



MINUTES
Cochran City Council
Tuesday, March 8, 2022
Regular Scheduled Meeting @ 7PM

City Auditorium, 102 N Second Street, Cochran, GA 31014

Present: Mayor Billy Yeomans, Mayor Pro Tem Keith Anderson
Councilmembers: Gary Ates, Carla Coley, Jimmy Jones, Andrew Lemmon,
City Attorney: Jim Elliott
Absent - Rufus Veal

Call to order by Mayor Billy Yeomans @ 7:00PM

The invocation was given by Mayor Yeomans followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilmember Jones.

Mayor asked for any corrections, additions, or deletions to the February agenda provided?
There were none.

Councilmember Ates made the motion to accept the agenda with a second from Councilmember Lemmon. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 5-0

Mayor asked if there were any corrections or additions to the 2/8/22 minutes. There were none.
Councilmember Jones made the motion to accept the minutes as presented with a second by Councilmember Lemmon. 5-0

- I. Call to Order by the Mayor**
- II. Invocation**
- III. Pledge of Allegiance**
- IV. Attendance**
- V. Adopt Agenda**
- VI. Agenda Items**

ITEM #1- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Employee of the Month. Public Works Director Willie Farrow presented the employee of the month to Dennis Rozier, General Maintenance Technician.

Public Works Director, Willie Farrow introduced the new Code Enforcement, Joseph Leach.

Also, during this time, City Manager, Richard Newbern recognized Willie Farrow for completing his Public Works Management Certification. Willie is also a member of the Middle GA Chapter of the American Public Works Association.

ITEM #2- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Recognition of Charlie Beck's service to the City of Cochran. Mayor Yeomans called the family of Charlie Beck who were in attendance come to the front to receive a retirement plaque in honor of Charlie Beck.

ITEM #3- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Recognition of the Middle School Boys Basketball Team Championship. Team was unable to attend. This item was moved to the April 12 meeting.

ITEM #4- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Discussion of pending grant applications.

- CHIP 2021 Housing Grant – 6 houses were selected. Three residents of Districts 1 and three residents of District 2 were chosen through the lottery system. The ones selected have been interviewed. The contractor will be advertised on the city website, social media and also listed in the local newspaper of who will be hired to do the construction.
- \$1,000,000 CDBG Housing Grant – The Council approve the revitalization and housing rehabilitation project in the Roberson Crescent and Sixth Street target area. The homeowners in that area have written letters describing their situation. City is working with the community along with Rhoda Gilbert with Gilbert & Associates.
- 2021 GA DOT LMIG Project – The city has resurfaced almost a mile of road segments with state LMIG money. Local Maintenance Improvement Grant funded by the GA DOT grant funds. The city has applied for another grant project for approximately 4,000 linear ft. of road resurfacing in the amount of \$100,000. Most recent contractor who has completed work is Dykes Grassing and Paving. The LMIG money will be bided out as soon as we get the grant and on deposit.
- Covid Cares & ARPA – The funds are on deposit. Did apply for a grant through the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget of \$755,000, that was not funded. The understanding is there may be additional funds through the Governors office later this year for the water and sewer improvements that are very essential.
- Fire Ladder Truck/Personnel Safer Grant – The two applications are progressing through FEMA in hopes the two will be funded. Fire Truck Grant will be matched with the fire SPOLST monies that are on deposit.
- Public Safety Supplemental Pay – We anticipate this funding to be received soon.
- Recreation Trails & GA DOT TAP Opportunity- Applied for \$200,000 to develop a trail along the bypass between Havenwood Gardens 1 and Dykes Street, 1/3 of a mile, 8 foot wide, which was not funded. DNR's reason not to fund application due to the trail was more a transportation trail than recreational. Transportation funds may be available through the GA DOT Transportation Alternative Program. Working with the Regional Commission on filing that application. This item may be on the April 12 Agenda. The Council will be asked to authorize filing that application for

the trail from Havenwood Garden 1 to East Dykes or to GA Hwy 26. Havenwood Daisey may as well be added to the trail.

- Grant application for Park property – 5.2- acre park on Ash Street, the city will develop a masterplan. This masterplan will enable the city to seek grant funds for amenities such as playground, walking trails and other amenities that could go in the park. The City plans to move ahead with the Masterplan development. The Masterplan must be developed and approved by the Council so that it will set up the City to secure grant money through GA DNR and other funds to develop that park. The Park was conveyed to the city. This location is between the solar farm and Daisy Senior.

ITEM #5- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Public Hearing and consideration of proposed Zoning Text Amendments on Off-street Parking, Land Buffers, and Intersection Clearances.

Called to order 7:21PM

This public hearing is to consider approval of “Text Amendments” on off street parking, land buffers, and Intersection Clearance provisions. This Public Hearing is called to provide any interested parties with an opportunity to express their views or concerns. Council is asked to approve “Text Amendments” to the City’s Zoning Ordinance to add off street parking, Land Buffers and Intersection Clearance provisions. The following three provisions will be added, by amendment, to the Zoning Ordinance.

Section 4-16: Off Street automobile parking

Section 4-17: Property Line Buffers

Section 4-18: Vision Clearance

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on Thursday, March 3, 2022, and voted 5 to 0 to recommend approval of the text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance.

The text amendments were advertised verbatim in the Times Journal Post in the February 10 edition.

The Planning Commission used the language that was in the former zoning ordinance as basis for developing the proposed text amendments.

Mayor called for any public in put regarding these proposed zoning text amendments, Off Street parking, Land Buffers and Intersection Clearances.

No comments were addressed.

Public Hearing closed at 7:24PM

Mayor asked Council if they had any questions or comments they would like to make.

Mayor called for a motion to approve the zoning text amendments, Off Street Parking, Land Buffers, and Intersection Clearances as presented.

Councilmember Ates made the motion to approve the text amendments to the Zoning Ordinance for Off Street Parking, Land Buffers, and Intersection Clearances with a second by Councilmember Jones.

City Manager stated the city attorney developed an ordinance to be signed if approved by Council.

Mayor asked both Councilmembers if they would consider withdrawing their motions. Jones withdrew his second to the motion & Ates withdrew his motion. Mayor called for a motion to adopt the ordinance to the amendment. Councilmember Ates made the motion to adopt the ordinance to the text amendments with a second by Councilmember Jones.

Motion passed with all voting in favor 5/0.

ITEM #6- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Public Hearing and consideration of a zoning variance request from Earl Lister Bates for front yard setback variance. This variance request is from property holder Earl L Bates to allow Jack's Family restaurants to encroach into the front setback of the property located at 157 & 161 East Dykes Steet.

Called to order 7:26PM

This public hearing is called to consider a zoning variance request from property holder Earl L Bates to allow Jack's Family restaurants to encroach into the front setback of the property located at 157 & 161 East Dykes Steet. This Public Hearing is called to provide any interested parties with an opportunity to express their views or concerns. The City Council is asked to consider this zoning variance request. The proposed restaurant frontage is expected to conform to the full 40' required front setback in front of East Dykes Street. The 40' setback is required by the B-2 Community Business District Zoning. Jack's Family Restaurant will have a fireplace on the inside of the front of the restaurant. The fireplace will require that a portion of the front of the restaurant will encroach approximately three feet into the 40' setback. The remaining restaurant frontage is expected to conform to the full 40' required front setback requirement.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on Thursday, March 3, 2022, and voted 5 to 0 to recommend approval of the variance request from Earl Lister Bates.

Notice of this public hearing was advertised in the Times Journal Post in the February 10 edition. The mayor called for any public input regarding the zoning variance from property owner, Earl L Bates. No comments were addressed

Public Hearing closed at 7:29PM

Mayor asked Council if they had any questions or comments they would like to make. Councilmember Coley asked if legally a variance requested by the property owner could it be passed on to another property owner? Can the Council vote on a variance for Earl Bates and will Earl be able to pass that same variance down? Richard Newbern stated he had a discussion with the city attorney. City attorney, Jim Elliott was attending the meeting through zoom, and he answered the question. He stated typically zoning and variances go to the property and not the person/ specific owners. He suggested some verbiage that describes the specific location of the fireplace so the variance could not be moved.

Mayor called for a motion to grant variance request from Earl L Bates to allow Jacks Family Restaurant to encroach into the front setback of the property located at 157 & 161 East Dykes Street. Councilmember Ates made the motion to approve the variance with a second by Councilmember Jones. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 5/0

ITEM #7- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Consider adjusting septic tank dumping charge at the wastewater treatment plant. Council was asked to consider adjusting the dumping fee per haul for septic tank haulers from the current rate of \$100 to \$400 per dump. The City's class one operator recommended due to the impact of the sewer dump on the waste treatment plant. Right now, the city generated with the current fee at \$100 per dump, \$24,200 during calendar year 2021. Those dollars collected are deposited into the wastewater treatment fund. The impact on the waste treatment plant and the cost to the city for processing those loads is greater than \$100. Brad Holsinger, City's Class One estimated it is \$400. This will require a motion by Council to adjust the fee if the Council chooses to do. Councilmember Jones made a motion to postpone the vote

until Public Works Director Willie Farrow can get the results of moving the dumping location further from the plant. He stated in the work session, the dumping location was closer to the treatment plant and was causing issues. Now they have moved it further from the plant and the breakdown seems to be improving. Councilmember Lemmon made the second. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 5/0

ITEM# 8-Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Consider changing the covid leave policy for employees. Council is asked to require employee who test positive for Covid to use any comp, sick, annual, FMLA or Short-Term Disability to cover their leave. The city is following all CDC guidelines when sending employee home if, they are positive. The new guidelines are to stay home for 5 days and if no symptoms wear a mask around others for an additional 5 days. Presently the City has been paying for the employees who test positive and been absorbing that cost with no leave being used. In the past the city followed the Governors recommendations. Also, employees are no longer required to go home for an elongated period of time. It is now limited to 5 days which would lower the impact on their sick leave. Councilmember Jones made the motion to change the covid leave policy for employees with a second by Councilmember Ates. Motion passed with all voting in favor.

City Manager Comments/Updates

- **Clean Up Day April 23 @ 9**
- **Scrap Tire Amnesty**
- **TSPLOST and Distilled Spirits on ballot May 24**
- **Pay Plan in process of being completed**
- **Conference -Athens March 9-11 City Managers Conference**
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Council Discussion Items:

District 1

Councilmember Anderson: None

Councilmember Ates: None

District 2

Councilmember Coley: None

Councilmember Veal: None/Absent

District 3

Councilmember Jones: None

Councilmember Lemmon: None

Mayor Yeomans stated he asked the Council at the city retreat for members for the Park Committee. He asked if anyone had names for the committee. No one had any but they stated they would get those names to him soon. Mayor asked the Council to get the names to him by the March 30.

Public Comments:

David Canady – DDA Director - Spoke on the DDA budget. Requested budget amendments for unused funds to be moved to other line items.

Edwin Peacock- 244 Crest Drive- Spoke on the country healing between the citizens and the law enforcement and one tool to help with that is the Crisis Intervention Training, CIT. A book over Crisis Intervention Training was written and Mr. Peacock will present these books to the Cochran PD.

Ethel King -110 Palm Street – Asked questions about the minimum/max rent amount at Havenwood Gardens. She asked if it was low income. The answer was yes. It is low income.

Mayor asked Council if any need to go into executive session. The answer was No.

Mayor Yeomans adjourned the meeting at 7:59PM

(SEAL)

Tracy B Jones
City Clerk