



MINUTES
Cochran City Council
Tuesday, November 14, 2023
Regular Scheduled Meeting @ 7:00PM

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

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

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

The invocation was given by Pro Tem Anderson Gary Ates and the Pledge led by Councilmember Lemmon.

Mayor asked for any corrections, additions, or deletions to the November 14, 2023 agenda. Councilmember Coley made the motion add an item to the agenda to pay the \$500 deductible to Mrs. Julie Mims for roof damage by Waste Management with a second by Councilmember Veal. All in favor. Motion passes. 5/0.

Councilmember Ates made the motion to accept the agenda with changes and a second by Councilmember Lemmon. Motion passed 5/0

Mayor asked if there were any corrections or questions to the October 10, 2023 minutes. Councilmember Ates made the motion to approve the 10/10/23 minutes with Councilmember Lemmon seconding. Motion passed 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

Ray Knighton- Honorary Plaque & Proclamation for his service to the Planning Commission since 1996
Mayor Yeomans presented Mr. Ray Knighton with a plaque of appreciation for his years of service.

ITEM #2- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Consider appointing a member of the Planning Commission to fill the unexpired term due to the resignation of Ray Knighton. Term expires in June 2027. Mayor asked Council if they had any names at this time. No names were presented. Any nominations need to be presented to Russell Odom and the decision will be made at the December meeting.

ITEM #3- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Presentation by Attorney Reid regarding liquor licensing. City attorney will meet with Mrs. Reid and a resolution will be made soon.

ITEM #4- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Consider approving Special Conditions and documents for the City's 2023 \$872,013 CDBG Housing Award. City Manager explained; Council is asked to accept the CDBG grant award from DCA and agree to fulfill the General and Special conditions. CDBG housing grant award target areas are 6th Street, Robertson Crescent and Ash street. This revalidation area was approved by the GDCA along with Federal dollars approved for 15 owner occupied projects. A local match will be expended by the end of the year that may require a budget amendment. By accepting the award, it will allow the Mayor to sign the award documents. Councilmember Coley asked where the match would come from. City Manager stated the match would come from the General Funds reserves and it is also TIA eligible. Funds are also available in the present CDBG line item that can be used. She asked it is fair to ask that Council approve a proposed budget amendment and when the budget is made, then a vote will be cast. City Manager stated that would be in order. He will be able to present the Council with exact figures at the next meeting. Councilmember Anderson made the motion to approve the Special Condition and documents for the City's 2023 CDBG housing with a second by Councilmember Ates. Motion passed with all in favor. 5/0.

ITEM #5- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Consider applying for \$500,000 for 2024 CHIP Grant. City Manager stated this was to approve the process to apply for the grant. No public hearing is required. This is for homeowners in the city who need their homes repairs as long as they are repairable. Rhonda Gilbert will assist with the application process. Councilmember Veal stated he does not feel like the city is getting the money worth with the grant. He expressed his concerns with the CHIP grant.

Councilmember Ates made the motion to apply for the 2024 CHIP Grant in the amount of \$500,000 with a second by Councilmember Anderson. 3/2. Yes – Ates, Anderson, Lemmon. No – Coley, Veal. Motion passes 3/2.

ITEM #6- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Consider approving the proposed Pay Scale and Pay Plan. City Manager The pay plan/scale covers 34 grades and 30 steps within those grades. City Manager presented pay adjustment review. The Regional Commission developed a pay scale for the city to follow. All positions are within the surveyed range that the regional commission researched. Approval is needed of the pay scale and the pay range. Request made at the last meeting for data regarding the \$2 per hours increase for all employees. Research on the impact of the budget was researched and how employees pay would be affected. Councilmember Coley made the motion to approve the pay scale as presented by the Regional Commission with a second by Councilmember Ates. Motion passed 5/0.

Councilmember Coley made a motion of a revision to the pay scale, that was recently approved, to bring the three position, full time custodian, police records clerk and waste management position up to meet median pay as presented and also add an additional \$2 for each of the full-time fire fighter positions with a second by Councilmember Veal. Yes – 2 Coley, Veal. No – Anderson, Ates, Lemmon. Motion fails. 2/3.

ITEM #7- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Consider approving a Blessing Box. Julie Lee asked to place a blessing box at or around the peanut museum. She will stock the box to begin with and the community will restock over time. It will be for nonperishable items only. The Boy Scouts will build the boxes. Councilmember Coley made the motion to approve the blessing box to be placed at the Peanut museum and maintained by Julie Lee and the community with a second by Councilmember Anderson. Motion passes. 5/0.

ITEM 8- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Consider the purchase of Dash Cameras and Body Cameras for the Police Department. Purchase is \$34,069 to be paid from ARPA funds. Councilmember Ates made the motion to approval the purchase of dash cameras and body cameras for the police department based on the standardization and compatibility with the existing camera system with a second by Councilmember Coley. Motion passed 5/0.

ITEM #9- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Discuss and consider dates, facilitator and location for 2024 Council Retreat, perhaps in February. The City Manager asked the council for suggestions on the dates when they would like to have a retreat. He explained it will take time to plan and coordinate the event. City Manager stated 1. He will consult with the new councilmembers to see when they would be available for the retreat. 2. A date in February seems to be the best time. 3. The facilitator from Carl Vinson was suggested. The date, location, agenda and facilitator will be on the December agenda to be approved by Council.

ITEM #10- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Consider applying for \$1,000,000 for 2024 CDBG grant. This location is between Phillips Lane on the southwest and the area near Havenwood Senior Living on N Ash Street . There is approximately 15 eligible homeowners in the area who have been identified as a possible phase II of the city's original CDBG initiative that was funded last June. Deadline for applying is April 5, 2024. The City was strongly encouraged to apply for this grant. Councilmember Coley asked for this to be considered for use of CDBG funds for infrastructure that will benefit the whole community. Councilmember Ates made the motion to apply for the \$1,000,000 for the 2024 CDBG grant with a second by Councilmember Anderson.

Yes – Anderson, Ates, Lemmon No – Veal, Coley. Motion passed 3/2.

ITEM #11- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Consider paying the \$500 deductible to Mrs. Julie Mims for damage to her roof by Waste Management truck. Councilmember Coley made the motion to approve to pay \$500 (her insurance deductible) to Mrs. Julie Mims for damages to her home by Waste Management with a second by Councilmember Veal. Yes – Coley/Veal. No – Lemmon, Ates, Anderson. Motion failed.

City Manager – Christmas After Hours December 9, 2023 4-8pm.

Christmas Parade Friday December 1, 2023 @ 7pm.

Thanksgiving Dinner -Wednesday, November 22, 2023, at the Community House at 12 Noon.

Park Budget has been approved.

City Attorney – NONE

Council Discussion Items:

District 1

Anderson – NONE

Ates – NONE

District 2

Coley – WOW to the BC School System. Shout out to the school system, administrators, teachers and parents.

Veal – Traffic application to give to police Chief Jeff Trawick concerning a speed bump.

District 3

Jones – Absent

Lemmon – NONE

Mayor Comments

Clarified a few things with the Fire Chief that was brought to the Council at last meeting.

- ✓ Leak on fire truck in service
- ✓ Washing machine
- ✓ Electrical panel to be replaced with a commercial panel box
- ✓ Smoke detectors – Mayor approved Fire/Police to buy smoke detectors

Mayor stated Vanessa Sanders emailed Mayor about feeding homeless during Thanksgiving/Christmas 5-7pm. Great ideas. If anyone can help out, please contact Vanessa. Stay safe and Thankful. Thanked City employees for all they do.

Public Comments (Please note that every individual who signs up to speak prior to the meeting will be given a total of 3 minutes to address the Mayor and Council.)

Mary Pitts – No Comment

Shane Savant – 173 S 12th Street

Gave some stats on the BC school system

153 3rd Street tree breaking sidewalk, citizens cut tree down, side walk not repaired as of yet.

178 Peter street – trash at location, entrance to the apartments

Waste Pickup – tons of hydraulic fluids on the road

Asked Attorney if the two insurance companies was a conflict in interest concerning the Waste Management issue.

Mickey Harbin – 196 9th Street

Representing DDA – Christmas After Hours – Bring back Christmas Open House

Light Up Cochran for Downtown- Thanked the Council for the support

Edwin Peacock – 244 Crest Drive – Veterans Flags – Veterans Day ceremony was great.

Thanked Sam Barrs for the Veterans Flag program in Cochran

Meeting adjourned at 8:47PM

(SEAL)

Tracy B Jones
City Clerk