



Blakely City Council Minutes

May 3, 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 Ray Jarrett and Councilmember Margaret Davis were present. Not present was Councilmember Al Hutchins and Councilmember Brad Clenney. The City Attorney Tommy Coleman and the City Clerk Melinda Crook were also present. There was a moment of silence. Charlie Sol gave the invocation and led the Mayor, Council and public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Mayor's Spotlight

The Mayor reminded the Council that February's Mayor spotlight was on Artigas Gregory and that he was unable to attend in February so he was being recognized at this meeting. The Mayor then stated that the March Mayor's spotlight was Peggy Robinson. He gave a brief history of Ms. Robinson's time at the City and stated that she recently had been promoted to Finance Director.

III. Approve Minutes

A motion was made by Davis and seconded by Jarrett to approve the Work Session and Regular Session April 5th minutes. The motion carried with Mayor Wimbush, Councilmember Davis and Councilmember Jarrett voting "YEAH"

The Mayor informed the Council that Ms. Gwen Houston had asked to be placed on the agenda to update the Mayor and Council on the senior citizen program being held at the senior center. He stated that it had been missed being added to the agenda and that a motion was needed to amend the agenda. A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to amend the agenda adding Gwen Houston under Citizens and Delegations. The motion carried with Mayor Wimbush, Councilmember Davis and Councilmember Jarrett voting "YEAH"

IV. Citizens And Delegations

Latonya Townsend – Use Of City Property For Tent Revival

The Mayor stated that Ms. Townsend of the Restored House Cathedral has requested the use of the City lot on Liberty St. for a tent revival. He reminded the Council that the property has been used for this in the past. A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to approve the use of the Liberty St property by Ms. Townsend for a tent revival. The motion carried with Mayor Wimbush, Councilmember Davis and Councilmember Jarrett voting "YEAH"



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Gwen Houston gave a six-month update on the senior center program. She informed the Mayor and Council that the hours are currently Tuesday's and Thursday's from 9:30 to 12:30. She spoke briefly on the demographics of the group. She stated that there are currently 8-12 seniors who participate with one being a man. She stated that she has found the main concern of the seniors is to not eat alone. She stated that they currently utilize the kitchen and/or someone provides lunch several times a month. She stated that they currently focus on games, music, exercise and fellowship. She spoke on goals for the seniors. She spoke on an AARP grant that was applied for to purchase exercise equipment. She stated that they have planted garden boxes to grow vegetables that they can cook with and provide any additional vegetables to the food bank that is sharing the space at the senior center and that they have planted flowers also. She asked that the Mayor and Council consider turning the old tennis court into pickleball courts. She stated that goals for 2022 are to get established on Facebook, open five days a week and increase attendance to 20. She then informed the Council that their budget needs would be around \$6,000 annually.

V. Administrative Committee

Will Caudill – Updates

Chief Will Caudill gave the April monthly report. He then informed the Mayor and Council that two cadets had graduated and immediately started another level of training. He informed the Mayor and Council that they currently have 16 sworn full time officers and 2 sworn part time officers. He updated the Mayor and Council on the Enterprise vehicle purchase stating that Ford had currently put everything on hold, not cancelled, at the present time and that he would continue to keep them updated.

Matt Hromalik - E911 Updates

Lequiesha Mincey gave the April monthly report. She stated that the total monthly calls were 4,195. She then informed the Mayor and Council that one employee had completed training.

Code Enforcement – Update On Properties Going To Court

Kenneth that court proceedings on properties was starting to move. He stated that three properties would be coming up on May 11th. He spoke of the conditions of these three properties. He informed the Mayor and Council that he had gotten some clean up estimates, if the court was to turn the properties over to the City to only bring up to code. He stated that one quote was \$18,000 and another was \$50,000 and that these quotes were for all three properties. He then stated that if the properties were turned over to the City to only bring up to code the clean up could be done in house for approximately \$7,500 to \$8,000. Kenneth stated that he would update the Mayor and Council after the court date. The Mayor asked the Council



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to look at the properties in question and consider how they would like to move forward if requested by the court to bring the properties up to code.

VI. City Attorney's Report

Verizon Water Tank Lease

The City Attorney, Tommy Coleman informed the Mayor and Council that most of what the City had requested changed in the agreement had been done. He stated that the agreement was for \$19,000 a year. He reminded the Mayor and Council that this was for Verizon to place an equipment on the City's water tower behind City Hall. He stated that this was a 20 year agreement to be renewed every 4-5 years and that with each renewal there was an 8% increase in income to the City. Mr. Coleman stated that the site agreement and survey had been approved by the City for the placement of the antenna and the building on the ground, so the last piece was the Verizon agreement. A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Davis to approve the Verizon agreement and authorizing the Mayor to executive/sign the agreement. The motion carried with Mayor Wimbush, Councilmember Jarrett and Councilmember Davis voting "YEAH"

Radio Tower Lease

The City Attorney, Tommy Coleman, stated that the agreement presented to the Mayor and Council had been drafted 10 years ago. He stated this agreement was between the City and the school board, which was not implemented but would be used as a format for a new agreement if the Mayor and Council so chose. Kenneth stated that currently the school system, Life Brite EMS, Early County EMA and Stewart County through E911. The Mayor stated that this will help with maintenance and improvements at the site. The Mayor then stated that Kenneth had stated possibly a \$500 a month charge per entity. Kenneth stated that the utility charge is \$1,300 a year, then there is liability insurance coverage and the need for a new building at the site. He then stated that the lights on the tower are not operating and the cost to repair those is \$4,550. He stated that regular maintenance on the tower is around \$4,000 per year. He then stated that there is already an agreement regarding the tower with rural fire. A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to have the City Attorney move forward in drafting an agreement. The motion carried with Mayor Wimbush, Councilmember Davis and Councilmember Jarrett voting "YEAH"

The City Attorney, Tommy Coleman presented an Ordinance regarding the closing of Bay St. He informed the Mayor and Council that all parties had been notified. He then explained and read the ordinance constituting the 1st reading.

VII. City Clerk's Report



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The City Clerk presented the financial reports to the Mayor and Council and provided a powerpoint presentation of the financial for the public.

- VIII. New Items Proposed By Mayor And City Council
Proclamation Professional Municipal Clerks Week
The Mayor read a Proclamation for Municipal Clerks Week which is May 1st thru May 7th.

Zoom Subscription for GICH

A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to approve the Zoom yearly subscription in the amount of \$149.00 to be used for the GICH project. The motion carried with Mayor Wimbush, Councilmember Davis and Councilmember Jarrett voting "YEAH"

GMA District Ballot

A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Davis to approve the GMA District Ballot as initially present excluding the add-on from Albany. The motion carried with Mayor Wimbush, Councilmember Jarrett and Councilmember Davis voting "YEAH"

The Mayor congratulated the SGA girl's tennis team for being State Champions, the Early County boy's baseball team for making it to regional playoffs, the Early County boys tennis team for advancing to the final four in State, Victor Robinson for advancing to the final four of EA Madden Sports

The Mayor informed the Council of Administrative Professional Day stating that a picture had been placed in the paper and lunch was purchased. He also stated that the Electric Department received lunch for Lineman Appreciation Day.

The Mayor reminded everyone of May Day in Arlington and a May Day celebration in Blakely at Jeanette King Memorial Park, put on by citizens.

The Mayor informed the Council of an auction at JM Woods. He informed the Council that the current pickup used to pull the sewer jet was too small and if continued to be used for this could damage the truck. He asked the Council for approval to have Lane Davis and Billy Powell attend the JM Woods Auction to possibly purchase an F250 and two other pickup trucks, which would replace the oldest in the City fleet to be sold for surplus. He stated that the amount would not exceed \$100,000. A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to approve going to the auction for the possible purchase of an F250 and



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two other pickup trucks not to exceed \$100,000. The motion carried with Mayor Wimbush, Councilmember Davis and Councilmember Jarrett voting "YEAH"

A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Davis to purchase three radar signs in the amount of \$9,673.80, as presented in the work session. The motion carried with Mayor Wimbush, Councilmember Jarrett and Councilmember Davis voting "YEAH"

A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to approve getting bids to raising the ceiling and walls and installation of FR sheetrock inside the Civic Center. The motion carried with Mayor Wimbush, Councilmember Davis and Councilmember Jarrett voting "YEAH"

A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Davis to approve getting bids to build a 50x100 slab and municipal metal frame building for the departments at the City Barn Complex.

A motion was made by Councilmember Jarrett and seconded by Councilmember Davis to get bids on renovating the house on Murdock and bring to code for possible sale. The motion carried with Mayor Wimbush, Councilmember Jarrett and Councilmember Davis voting "YEAH"

IX. Public Comments

J.B. Jones came before the Mayor and Council stating that other work was being approved to be done and he wanted to question why work was not being done on E. South Blvd and drainage in this area. He thanked Billy Powell for doing some drainage work in this area.

Joseph Powell and Pastor Morris Barns from the Calvary SDA Church wanted to introduce themselves and speak to the Mayor and Council about wanting to help in the community. Pastor Barns spoke on his belief of engaging the community and way they may be able to assist with the mental health of the community. He spoke on some things they would like to do in the community

Celia Bostwick spoke about the Homer Reddick property next to the Chamber. The Mayor stated that the premises has been cleaned and that Mr. Reddick is trying to sell the property. He stated that the Council took no action to renovate this property. She spoke on loud vehicles around the square.



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The Mayor informed the Council that due to additional work on Angus Dr, in the water/sewer project, 12 areas were going to be cut into the road for new laterals. He stated that he felt this street would need to be added to the paving project due to these cuts.

X. Adjournment

A motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to adjourn the May 3, 2022 City Council Meeting. The motion carried with Mayor Wimbush, Councilmember Davis and Councilmember Jarrett voting "YEAH"

Travis Wimbush, Mayor