stella has been with The City of Jasper for 33 years.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the Fire Report.

Mayor Lawrence asked for a motion to adjourn with Councilmember Foust providing a motion and Councilmember Looney providing a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.


Steve Lawrence
Mayor


Beverly Ragland
Finance Director/City Clerk

MINUTES
WORK SESSION
PUBLIC HEARING
IN PERSON
THURSDAY, May 27, 2021

Members Present:

Mayor Steve Lawrence
Dr. Sonny Proctor
Kirk Raffield
Jim Looney
John Foust

Staff:

Brandon Douglas
Beverly Ragland
Tara Benson
Lindsey Williams
Shauna Coleman
Lonnie Waters

Guests in Attendance:

Green

Members Absent:

Anne Sneve

Legal Counsel:

R. David Syfan

Press:

Mari Livsey-Know Pickens

Mayor Steve Lawrence asked Councilmember Kirk Raffield if he recognized a quorum. See a quorum, Mayor Lawrence recognized meeting as opening. He requested Development Director Lonnie Waters to provide the invocation. He requested Councilmember Jim Looney to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Lawrence advised that an agenda is in front of them and entertained a motion to adopt the agenda. Councilmember Raffield made a motion to adopt the agenda with Councilmember John Foust providing a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the first item under new business (item A) Public Hearing. Text Amendment of the City of Jasper Zoning Ordinance-Sec. 94-96 (d)(1). Mayor Lawrence called on City Manager Brandon Douglas. Mr. Douglas stated this is a Public hearing and a staff driven initiative. Staff would like to look at a couple of amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Douglas provided background information from the Planning and Zoning meeting held on May 27th. Staff is asking to change Sec. 94-96 (d)(1) that requires 35% fenestration on all building facades. Mr. Douglas gave background information on the permitted use under the central business district. It is more practical to require 35% fenestration on the front of the building only. The additional text amendment requested to be changed is Sec. 94-95 for permitted uses in the Central Business Section. It has previously been amended to allow breweries. This request will allow wine specialty shops in the Central Business District. Mr. Douglas called on Mr. Waters to elaborate on his experience as the day-to-day Development Director with fenestration. Mr. Waters said has spoken to about 4 builders and none of them mind the change and would abide but that it would be more costly. Buildings were viewed by staff in surrounding counties, and none had fenestration on all sides. Mayor Lawrence asked if anyone had questions or anything to add. City Attorney R. David Syfan added that he understands that administration is corresponding with a potential applicant about the requirements for a wine specialty shop in the Central Business District. He added that the city tries to work with businesses and have reasonable regulations to allow them to be successful. Jasper wants to be a business-friendly environment. Mr. Syfan stated that from now until the next Council meeting, we may have to make changes to allowable percentages of sales of bottles and consumption on the premises. The percentages could change from 60/40 to 55/45 or 50/50. Mr. Syfan asked Council if anyone has strong feelings about the percentage of bottles of wine versus on-premises consumption. Councilmember Jim Looney asked if this is something that could be changed after the business is opened. Mr. Syfan stated that it could be done. With the new Charter, we no longer require two readings so that process is quicker. The other requirements for advertising and holding public hearings are still in place. Mayor Lawrence reminded Council that this is a public hearing, and no action would be taken tonight. Mayor Lawrence asked if anyone had any questions. Councilmember Foust spoke up and addressed Mr. Waters about speaking with the builders about what they preferred. Mr. Waters elaborated their concerns with additional costs of building and challenges of selling them. There also is an additional security risk with more windows. Councilmember Foust asked if anyone has reached out to the citizens to see what they thought. Mr. Waters said that he has not. Councilmember Foust stated he is concerned about what citizens think and that we need to speak with them and get their viewpoints. He asked if anyone present in the audience wanted to speak. Nobody came forth.

Mayor Lawrence moved on to item B. Discussion on Emergency Repairs to Water Main -JL White. Mr. Douglas provided information on the incident that occurred the previous weekend. A water main had been busted along JL White near the Hospital. This same area had a water break back in 2018. Mr. Douglas discussed the depth (20 feet or so) of the line was above the City's expertise, experience, or resources to address that type of fix. City Crews installed a temporary line from hydrant to hydrant to make sure that Sanctuary Residential has water. Staff went with the direction of getting a contractor out who had the requisite track hoe and trench boxes as well as experience. Mr. Douglas went over the cost of this emergency repair. The original cost was \$125,000, however with the enormity of work that our crews did to work with the contractors. It was reduced it down by \$23,050. Additionally, there was a credit of \$15,000 for not doing the asphalt repair. Mr. Douglas expressed concern in repairing the asphalt before we make sure this will not happen again.

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Staff is seeking approval for up to \$90,000 to pay the invoice received for this emergency repair. Staff will be meeting with the Committee to address alternate lines to thwart a future break at that depth. Mayor Lawrence made a motion to approve the invoice for that work that has been done for the emergency repair. Councilmember Foust made a motion to approve. Councilmember Looney provided a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

After further discussion about materials on hand and the lead time for delivery, Mayor Lawrence called for a motion to spend up to \$50,000 for pipe material that will be stockpiled for use in future routine as well as emergency repairs. Councilmember Foust made a motion to approve. Councilmember Raffield provided a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence called for a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Looney made a motion. Councilmember Foust provided a second. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.



Steve Lawrence
Mayor



Beverly Ragland
Finance Director/City Clerk