



Blakely City Council Minutes

October 5, 2021, City Hall, 6:00 P.M.

I. Public Hearing – Rezoning Howell Street

Mayor Travis Wimbush called the public hearing to order. He informed the public that each side, those for and those against, would be given an equal amount of time, up to 10 minutes, to speak and to address the Council regarding questions or concerns. The Mayor asked if there was anyone present to speak in favor of the rezoning – no one came forward. The Mayor then gave anyone in opposition a chance to speak.

Ms. Sandra Cawthorn addressed the Mayor and Council, as the citizens representative, stating that the first concern is opening the rezoning from restricted to least restricted. She then stated that the home on Howell St have been there for many years and bringing in mobile home, which decrease in value, will decrease their property values. She stated that rezoning to R2A will further decrease their home values. She spoke on the new the younger generation coming into their area and an increase of younger children. She stated that if rezoned to R2A it will open the area up to mobile homes, multi-family homes and duplexes and requested that the Mayor and Council give their community the same consideration that other areas have gotten where rezoning was being considered. She asked that the Mayor and Council not just look at the rezoning just because there is a housing shortage but take the current homeowners into consideration. She asked the Mayor and Council think twice and think hard about this rezoning. She stated they pay their taxes just as other areas have where rezoning has been denied.

Charlie Sol stated that he has heard from most citizens in that district regarding this rezoning. Charlie asked the current zoning to which Kenneth Jones stated it is presently R1A and the request is for R2. Charlie then stated that there is a square footage difference between R1 and R1A and that the current property owners are just requesting it to stay where it presently is to have the zoning for larger stick-built homes that are still affordable but nice.

Another resident spoke, stating that she was the very first resident on Howell St., and she stated that as long as she has been there, she should have a voice and asked that the Mayor and Council not let the rezone happen. She stated that she worked hard to pay for her home and asked that the Mayor and Council to please not let this happen to bring down her property value or the property values of those that are now around her.

With no further discussion the Mayor called the public hearing to a close at 6:10 pm

II. Call To Order, Roll Call, Invocation, Pledge Of Allegiance

Let the record show that Mayor Travis Wimbush called the meeting order. Mayor Travis Wimbush, Councilmember Margaret Davis, Councilmember Al Hutchins, Councilmember Ray Jarrett, and Councilmember Brad Clenney were all present. Also present was the City Attorney, Tommy Coleman and City Clerk Melinda Crook. There was a moment of silence for the loss of a retired Fire Department employee, Captain Pat Mock, Owner of Brickyard Market, Ricky



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Treadwell and those that have lost their lives due to COVID. Commissioner Charlie Sol gave the invocation. The Mayor and Council led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Employee of the month

The Mayor stated that Chief Caudill submitted Jennifer Hunt for the employee of the month and had brought to his attention all the accomplishments of Jennifer Hunt. Chief Caudill spoke to the Mayor, Council and public of Jennifer's accomplishments. He stated that she always goes above and beyond and has helped in the staff shortage by filling in spots open. He stated she is working on her bachelor's degree as well. Jennifer was presented with an employee of the month certificate.

IV. Approve Minutes

A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Davis to approve the work session and regular session minutes from September 7th and the work session minutes from September 21st. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmember's present

V. Citizens And Delegations

Richard Thomas – Drainage Ditch on Southside

Mr. Thomas came before the Mayor and Council regarding the ditch beside his house needed to be cleaned out. He stated that he had asked in 2018 for some help because his it causes his yard to flood. He informed the Mayor and Council that it had been cleaned out last week and said thank you. The Mayor stated that Charlie Wade had cleaned it out and that there was some question about an easement but that it was being worked on so that the whole ditch could be cleaned out and the right equipment being available so as to not tear up the yard. Mr. Thomas stated that there were questions about ownership regarding a portion of property along the ditch.

VI. Administrative Committee

Will Caudill – Updates

Chief Will Caudill gave his month Police report. He informed the Mayor and Council of an upcoming training for First Responders to learn how to work with people of different economic backgrounds. He then informed the Mayor and Council of an upcoming event on the weekend called National Faith in Blue Weekend. He stated that it was the largest Police and community outreach ever in the country. He stated that stated that individual departments do things from time to time but that this is the first he had heard of nationwide, and that Georgia has an extremely high participation rate. He stated that they could not do it on the inaugural year, which was last year, but is excited about getting involved with it this year. He stated that law enforcement organizations are partnered with a faith-based organization to schedule events to have anyone from the public to come in and have interaction to bridge gaps between police and

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the community. He stated that they are partnering with C-Hope Ministries and other faith-based organizations. He then went through an agenda for this event stating that Friday was a round table discussion, Saturday would be a cookout and activities at Jeanette King Park and Sunday evening at the Methodist Church with music.

Matt Hromalik - E911 Updates

E911 Director Matt Hromalik gave his monthly report to the Mayor and Council stating that they had received a total of 4,094 between E911 and administrative calls. He then stated that Lequisha Mincey had graduated from the Directors Academy, and they had dropped off her certificate and he would like to acknowledge this at the next meeting since Ms. Mincey was unable to attend due to covering a shift at the E911 center.

Building Official – Rezoning Howell Street

Kenneth Jones informed the Mayor and Council that the Planning Commission had held a public hearing regarding the rezoning on Howell Street. He stated that the application nor a potential buyer was present. He stated that several citizens had come in opposition. Kenneth spoke of the subdivision several years ago. He stated that upon entering regular session, after the hearing, a motion was made to deny the request for rezoning, but the motion died due to a lack of second, so the rezoning failed in the Planning Commission. The Mayor questioned the City Attorney about the next steps to which the City Attorney stated that the Mayor and Council could proceed with action. Councilmember Clenney requested to abstain in the vote count due to his real estate firm managing the property. Councilmember Hutchins asked Kenneth Jones if the applicant or potential buyers were present to which Mr. Jones stated they were not. A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to deny the rezoning of Howell Street property. The motion carried with Councilmember Davis, Councilmember Hutchins and Councilmember Jarrett voting “YEA”

Building Official – Alcohol License Audra Claybrook

Building Official Mark Hawkins stated that Ms. Claybrook has completed everything, but Chief Caudill had denied the application. The Mayor asked the City Attorney if Chief Caudill could state his opposition, to which the City Attorney stated that the Mayor and Council could hear from Chief Caudill. Chief Caudill informed the Mayor and Council that due to the language in the Ordinance he felt he was compelled to deny the application and explained this Ms. Claybrook. The Mayor clarified with the City Attorney that Council could still take action on this issue. The City Attorney informed the Mayor of the steps to be taken if Council upheld the Chief’s recommendation. A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to deny the alcohol license for Ms. Audra Claybrook. Councilmember Davis, Councilmember Hutchins and Councilmember Jarrett voting “YEA” and Councilmember Clenney voting “NAY” The Mayor requested the City Clerk to poll the Councilmembers for

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clarification of the vote. There was discussion with the Councilmembers and Chief Caudill about his reason for denial and how the verbiage could be corrected. After the poll the City Clerk informed the Mayor the vote was three to deny and one to approve. The motion carried to deny the alcohol license. The City Attorney stated that he would get with Chief Caudill on the hearing process.

VII. City Attorney's Report

First Reading of Ordinance Amending Chapter 5 Building Codes

The City Attorney, Tommy Coleman, explained that from time-to-time DCA updates the building codes and that this is a first reading to adopt the updated building codes.

VIII. City Clerk's Report

The City Clerk presented the Mayor and Council with their monthly financial reports. She did a power point presentation for the public. The City Clerk informed the Mayor and Council that property tax bills would be mailed on October 15th with a due date of December 20th.

IX. New Items Proposed By Mayor And City Council

Reddick Building on S Main – request for bids

Kenneth Jones informed the Mayor and Council that the 270 days that were given by the court to do repairs to the building would be up at the end of November. He stated that in the current condition it was causing problems to the neighboring buildings. He stated that it was being presented for a decision on whether to tear the building down or to take bids to do some work on the building. A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded Councilmember Jarrett to submit for bids on the building. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmember's present

Flu Shots

A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and Councilmember Clenney to approve flu shots for City employees, which would be covered by insurance, and for the City to pay for part time and temporary employees. The Mayor of being able to use funds from the Health and Wellness Grant as a boost or incentive to encourage participation. Councilmember Hutchins questioned if this covered the Mayor and Council to which the Mayor stated that it would. The Mayor stated that the Health Dept would come on sight to administer the shots but that employees could also go to the Health Dept to receive the shot. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmember's present

SOWEGA Senior Recreation Grant

A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to approve the SOWEGA Senior Recreation Grant on behalf of the Early County Literacy Task Force.



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The Mayor stated there would be information on the going out but that this is to offer activities for the seniors in the community. He stated that the grant was for \$12,000 per year/\$1,000 per month. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmember's present

A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to reinstate the 10% late fee to take affect in January with the next years budget. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmember's present

Councilmember Hutchins questioned the sewer work on Dean Ave. The Mayor stated the work was to being the following week.

Councilmember Hutchins questioned the work at the Civic Center. The Mayor stated that material was a hold up on the siding work that was approved. Councilmember Hutchins question the restrooms. A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Davis to get bids to bring the restrooms up to compliance. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present.

Councilmember Hutchins asked the nomination of employee of the month. He gave a recommendation of the Department Head presenting a name. There was discussion between Councilmember Hutchins and the Mayor.

A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Hutchins to move forward with the Enterprise Fleet Management program on four Ford Explorer interceptors for the Police Dept. The City Attorney spoke of the agreement amendments he had presented that had been forwarded to Enterprise and was awaiting a response. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmember's present

Councilmember Hutchins questioned storm water issues in the ditches at N. Main St and Rose Dr. The Mayor asked Councilmember Hutchins to make Charlie Wade aware of the issue.

A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded by Councilmember Davis to approve observing Halloween on Saturday October 30th. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present.

- X. Public Comments
There were no public comments
- XI. Executive Session – Personnel & Sale of Property



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A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Davis to enter Executive Session for personnel matters. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present.

A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Davis to enter back into regular session. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmember's present

A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded by Councilmember Hutchins to approve making Craig Jarrett Foreman of the Sanitation Department and Gabe Jordan Supervisor of the Landfill Department. The motion carried with Councilmember Davis, Councilmember Hutchins and Councilmember Clenney voting "YEA" Councilmember Jarrett abstained from vote.

A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded by Councilmember Davis to declare the North Main parcel surplus and to put the sale of this parcel out for bid. The Mayor requested this be out for bid for 30 days. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmember's present

XII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Hutchins to adjourn the October 5th City Council Meeting. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmember's present

Travis Wimbush, Mayor