



Blakely City Council Minutes

April 5, 2022, City Hall, 6:00 P.M.

- I. Public Hearing Zone Change Request Corner of Chattahoochee & Flowers Dr
The Mayor explained the process of the hearing. He stated that those in favor and those in opposition would be allotted the same amount of time to be heard. He asked if there was anyone in favor who wished to speak.

Ms. Nancy Wright came before the Mayor and Council in favor of the rezoning. She spoke of her plan to build decent housing as apartments in this location. She informed the Mayor and Council of her history. She informed them that this project was targeting seniors and veterans. She gave a brief explanation of how the apartments would look like.

The Mayor asked if there was anyone in opposition that would like to speak. No one in opposition was present.

The hearing was closed at 6:07

- II. 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 Davis, Councilmember Hutchins, Councilmember Jarrett and Councilmember Clenney were all present. Also present was the City Attorney Flin Coleman and the City Clerk Melinda Crook. After a moment of silence Councilmember Hutchins gave the invocation. The Mayor and Council led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Mayor's Spotlight
The Mayor stated that the March Mayor's spotlight was on an employee who presently was on night shift and could not be present at the meeting. He stated that the March Mayor's spotlight was on Artigas Gregory. He spoke on things that Mr. Gregory has done since being employee by the City. He stated that at Peanut Proud he watched Mr. Gregory taking time to talk to a group of young men for a period of time. He stated that since Mr. Gregory was on night shift pictures would have to taken at a later time.

A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to amend the agenda to add an Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

- IV. Approve Minutes
 1. Minutes March 1, 2022 & March 22, 2022



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A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded by Councilmember Hutchins to approve the March work session, regular session and special called meeting minutes. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

V. Citizens And Delegations

Darrell Alexander – use of Howell Park

Elber Lee came before the Mayor and Council to request use of the Jeanette King Memorial Park on May 7th to host a May Day event. He stated that he felt the event would be helpful to the community and could be beneficial to solidarity of the community and Police. He gave a list of speakers for the event, Sheriff Price, Chief Caudill and Dewana Fields. Councilmember Hutchins questioned if Mr. Lee had spoken with the Mayor about this event to which he said that he had. The Mayor stated that he had spoken with Mr. Lee and that he was ok with the event but that it was an item that needed to come before the Council for a vote because it was an event. A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to approve use of the Jeanette King Memorial Park on May 7th for the May Day event.

Councilmember Hutchins questions if there were any costs for services and if there was any liability to the City due to items that may be present. The Mayor stated that no slides would be present due to no capability of was use for that type of item. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

Petition Requesting Speed Bumps on Chattahoochee Ave

The Mayor and Councilmembers had been presented with a signed petition from the individuals who lived on Chattahoochee Ave. A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to approve speed bumps on Chattahoochee Ave as requested. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

VI. Administrative Committee

Will Caudill – Updates

Assistant Chief Tinsley presented the March monthly Police report stating that the total number of calls was 1,062. She then gave a run down of the calls. She informed the Mayor and Council that Officer Exum had completed the EQT and is now GA certified. She stated that two cadets were still in the academy and should graduate April 22 and that one part time Officer McDowell, had been removed from the roster and one part officer Cawthorn had been added to the roster. Councilmember Jarrett questioned if they were still short staffed to which Assistant Chief Tinsley stated that they were still two short, that they were at 14 sworn full time, two sworn part time and two in the academy.

Matt Hromalik - E911 Updates



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Director Hromalik gave the March monthly E911 report. He stated that they had received a total of 4,300 calls. The Mayor questioned if the quarterly county meetings had resumed to which Director Hromalik stated that they were resuming.

2. Planning Commission –

i. Zone Change Request Corner of Chattahoochee & Flowers Dr

Kenneth Jones informed the Mayor and Council that the Planning Commission had a public hearing about the rezoning and that no members of the public were in attendance. He stated that this involved two properties. He stated that this rezoning was for a four apartment project. He stated that the property is large enough to accommodate this project. He stated that there could be some issues with GA Power and/or Three Notch power lines and any possible easements there might be and that would have to be addressed with the Mayor and Council. He stated that presently the property is zoned R1 (a 1200sq ft house). He stated that a questioned had been raised about if a mobile home could be put there if the zone was changed to which Kenneth stated that one lot could possibly be large enough but he wasn't sure and that would have to go to a surveyor. He reiterated that the zone change would allow for the apartments to be built. He stated that the zone change allowed for 3,000 sq ft for the complex with each apartment being at least 600 sq ft. He stated that the notice had been put in the paper and a sign had been posted at the property. He informed the Mayor and Council that it had past the Planning Commission with three voting to approve the zone change and one voting against it so the motion to approve the zone change had passed the Planning Commission. A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to approve the zone change from R1 to R2 for the property at the corner of Chattahoochee & Flowers with a possible address of 99 Chattahoochee. Councilmember Hutchins question the other lot where a mobile home could possibly be placed. Kenneth stated that if the lot was big enough the R2 zone would allow for a mobile home but her proposal was for apartments and that was a question that had been asked but that the two could not be put on the same property. Kenneth stated that property across the street was zoned R2 and the lot with the sign didn't have a number. Councilmember Jarrett questioned if the motion could be changed for just the apartments. The Mayor stated that zone request was made to just change the zone from R1 to R2 to construct apartments and that Ms. Wright was specific on what her intentions are and the zone change would allow for this type of project. The Mayor then stated that there was a lien of a nuisance abatement that had taken place back in 2012 and that Ms. Wright had not been made aware of this at the time she purchased the property. The Mayor asked that the Council consider waiving the attempt to collect the nuisance abatement and that this be included in the motion because what she is trying to do will benefit the community. The Mayor asked the Clerk to take a poll of the vote to make sure that it is clearly stated. The clerk informed the Mayor that per the poll of votes the motion carried with Councilmember Clenney voting "YEAH", Councilmember Jarrett voting "YEAH", Councilmember Hutchins abstained and

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Councilmember Davis voting “YEAH.” A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to waive the nuisance abatement from 2012. The motion carried with Councilmember Davis, Councilmember Jarrett and Councilmember Clenney voting “YEAH” and Councilmember Hutchins abstained.

ii. 99 Chattahoochee Ave

This item was incorporated with the rezone of Chattahoochee Ave and Flowers Dr.

VII. City Attorney’s Report

Second Reading and Adoption of Reapportionment Ordinance

The City Attorney Flin Coleman read the Ordinance

A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to approve the Adoption of Reapportionment Ordinance. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

Telecom Year End Settlement & MEAG Year End Settlement

A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded by Councilmember Davis to approve that 100% of the Telecommunication refund in the amount of \$98 and the MEAG year end settlement refund in the amount of \$453,435 be put into the Short Term Flexible Operating account of the Municipal Competitive Trust. The Mayor stated that the Telecommunication refund was so much lower due to the finalization of Telecommunication. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

Verizon Site Plan for Water Tower Lease Agreement

The City Attorney Flin Coleman informed the Mayor and Council that the lease agreement was not completed and that a higher lease payment was being looked into. The Mayor stated that the site plan was presently being reviewed and that it was believed that there would not be any issues with the plan.

Resolution for GMA Financing for Semi Truck

The City Attorney Flin Coleman read the Resolution from GMA. He stated that this was the same Resolution that the Council has seen and approved with past financing. The Mayor informed the Council that this financing was for the semitruck had been approved at the special called meeting. A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Davis to approve the GMA financing Resolution for the financing of the semitruck. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

VIII. City Clerk’s Report

The City Clerk presented the Mayor and Council with February monthly financial reports. She then made a financial powerpoint presentation for the public.



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IX. New Items Proposed By Mayor And City Council

The Mayor informed the Council that April 10-16 is National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week. He asked that if they get the opportunity to stop by E911 to thank them for their hard work. He stated that lunch would be provided one day through that week.

The Mayor informed the Council that the food boxes being provided for the seniors at the senior center is going well.

Proclamation Safe Digging Month

The Mayor informed the Council that this month is the month promoting Call Before You Dig month. He gave the Council and public some recent examples of items where utilities have been affected by digging. He stated that the Gas Department has placed banner throughout the City. He stated that the service of Call Before You Dig is a service that is free of charge is to promote safety first.

The Mayor informed the Council that the methane monitoring for the Landfill has increased this year from \$2,300 to \$2,800. He then stated that the groundwater monitoring has increased from \$13,850 to \$15,000. He then stated that these costs are a shared expense with the County.

The Mayor brought to the Council the renewal of the alcohol license for CoCo's Lounge, discussed in the work session. A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to renew the alcohol license for CoCo's Lounge. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

The Mayor brought the purchase of a grapple truck for the Sanitation Department in the amount of \$179,700 as discussed in the work session. He reminded the Council that the City would be looking in to a possible USDA Grant to assist with this purchase as discussed in the work session. A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to approve the purchase of the grapple truck in the amount of \$179,700. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Hutchins to approve the purchase of new Police uniforms per Chief Caudill's recommended changes, in the approximate amount of \$6,115. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present



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A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to approve moving forward on adding three parking spots on Bay St. for the Police Department. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present.

The Mayor brought to the Council a Resolution to make the wearing of masks by employees and citizens in City facilities optional. A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to approve the Resolution. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

Councilmember Hutchins questioned what had happened to the four-day work week that had previously been approved by the Council. The Mayor stated that there were some logistic issues that had arisen that didn't allow this to move forward as of yet.

Councilmember Hutchins stated that with Charlie Wade being part-time there was another employee in the Street Department with a green thumb that would like to take over tending the plants around the square. The Mayor stated that the employee would need to get together with Billy Powell to discuss the matter.

The decision was made to address any pay rate changes in Executive Session

Councilmember Jarrett questioned Building Official about semitruck parking. Mark Hawkins stated that Ordinance amendments were being investigated but that some letters had been sent out to address this issue.

The Mayor asked the Council how they wanted to proceed with the Civic Center. He reminded the Council that if they chose to move forward with the addition, per the new laws, they City would have to hire an architect to create a set of plans. He then reminded them of the items that could be done to the inside of the center, raise the roof, renovate the existing restrooms and replace the back door to be able to get the center back open for rental. A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Davis to get the Civic Center back into operational state. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

Tower Maintenance - Was not ready to proceed on



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X. Public Comments

Mr. Adkins gave a little history on places he has been and why he has come back to live in Blakely Ga. He stated that he has never seen such a great effort to put on Peanut Proud. He talked about the work of the Police, the City workers and the Peanut Proud workers. He then stated that when he came back through on Sunday morning, he could not tell that the festival had even taken place. He then spoke on how come Monday morning the City workers would had been out all day Saturday working were back on the garbage trucks with smiles on their face. He stated this is why he has come back to live in Blakely GA.

Mr. J.B. Jones thanked the Mayor and Council for giving back their neighborhood. He then asked if he and the Mayor could have a meeting about the storm water issue at his house.

Mr. Mike Newberry spoke on the work of the City/County workers who helped with Peanut Proud. He then stated that the use of the Government Complex is so important to the day and how thankful he is to the City for the use of the building and everything that the City helped with. He then spoke of seeing Mr. Gregory speaking with the young men. He then stated that confetti will not be done again. The Mayor thanked Mr. Newberry for putting on such a wonderful festival for our community and of some clean up Mr. Newberry had done as well in front of Village Pizza

XI. Executive Session

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

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

A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Clenney to approve the pay rate changes recommended by Department Heads for Peggy Robinson from 12.74 to 15.24, Bobby Freeman for \$1.00 increase and a Department Head recommendation to increase \$1.00 for hourly temp workers. The motion carried with Councilmember Davis, Councilmember Jarrett and Councilmember Clenney voting "YEAH" and Councilmember Hutchins voting "NAY."

XII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Councilmember Clenney and seconded by Councilmember Davis to adjourn the April 5th City Council meeting. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

Travis Wimbush, Mayor