



**Blakely City Council  
Agenda  
City Hall**

**September 1, 2020**

**6:00 P.M.**

**I) Call To Order, Roll Call, Invocation, Pledge Of Allegiance**

Let the record show that Mayor Travis Wimbush called the meeting to order. Mayor Travis Wimbush, Councilmember Margaret Davis, Councilmember Brad Clenney, Councilmember Al Hutchins and Councilmember Ray Jarrett were all present. Also present was City Attorney Tommy Coleman and City Clerk, Melinda Crook. There was a moment of silence for those lost to COVID-19 and for Jesse Sampley, a young member of the City of Blakely, who lost a battle with cancer. Wilbourn Wade gave the invocation. The Mayor led the Council and Public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II) Approve Minutes**

A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Davis to approve/deny the Minutes from August 5<sup>th</sup> Public Hearing and Regular Meeting as well as the Minutes from the August 20<sup>th</sup> Special Called Meeting. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

**III) Citizens And Delegations**

Jerry or Sheila Tiner

Mr. Tiner spoke of bondman requirements. Mr. Tiner feels that the City employee, who has a bondsman license, is not an actual bondsman. Mr. Tiner stated the time frame he has been speaking to the Council on this issue, which has been about a year. Mr. Tiner state that he had been out to the jail to investigate other items and feels that something took place in July of this year and November of last year. Mr. Tiner again stated that he was willing to show his assets.

**IV) Administrative Committee**

Chief Will Caudill gave a monthly report on calls and what they entailed. Chief Caudill updated the Council on his staffing situation. Chief Caudill stated that two part time employees had returned to full time status and that he had two candidates from applications received. Chief Caudill explained the new hire process regarding training. Chief Caudill then asked that the Council consider changing the vehicle policy to include ride alongs (possible citizens.)

Assistant E911 Director, Lequiesha Mincey, gave a monthly report on the E911 calls for Blakely, Stewart and Randolph Counties.

Mark Hawkins – Alcohol License, Gold Club, N Church St  
Building Official, Mark Hawkins, stated that LaQuevia Sheffield had applied for On Premise Consumption of Distilled Spirits License. He stated that she has a clean record. Chief Caudill stated that he had approved the license but was changing his to denial due

to the Ordinance which states that there has to be 50% food sales. Chief Caudill stated that there was also some confusion regarding the fee for the license, per the Ordinance. The Mayor suggested to table this item until Chief Caudill's items had been addressed. Mark Hawkins stated that Ms. Sheffield was working toward getting her food license as well and had already contacted the Health Dept. No action was taken on this matter at this time

Lane Davis – Gateway

Lane Davis asked the Council about their decision on whether to move forward on the Gateway Project. The Mayor asked Lane about the engineering cost to move forward with the re-bid, to which Lane stated it would be \$4,500. He then stated that it would be an additional \$12,000 for the engineer to oversee the project. The Mayor questioned the total cost to which Lane stated that the engineering firm had originally stated that the project could be done for \$800,000. The Mayor reminded the Council of the cost the City has contributed to date. There was discussion about the de-obligation and the process to re-obligate. Councilmember Clenney questioned the status of the two local firms. A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded by Councilmember Davis to proceed forward with the Gateway Project. The Mayor asked that a Councilmember assist in overseeing the project from this point due to City funding. A poll was taken of Councilmembers votes. The motion carried with Councilmember Davis, Councilmember Jarrett and Councilmember Clenney voting "YEA" and Councilmember Hutchins voting "NAY"

#### **V) City Attorney's Report**

Solar Rate Agreement

The City Attorney, Tommy Coleman, spoke of the Solar rate proposed by ECG. He spoke of why the agreement was needed. He then explained the rate. A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to approve the solar rate and agreement. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

First Reading of Ordinance to substitute "Police Department" for "Sheriff" in code of ordinances

The City Attorney, Tommy Coleman, read the Ordinance to Amend the City Code to substitute references to the Sheriff's Department with References to the Police Department. He stated that this was in Code Section 17 (3). This constituted the first reading.

City Attorney, Tommy Coleman, spoke of the change in the Governors Order regarding masks. He spoke of the issues between the Governor and the Mayor of Atlanta. He then stated that the Governor was looking at amending the Order to allow cities to make the call on masks in public buildings. He stated that Court facilities are required to wear masks at all time.

#### **VI) City Clerk's Report**

The City Clerk, Melinda Crook, presented the Mayor and Council with financial reports. She then showed a power point presentation of revenues and expenditures compared to budget. She informed the Council that the audit was progressing. She informed the Council that the new pole truck has arrived and funds for payment had been withdrawn from the Municipal Competitive Trust.

**VII) New Items Proposed By Mayor And City Council**

The Mayor asked, per the City Attorney's information, for the Council to consider the Governors recommendations on face masks. He then gave an updated City-wide tally of COVID cases/deaths.

The Mayor spoke on the 2020 Census. He stressed the need to an increase in count. He spoke of an incentive on utility bills similar to what Seminole County had done. He asked the Council if they were willing to invest credit toward utility bills of \$5.00 for each person who showed proof of Census completion. A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Hutchins to approve a \$5.00 credit on utility bills for person who showed proof of a completed Census. Councilmember's Jarrett and Clenney voted "NAY" A poll was taken. Councilmember Davis and Councilmember Hutchins voted "YEA" and Councilmember Jarret and Councilmember Clenney voted "NAY" the tie was broken by the Mayor who voted "YEA" The motion carried.

Gwen Houston, with Early Choices, stated that Early Choices would match the City's credit per bill.

The Mayor asked the Council to consider, for the essential employees that didn't stagger during the initial stages of the pandemic, to get 10 days off paid. A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Davis to approve 10 days off paid for employees who didn't stagger during the initial stages of the pandemic. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

The Mayor informed the Council of a ribbon cutting on September 4<sup>th</sup> at 62 North Main St.

The Mayor informed the Council that the first two houses of the 2019 CDBG were almost finished and that paperwork had been signed on the next two.

The Mayor stated that the Landfill was back open and that the area looked good. He spoke on the repairs from temp site and informed the Council of a possible trailer/tarp replacement for around \$58,100.

A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to declare a list of City assets surplus and to place these items on GovDeals for auction. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

The Mayor asked the Council to consider another \$10,000 donation toward customer utility bills. He spoke of the pending applications. Ms. Exie Smith spoke to the Council regarding continuing the process and the need due to job loss and recovery. A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Hutchins to approve another \$10,000 in donation for utility bills. Councilmember Jarrett and Councilmember Clenney voted against. A poll was taken with Councilmember Davis and Councilmember Hutchins voting "YEA" and Councilmember

The Mayor congratulated Councilmember Hutchins on 20 years of Council service.

**VIII) Public Comments**

Mr. Tiner showed his assets to the Council and spoke of how easy it was to get the information. He spoke of reprimands and disciplinary comments. He questioned if this employee gets special privileges. He questioned what the Council was going to do and if he needed to take the issue higher.

Ms. Tiner stated that if you let one do something and not everyone than why have Ordinances. Ms. Tiner spoke of employees holding more than one job.

Joel Tucker addressed the Council about human trafficking, Police staff and asked of a creating a program to make people aware.

Tracey Robinson spoke of the different forms of assistance that citizens can receive in the City. He spoke of bribing citizens to complete their Census. He then asked how to get a response from the Council regarding the items he had presented at the July 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Mike Newberry thanked the Council for consideration on the Gateway project. He on the history of the project and how it came about.

Celia Bostwick also stated her appreciation of the Council moving forward on the Gateway project

Erica Harris with the Pataula Center for Children spoke on human trafficking. She stated her concerns about children staying at home.

Another citizen spoke on the issue of human trafficking and the Census.

## **IX) Adjournment**

A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to adjourn the September 1<sup>st</sup> City Council meeting. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

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Travis Wimbush, Mayor