



Blakely City Council Minutes

January 4, 2022, City Hall, 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 Al Hutchins, Councilmember Ray Jarrett and Councilmember Brad Clenney were all present. Councilmember Margaret Davis was present by teleconference. Also present was City Attorney Flin Coleman and City Clerk Melinda Crook. There was a moment of silence for those who have lost their lives due to COVID-19. Harvey McCoy gave the invocation. The Blakely/Early County Youth Football Team B led the Mayor, Council and public in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- II. Swearing in of Councilmembers Al Hutchins Jr & Brad Clenney
Mayor Wimbush read the oath and each Councilmember repeated the oath constituting the swearing in of Councilmember Al Hutchins and Councilmember Brad Clenney for a four year term.
- III. Recognition of 3 new Blakely police officers: Trakendra Mitchell, Darryl Gilliland, & Dana Ogden
Chief Will Caudill came before the Mayor and Council stating that on December 17th three cadets graduated from the Police Academy making them full Police Officers. He stated that Officer Darryl Gilliland had graduated with top academic honors. He gave a brief explanation of what the Officers must go through in order to get to graduation.
- IV. Recognition of Blakely/Early County Youth Football League B Team Super Bowl Champions
The Mayor asked the coaches and B Team to come forward for a picture. He stated that a proclamation would be presented at the award banquet. After pictures were taken snacks were handed out to the cheerleaders and team.
- V. Employee of the month
The Mayor stated that the employee of the month was also the employee of the year. He stated that the employee of the month was Nick Stapleton. He stated that Mr. Stapleton helps out anywhere in any department that he can.
- VI. 2021 Employee of the year
Mr. Stapleton was recognized as employee of the year.
- VII. Approve Minutes
A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to approve the Work Session, Regular and Public Hearing Minutes. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present



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VIII. Citizens And Delegations
No one present

IX. Administrative Committee

Will Caudill – Updates

Chief Will Caudill gave his monthly report and then gave a yearly report. Chief Caudill then spoke on two alcohol licenses that had not been previously approved for on premise consumption of distilled spirits. He stated what had been presented by The Club Gold Rush which totalled \$629.10 in income. Chief spoke on the CPA letter regarding information for CoCo's Lounge which totalled \$24,827 for the year of which \$12,240 were for bar sales and \$12,587 food sales meaning 49% bar sales and 51% food sales. He spoke on several issues like not reporting of full gross income due to not showing admission or ticket sales. There was discussion on what documentation may still need to be provided for what may constitute gross income. A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to table the renewal of the alcohol license to the next meeting to give the two businesses the opportunity to present the balance of the documentation needed. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present. The Mayor asked Chief Caudill to get with the City Attorney for clarification on what documentation is needed.

Matt Hromalik - E911 Updates

Lequeisha Mincey gave the monthly report. She stated that there was a total of 4,122 calls for the month of December with a yearly total of 53,553 for the year.

Charlie Wade – Boom Mower Quotes

Street Department Head Charlie Wade informed the Mayor and Council that it was time to replace the Tiger Boom Mower. He informed the Mayor and Council that the current equipment is about 15 years old. He stated that the current equipment stays in the shop more that it works. He spoke on the areas where this equipment is used. Charlie provided two quotes on a new Tiger Boom Mower. Councilmember Hutchins questioned Charlie on which piece of equipment he preferred. Charlie Wade stated that both quotes were for the same equipment, but he would prefer to go with the quote from SunSouth in the amount of \$169,289.04 with the other quote being around \$173,000.00. He stated that both quotes were from John Deere dealers. A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to approve the purchase of a new Tiger Boom Mower from SunSouth in the amount of \$169,289.04. Charlie informed the Mayor and Council that it could take up to seven months to receive the equipment. The Mayor stated that the purchase would be paid out of the DOT Reimbursement account. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present



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X. City Attorney's Report

Second Reading & Adoption of Budget Ordinance

The City Attorney Flin Coleman read the Budget Ordinance. A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Hutchins to approve the Budget Ordinance with the following amendments that the budget shall include the public safety modifications which shall include pay raises for Police, Fire and E911 for employees and a 4% pay increase for all non-public safety employees and any additional pay increases granted in this budget year shall be granted after Council approval. The Mayor then questioned if this went against the charter in regards to the pay increases with the public safety entities due to the County paying 20% of the Fire Department budget and that no one had consulted with anyone from the County since it factors into their budget as well and may go against the agreement regarding these departments. He went on to state that the pay increases are not done within the budget just a cost-of-living increase. Councilmember Jarrett stated that his motion came from the City Attorney. The Mayor again questioned the City Attorney as to whether this went against the charter. The City Attorney stated that he did not have the charter with him but that if it went against the charter then they would have to go back and amend it. The City Attorney posed the question of what the difference was between the cost-of-living and a pay raise but again without reading the charter he could not offer a legal opinion. There was more discussion between the Mayor and the City Attorney regarding whether the motion fell within the charter guidelines with the Mayor stating that he didn't feel this could move forward without clarification. Councilmember Jarrett questioned the City Attorney on if he was saying this motion could be voted on to which the City Attorney stated that he didn't see any reason as to why it could not be voted on. Councilmember Jarrett re-read the motion for Councilmember Davis and further explained about the increases. The motion carried with Councilmember Hutchins, Councilmember Jarrett and Councilmember Clenney voting "YEAH" and Councilmember Davis abstaining. The motion carried

Second Reading & Adoption of Change to Alcohol Ordinance

The City Attorney read the Alcohol Ordinance change. There was discussion that the Ordinance presented in the packet was not the correct Ordinance and that the Ordinance presented had been previously taken care of by passing and dispensing of the second reading.

Renew Chamber of Commerce Agreement

A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to approve the Chamber of Commerce Agreement. Councilmember Clenney questioned if this renewal was for the same contribution amount as presented in the budget. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present



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Renew Court Square Development Agreement

A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to approve the Court Square Development Agreement. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

CDBG Resolutions

A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded by Councilmember Hutchins to approve all the CDBG Resolutions. The Mayor stated that these Resolutions are standard and in compliance with the CDBG standards and once the project is presented the matching amount would be brought before the Council. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

XI. City Clerk's Report

The City Clerk gave the Mayor and Council financial reports. She gave a powerpoint presentation for the public. The Clerk then presented 2021 budget amendments and adjustments between the departments for the revenues and expenditures through November 2021. She explained that the amendments and adjustments balanced out.

A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to approve the Budget Amendments and Adjustments presented. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

XII. New Items Proposed By Mayor And City Council

A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to make the mask mandate optional for city employees in city buildings. Councilmember Hutchins and Councilmember Davis voted against. The Mayor broke the tie with a vote of "NAY" due to the amount of cases on the rise. The Mayor then asked the Council that there be disciplinary action of those not in compliance with the mask mandate.

A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to pave the balance of the cemetery lanes that were not previously done. The Mayor stated that there were four lanes that were not paved and that this was done so that there might be some additional burial spots. The Mayor then stated that he thought the quote was \$24,000 to \$25,000 to do those four lanes. Councilmember Hutchins questioned why the City could not take care of the other three cemeteries like they do at the city cemetery. It was stated that these were private property, and the city cemetery is city property. Councilmember Hutchins stated that once the plot was sold it became the property of the owner. There was discussion about the upkeep of the property and the possibility of contracting this work out. The Mayor stated that bids could be gotten regarding the upkeep of the city cemetery. The motion carried



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with Councilmember Jarrett, Councilmember Clenney and Councilmember Davis voting “YEAH” and Councilmember Hutchins voting “NAY”

A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to declare the firearms presented by Chief Caudill surplus and dispose of them by being offered as Police Officer buy back with one to be presented to Terry Jordan. The Mayor stated that these were firearms from the separation of the Department of Public Safety and the serial numbers were presented by Chief Caudill in the work session. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

Councilmember Hutchins questioned if there was a grant or if the city could clean out and work on the ditch by Annie Wright on Jesse Johnson and E. South Blvd. Councilmember Clenney also questioned a ditch in the Southside area both regarding overflow and run out. The Mayor stated that these areas would be looked into and that if this worked involved being on private property easements would be looked into. He stated that there may be some easements already and that they could get with Charlie to look into the easements. Councilmember Hutchins questioned the Civic Center work that had been approved. The Mayor informed Councilmember Hutchins that the plans had been forwarded to the State Fire Marshall and the city was just waiting on the approval.

A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Davis to extend the waiver of the 10% penalty for an additional three months due to the rising cases of COVID. The motion carried with Councilmember Hutchins and Councilmember Davis voting “YEAH” and Councilmember Jarrett and Councilmember Clenney voting “NAY” and the Mayor breaking the tie with a vote of “YEAH”

Appoint Mayor Pro Tem

A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to appoint Councilmember Clenney as Mayor Pro Tem. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

Rezoning of Huddle House Property

Kenneth Jones reminded the Mayor and Council that this rezoning had been tabled in October due to not having a preliminary plans completed and they are completed now. He stated that there are two properties being voted on, one being two acres for the Huddle House and 10 acres undeveloped. He presented the drawing stating there was going to be a convenient store, restaurant and walking area for animals and semi parking. He also stated that there was a tentative proposed drive going out to HWY 27 Bypass. The Planning Commission voted on it as two properties with the 10 acres changing from R1 to PUD and the two acres, which is not

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enough room for the zone change to PUD but the plans are to combine the properties making it 12 acres. He stated that the Planning Commission voted to recommend to the Mayor and Council to approve both zone changes from R1 to PUD and that even though the Huddle House property is already zoned commercial be included in the PUD rezone. He informed the Mayor and Council that there are plans to purchase an additional six or seven acres included in the drawing submitted but that it is presently not included in this zone change. A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded by Councilmember Hutchins to approve the zone change to PUD on properties one and two. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

XIII. Public Comments

Tracey Robinson came before the Mayor and Council to inform them of the issues with the 2007 Kenworth Freightliner. He stated that the City and County have already spent \$35,000 in repairs to this truck. He informed the Mayor and Council that this truck has a def system. He stated that the truck is down again for the def system and not a rebuild of the engine. He stated that Caterpillar has a wait of 45 to 60 days out to get repaired. He recommended to the Council to sell the truck and lease another to cut down on costs.

Celia Bostwick came before the Mayor and Council to thank the electric department for their assistance with the Christmas decorations on the square. She spoke on how well the City and County worked together.

Exie Smith came before the Mayor and Council to thank them for extending the 10% penalty. She also stated that it would be appreciated if the Mayor and Council looked at a refinement of the penalty ordinances to be more customer friendly for those in need at this time.

Another citizen came before the Mayor and Council regarding the second reading of the alcohol ordinance that was read at this meeting. She asked if this meant that the alcohol ordinance remains the same until the second reading is done. She then stated that the one from the previous month was regarding the 50% sale of food and changing of the operation times. There was discussion between the Mayor and the citizen. Chief Caudill spoke regarding that there was change proposed under the section of hours of operation. He stated that he wasn't sure if there was a second reading or if the second reading had been dispensed. There was further discussion on which ordinance was supposed to be brought up at this meeting and getting back with the City Attorney on the correct ordinance.

XIV. Executive Session



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A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded by Councilmember Hutchins to enter into Executive Session for matters of personnel. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to enter into Regular Session. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present
No action was taken from Executive Session

The Mayor brought before the Council that a former employee asked that a name be given to the main street that runs through the cemetery. A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to give the name John Wesley Dr to the main street that runs through the cemetery. The Mayor asked the City Attorney if there was any legal parameters for this. The City Attorney stated that if there was a name change there would be but since there was never a name on it that this should be okay. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

XV. Adjournment

A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to adjourn the January 4th City Council Meeting. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

Travis Wimbush, Mayor