



**Blakely City Council
Minutes
City Hall**

January 3, 2017

6:00 P.M.

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

The Mayor, Anthony Howard, called the meeting to order. Let the record show that the Mayor, Anthony Howard, Councilman Frank Thornton, Councilman James Crozier and Councilman Al Hutchins were present. Councilman Charles Middleton was not present. Let the record show that the City Attorney, Tommy Coleman and the City Clerk, Melinda Crook were also present. Pastor Powell gave the invocation. The Mayor led the Council and public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II) Approve Minutes

A motion was made by Councilman Crozier and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to approve the minutes from the December 6 and December 13 City Council meetings. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

III) Citizens And Delegations

James Crozier And Will Wiley - Councilman Crozier stated that last they had arranged some citizens and delegates from the drama community to address the Council, but were unable to attend. He then stated that he had been contacted to revitalize the Blakely/Early County Arts Council. He stated that there is a large number of talented citizens. He stated that Mr. Wiley had initiated the conversation about the revitalization of the Arts Council. He then stated that while being looked into it was found that the Arts Council still had funds in the bank for the revitalization. He stated that Mr. Wiley was not coming for funds but for permission and to see how he needs to proceed to re-start the Arts Council. Mr. Wiley addressed the Council stating that he as well felt there was a lot of talent in this community that is going to waste or elsewhere to perform. There was discussion about past members of the Arts Council. The Mayor stated that the County Chairman might have more information regarding past members. Councilman Crozier then asked if there was agreement to form an adhoc committee. The Council and County Chair agreed that they were in approval of the revitalization and that the City would assist where it could.

IV) Administrative Committee Reports

Planning Commission - Conditional Use Flowers Drive

The Building Official, Kenneth Jones, spoke regarding a home occupational license for a beauty shop at 956 Flowers Drive. Mr. Jones stated that the Planning Commission had approved the request. He informed the Council that this location had previously been a beauty shop and was therefore equipped for such. The Mayor questioned/stated that there would be no new construction and that it would be in the same footprint that the house is presently in. Mr. Jones then stated that there would be no advertising at the location past a 2ft square sign due to it also being a residential location. A motion was made by Councilman Crozier and seconded by Councilman Thornton to approve the conditional use at 956 Flowers

Dr. for a home occupation of a beauty shop. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

Planning Commission - Lilly Powell – Redbud Street

The Building Official, Kenneth Jones, stating that Ms. Powell had been before the Council previously regarding a church on Redbud St. He stated that the conditional use for the church had been approved but there were concerns about drainage issues. He stated that she had contacted Mr. Lodge Holman regarding the site plan. He reminded the Council that the conditional use for the church had previously been approved by them. He then stated that they were going to construct a building but have now changed the plans to a modular buildings (sizes 70' x 60' and 76' x 27'.) He stated that the plans would still need to be stamped by an architect/engineer and would still need to follow the soil and erosion plan for issues of drainage. There was a brief discussion about the soil and erosion plan and its purpose. The Mayor questioned if conditional use talks about the construction of a particular building. Mr. Jones stated that it gives specification according to zoning (R1, R2 etc...) in that area and that conditional use has a separate list which requires a public hearing before the Planning Commission and then on to the Council for a final decision. Mr. Jones stated that conditional use is just for something that is not allowed in that particular zone. The Mayor stated that since conditional use addresses the use of the property what addresses the type of construction under that certain conditional use. Mr. Jones answered that it then goes back to building codes to comply. The City Attorney stated that the code only allows for certain types of buildings in certain zones. There was some discussion between the Attorney and Mr. Jones regarding the building types and what is allowed in the different zones. Mr. Jones stated that it was tabled by the Planning Commission to obtain a better classification of the structures. The Mayor questioned what type of building the modular structures would be classified as. Mr. Jones stated that is why more information is needed because he thought he remembered seeing tag receipts like a mobile home. Ms. Powell stated that the buildings are mobile buildings that had been turned into a sanctuary. The City Attorney asked if they were buildings such as mobile classrooms, to which Ms. Powell stated that they were. There was further discussion regarding the type of structure of these buildings. The City Attorney stated that this may not need a zone change but that there could be some code issues. There further discussion as to whether there needed to be a zone change. There was discussion as to where the buildings are at the present time. Ms. Powell stated that this would be less invasive and it would be a way to get their church up and running as quickly as possible. It was also questioned if there is usually an inspection before they are brought into the City limits. The City Attorney stated that zone R1 and R1A do not allow for these types of structures at the present time but they are permitted use in R2. A motion was made by Councilman Crozier and seconded by Councilman Thornton to table this item to allow time for a zone change. Councilman Hutchins questioned if there would be a public hearing, to which it was stated that there would be a public hearing. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

Kenneth Jones - Rodney Brookins Business License Application For Salvage Yard

The Building Official, Kenneth Jones, stated that this salvage yard would be located at 14369 Magnolia St. He stated that the business would be tractor and equipment repair. Mr. Jones stated that the screening requirement would be met according to the Ordinance. Councilman Crozier stated that Mr. Brookins has met the small business conveyance. Mr. Jones also stated that this would be a salvage yard as well with parts on the shelves and that there would be modification to the building along with four new jobs. Councilman Crozier stated that there would be export of parts to other Countries as well. There was discussion regarding the parking lot area as a hard surface either asphalt or crush and run. A motion was made by

Councilman Crozier and seconded by Councilman Thornton to approve the occupational application from Rodney Brookins. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

Chris McClendon – purchase of new sewer jet - The Mayor stated that Chris McClendon could not be in attendance but that his request was for the purchase of a new sewer jet, which had been discussed with the Council in December. He stated that there were two bids, one in the amount of \$59,946 and the other being \$64,960. The Council was informed that Chris McClendon had actually stated that he would prefer the sewer jet priced at \$59,946. A motion was made by Councilman Thornton and seconded by Councilman Crozier to approve the quote for a new sewer jet in the amount of \$59,946. Councilman Hutchins questions the funding for the sewer jet to which the City Clerk informed the Council that it was in the 2017 SPLOST budget. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

Technology Director Report - The Technology Director was not present

V) City Attorney's Report

Renew Contract For Sheriff Services - A motion was made by Councilman Crozier and seconded by Councilman Thornton to approve the renewal of the Sheriff Service agreement. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

Renew Chamber Of Commerce - A motion was made by Councilman Thornton and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to table the renewal of the Chamber of Commerce agreement. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

Renew Court Square Development - A motion was made by Councilman Thornton and seconded by Councilman Crozier to renew the Court Square Development agreement for Tourism of which 3% of the Hotel/Motel tax collected goes to them and 2% stays with the City. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

First Reading Of Ordinance Setting Compensation For Mayor And Council

The City Attorney stated that this provides for compensation to the members of the City Council. He briefly explained how this compensation can be set for Cities. He stated that with this Ordinance change the Mayor would receive \$9,600 per year, Mayor Pro Tem would receive \$8,400 per year and Councilman \$7,200 per year. He stated that if passed it would begin January 1, 2018. He also stated that this Ordinance has to read twice and in between an ad has to run in the paper to give notice to the public as to when it will be voted on. He stated that if the Council is prepared this Ordinance could be passed at this meeting and place on the agenda for the second reading in February. A motion was made by Councilman Thornton and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to approve the Ordinance setting compensation for Mayor and Council. Let the recorded show that the motion passed with Councilman Hutchins, Councilman Thornton voting "YEH", Councilman Crozier voting "NAY" and the Mayor breaking the tie with a vote of "YEH."

Second Reading And Adoption Of Election Ordinance - A motion was made by Councilman Crozier and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to approve the Election Ordinance. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

Second Reading And Adoption Of Cell Tower Ordinance - A motion was made by Councilman Crozier and seconded by Councilman Thornton to approve the Cell Tower Ordinance with some further amendments and some blanks that will need to be filled in appropriately. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

Resolution To Change Electric Rate Structure - A motion was made by Councilman Thornton and seconded by Councilman Crozier to approve the Resolution to change the electric rate structure incorporating the PCA and ECCR back into the base rate and omitting those line items from the bill. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

VI) City Clerk's Report

The City Clerk presented the Mayor and Council with financial reports. The Clerk explained to the Council that she has been working on her Finance Officers Certification for the last three years. She informed the Council that to complete the certification she had to complete a project which was a written financial policy that had been requested by the Mayor. She informed the Council of the areas that had been incorporated in the policy and that it had been reviewed by the Mayor and the auditor. The Clerk then informed the Council that there are 34 customers on prepaid and that there has been no resolution on the software issues. She also informed the Council that revenues looked understated on the financial reports due to having to move revenues back into last year that will be received in January/February.

VII) New Items Proposed By Mayor And City Council

Adoption of Finance Policy - A motion was made by Councilman Crozier and seconded by Councilman Thornton to approve the Finance Policy presented by the City Clerk. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

Reappointment Of Council Representative To Public Safety Board - A motion was made by Councilman Hutchins and seconded by Councilman Crozier to reappoint Councilman Middleton and Councilman Thornton to the Public Safety Board. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

Appoint Mayor Pro Tem - There was discussion regarding Councilman previously appoint to Mayor Pro Tem. A motion was made by Councilman Hutchins and seconded by Councilman Thornton to appoint Councilman Crozier Mayor Pro Tem. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

Agreement With Tax Collection - The City Attorney discussed the previous agreement for tax collection from 2004. He stated that the agreement needs to be with the County directly and that he felt that the previous agreement had not been handled accordingly. He informed the Council that he had forwarded a copy to the County attorney for review and had not heard anything back as of this meeting. He felt that the issue should move to the February meeting. The Council agreed

Appointment To The Early County Board Of Health - The Mayor informed the Council that Glenda Nix had held the position on the Board of Health that was now open. He asked that the Council consider appointing Dawana Fields to the position now vacant. He stated that Dawana works with FACES and is a very upstanding person. A motion was made by Councilman Crozier and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to appoint Ms. Fields to the expired term of Glenda Nix. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

Appointment To Planning Commission - The Mayor informed the Council that the position open on the Planning Commission was that of Linda Skipper, who's term has expired. He stated that he had contacted Kendall Alderman regarding filling this open position and she had agreed. A motion was made by Councilman Thornton and seconded by Councilman Crozier to approve the appoint Ms. Alderman to the expired term of Linda Skipper. Councilman Hutchins questioned Kenneth Jones if Mr. Moore comes to the meetings. Mr. Jones stated that he does but had previous issues due to job change. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

2017 Holidays - The Mayor and Council reviewed the days for the holidays in 2017, which are the holidays allotted in the employee handbook. The Mayor stated that the Christmas Eve holiday had been left open and the Council needed to determine which day would be allotted for that holiday due to Christmas falling on a Monday with Christmas Eve falling on Sunday. A motion was made by Councilman Thornton and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to approve the holiday schedule with filling in Christmas Eve with a date of December 22, 2017 (Friday). The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

The Mayor presented the updated contract with Waste Management. He informed the Council that it was a multi-year contract with a graduating tipping fee of \$ 23.50 for 2017, \$24.40 for 2018 and \$25.30 for 2019. A motion was made by Councilman Thornton and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to approve the updated three year contract with Waste Management. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

The Mayor than informed the Council that he had just received a letter regarding a lawsuit being brought against the City and asked that the City Attorney further explain this to the Council in the appropriate session.

VIII) Executive Session [Requested By Gabe]

The City Attorney stated that he felt that this was an inappropriate item to discuss in Executive Session. He stated items that could be discussed in Executive Session and that an employee discussing another employee was not one of those items.

IX) Public Comments

Gabe Jordan addressed the Council adamantly stating that he has tried five times to bring this employee issue to the Council. He feels that something is going on and he then stated the different things he has been told regarding getting this addressed with the Council. He questioned what he needs to do. The Mayor reminded Mr. Jordan that he had asked that he write a report regarding this matter to be presented to the Council to which Mr. Jordan stated that he had not had time. The Clerk stated that she had informed Mr. Jordan not to write the report due to the Mayor stating that they were not going into Executive Session due to all the Council members not being present. There was further discussion on exactly how to handle this matter. The Mayor reiterated that Mr. Jordan should write a report and let the Council determined if they felt this matter needed to be addressed in Executive Session.

A citizen addressed the playground and the restroom facility. He asked that the Council renovate the bathroom facility presently on the property so that the temporary facilities could be removed. He then questioned an area on N. Church Street where a lane has been deteriorating and getting worse during heavy rain events. The Mayor stated that he was aware of the section and that it is on the priority list to be corrected. He also questioned if the City has a temporary shelter in the event of extremely bad weather. The Mayor stated that if there was a need for a shelter the City had the Civic Center if need be. There was further discussion

regarding other facilities that may be available. He also questioned if there was a grant available regarding providing emergency radios to citizens. The Mayor stated that they would get the Fire Chief to address that matter. There was then discussion regarding Code Red.

A citizen questioned Jesse Johnson St. and the water backups and how it has washed out her driveway and other areas. She stated that the City had brought out dirt to fill in holes in her driveway. The Mayor stated that he had noticed that some of the ditches needed to be readdressed and that the Street Department would be addressing this matter.

X) Executive Session – Litigation

A motion was made by Councilman Crozier and seconded by Councilman Thornton to enter into Executive Session regarding litigation. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

XI) Adjournment

A motion was made by Councilman Crozier and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to adjourn the January 3rd City Council meeting. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

Anthony Howard, Mayor