

A meeting of all committees of the City of Gray, Georgia was held on Monday, February 27, 2023, in the conference room at City Hall located at 109 James Street

Present: Mayor Ed Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem James Collins, Council Members Terrell Fulford, David Tufts and Terry Favors, City Attorney John Newberry, City Superintendent Cheyenne Morgan, Public Works Manager Chris Neal, Police Chief Adam Lowe, Main Street Director Ashley Roberson, City Clerk Cindy Yancey, and Assistant City Clerk Heather Brown.

Guests: Leigh Goolsby, Danny Mundy, Sherri Rollins, James Nobles, Donnie & Sandra Melton, Chuck Thompson, *The Jones County News*,

Mayor Barbee called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

#### **Finance/Tax Committee:**

- Financial Update –
  - 95.16% of the 2022 property tax has been collected, leaving an unpaid balance of \$51,439.26.
- City Accounts – Cadence Bank
  - Councilman Fulford stated that City Clerk Yancey would like to move accounts back to Cadence Bank due to issues she's having with Morris Bank and that it will be voted on in the special called council meeting following the committee meeting.
- Budget Supplement – called meeting.
  - Councilman Fulford stated that this is to supplement the 2022 budget for multiple departments.

#### **Water/Sewer Committee:**

- Chapter 70 Utilities Ordinance Amendment –
  - City Superintendent Cheyenne Morgan updated that council received a copy of this ordinance in last month's committee meeting to go over and decide if it will be added to the March Council Agenda for voting.
- 312 Dolly Street
  - City Superintendent Cheyenne Morgan stated this is a lift station that the city technically doesn't own but is spending a lot of money on in maintenance. Last year the city spent roughly \$10,000 on maintenance and city receives roughly \$40.00 a month. There is only one house on this lift station and the homeowner refutes everything they say about debris being flushed. Mr. Morgan stated a bar screen has been added to hopefully help the situation. The main issue the city doesn't own the lift station but is paying for the maintenance and the power bill.
  - Councilman Tufts asked what happens if we stop servicing it. Mr. Morgan stated it would overflow and feels best the lift station either be deeded to the city or for the property owner to consume control over it.
  - City Clerk Yancey stated that the city doesn't have an easement to the lift station on the property.
  - City Attorney John Newberry asked what the preferred outcome of the city would be.
  - Councilman Favors asked if it was only one customer. Mr. Morgan stated yes, and he only remembers one other person interested in tying on to it and financially it's not in the city's best interest.
  - City Clerk Yancey stated the city paid for the lift station for the customer to be able to get on city sewer. Ms. Yancey stated the cost increased after the original owner of the property moved out and a relative of the property owner moved in with a small child and is flushing wipes. Ms. Yancey feels we should start fining her every time the city is called out.
  - Mr. Morgan stated he has sent her a copy of the ordinance stating that she could be fined for every offense in Municipal court.
  - Councilman Tufts stated they would look into the situation.

- Sewer capacity letter
  - City Attorney John Newberry stated the city cannot give out any letters right now. Mr. Newberry stated the city should wait until we have the waste water treatment plant up and running and the water sewer moratorium lifted.
  - Mayor Pro Tem Collins agreed.
  - City Superintendent Cheyenne Morgan stated that for the month of January with some of the issues experienced the city averaged 540,000 gallons a day and there is literally no sewer capacity.
  - Councilman Tufts asked when the estimated completion date of the WWTP is. Mr. Morgan responded March of 2024.
- City Superintendent Cheyenne Morgan stated we need to change the rate which the city sells water back to Jones County. The county went up to 4.44 per thousand gallon from 3.76 per thousand-gallon out at the lite n tie meter where they purchase from them.
  - Councilman Tufts asked Mr. Morgan to get some numbers together. Mr. Morgan stated in the past the city mirrors what they sell it to us for we sell it to them for.
  - Councilman Fulford asked how many customers are on that line. Mr. Morgan stated basically nothing but the nursing home. Councilman Fulford asked if we should send a letter to notify them.
  - Councilman Tufts stated we should send them a letter.

#### Plan Committee:

- Alcohol Ordinances
  - Mayor Pro Tem Collins asked if there was any discussion.
  - City Attorney John Newberry stated this is the Ordinance we had the first reading last month and the final reding will be in the March meeting. Mr. Newberry stated that Ashley with Main Street made a couple of comments with revisions to them and that council need to look at them with any additional revisions before the final reading.
  - Councilman Favors asked if this Ordinance allowed alcohol for a special district and not the entire city.
  - Mayor Pro Tem Collins stated there are two separate Ordinances one is for the entertainment district and the other is for festivals. Both Ordinances were provided, and the festival ordinance is more for city sponsored events with approval of council ahead of time, kind of like an application of the where, the what, and the when.
  - City Attorney John Newberry added that it allows for open container in an approved sized city cup.
  - Councilman Favors asked if this would be allowed at the new shopping center. Mayor Pro Tem Collins stated that this was just for festivals and added that Mr. Favors was asking about the other ordinance read that would be provided for a district that would allow the loosening the food requirement for sales of beer and wine. That was just a first reading and the second reading for a vote will be taking place at the next council meeting.
  - Councilman Favors stated that you know these things start and next thing you know there is a bar.
  - Chief Adam Lowe stated that he was not in favor of the Ordinance to allow the loosening of the food requirement because that is exactly what they would be doing is opening a bar.
  - City Attorney Newberry added that another thing is they have not defined exactly where that district is where the food percentage and seating capacity would no longer be required but generally it is in the small downtown corridor area.
  - Councilman Favors stated that he feels it should be city wide or not at all. Mayor Pro Tem Collins stated that he doesn't feel this will receive the support it needs to pass.
  - Guest James Nobles spoke up to ask when council would receive public comment on this Ordinance. Mayor Pro Tem Collins stated at the council meeting but if he was brief and council didn't mind, he was open to hearing his comments.

- Mr. Nobles asked what good would alcohol do to introduce it to an entertainment district in this community. He said it seems we have been there and done that around 12 years ago when the county and city adopted a no open container ordinance. He feels this is a move to reintroduce this back to the community. He feels that city council should consider this an ultimately reject and not pass this ordinance.
- Councilman Favors confirmed that it is the second reading coming up at the next council meeting for them to vote on.
- GICH – Letter of support
  - City Clerk Cindy Yancey stated this a letter of support they are requesting is for their letter of support for the same development that is asking for the water and sewer capacity letter.
  - Mayor Barbee stated that the GICH committee hasn't meet with the developer yet and all they have is a tentative location.
  - City Attorney Newberry stated best thing is to let GICH Committee meet with all the applicants and GICH provide their letter first.
  - It was consensus of council to take no action on the letter of support.
- Main Street Ashley Roberson updated that the Hometown Spring Festival will be held April 15<sup>th</sup> and she began advertising for it today and she has already had 30 vendors to sign up. Arts and Crafts will be from 10-5. The music lineup will be 12-3 Music Medix, 3:00-6:00 Heath Peacock, and 6-9 will be Ethan Payne. The stage will be set up in Butler Hall Parking lot and there will be inflatables for the kids.
  - Mayor Pro Tem Collins asked for qualification if this is what the Turkey Fest is now. Mrs. Roberson confirmed yes.
  - Mayor Pro Tem Collins asked how Fridays on Mains are going, being this is the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> one. Mrs. Roberson stated that this one wasn't as busy and feels the shorter month threw a lot of people off.

#### Personnel Committee:

- Assistant City Superintendent
  - Councilman David Tufts stated he asked for this to be on the agenda because right now we only have the City Superintendent handling everything and he feels the city should fill the assistant position and Mr. Tufts would like to discuss how the city should handle this, should council make recommendation or advertise for the position.
  - Mayor Pro Tem Collins stated that from his understanding it was no problem to discuss it or make a recommendation but ultimately the decision would be left up to the City Superintendent. Councilman Tufts stated in the past he knew council made the recommendation.
  - Councilman Fulford asked if there was more than one person showing interest in the position.
  - City Superintendent Cheyenne Morgan stated he feels he should be included in the discussion considering he knows who has the initiative to go the extra mile.
  - Mayor Pro Tem Collins stated that ultimately the decision will be up to Cheyenne and asked Cheyenne how everything has been operating.
  - Mr. Morgan updated that everything has been operating good and that public works Manager Chris Neal has been supervising the guys in the field as he focuses more on administrative stuff.
  - Councilman Tufts just feels the city needs someone qualified to be there when Mr. Morgan is out of the office. Mr. Morgan feels it is worth discussing.
  - Mayor Pro Tem Collins stated he does feels at some point it needs to be done but not rushed and the candidate needs to meet the guidelines which are stout for that position.
  - City Clerk Yancey stated that the job description was changed when the last assistant city superintendent was hired and that the job descriptions for the city superintendent and the assistant city superintendent needs to be swapped.

- Mayor Pro Tem Collins asked Mr. Morgan if he would like to submit some guidelines for the position that he would like council to approve. Mr. Morgan stated that he could do that. Mayor Pro Tem Collins asked that he present it in the next committee meeting.
- City Clerk Yancey said she will send both job descriptions out to everyone tomorrow.

#### **Streets/Sanitation Committee:**

- Councilman Tufts stated he thinks we are still having issues with garbage collection and feels there will need to be a sit down with Advanced Disposal to discuss the issues and maybe later in the year make the decision to stay with Advanced Disposal or re bid.
  - City Attorney Newberry stated he knows we discussed sending them a notice which is required in the contract, and he needs more specifics of the issues to include in the letter. Councilman Tufts said he will work on getting that to him.
- Councilman Favors asked City Superintendent Cheyenne Morgan the status of Autumn Ridge. Mr. Morgan stated he spoke with him today and he is waiting for a return call but he let him know to begin. Mr. Favors ask if they will put rock in the hole. Mr. Morgan stated he feels they will back fill it in.
- Police Chief Adam Lowe stated on Cedarline Dr the residents are using the bottom drive to exit onto the street and is pulling a lot of mud onto the street. Both him and Cheyenne Morgan have received several complaints. Mr. Lowe stated that from his knowledge there is nothing they can do to keep them from using it, but it is creating an issue. Mr. Lowe asked City Attorney Newberry if there was anything they could legally say to them.
- City Superintendent Cheyenne Morgan updated that Georgia Safe Sidewalks completed their 238 vertical misplacements.

#### **City Property:**

#### **Public Safety Police/Fire:**

- Flock Safety Agreement
  - Chief Adam Lowe stated that he is requesting from council the ability to install these cameras. Mr. Lowe stated these are not speed cameras and they do not issue speeding tickets. Mr. Lowe stated they read car tags and will alert PD of any hits of people wanted or stolen vehicles. Mr. Lowe said these cameras helped tremendously with the efforts to capture those in the recent entering autos in Turner Woods neighborhood when they tracked them from Gordon all the way to the Albany aera. Chief Lowe stated he made sure to get approval from the GDOT for the State Roadways and the cameras will be at every entrance to the city, a total of 9 cameras. Mr. Lowe stated if a car enters the city limits and receives a hit it will notify the officers in their car with the car and the tag to alert the officers to look for the car. Mr. Lowe stated it is a two-year agreement that begins when all the cameras are installed. If the city is satisfied after the two-year period, it will go back before council for renewal.

#### **Miscellaneous:**

- Rabbit Farming – Terry Favors
  - Councilman Favors stated there is a resident in the Autumn Ridge neighborhood raising rabbits. Another resident notified him they recently moved due to the smell, and he has received several complaints from multiple residents about the smell. City Clerk Yancey stated there is nothing in the ordinance to prevent them from having rabbits.
  - City Attorney asked Mr. Favors if he has looked at his neighborhood convenance.
  - Chief Lowe suggested that someone let them know to use lime for the smell.
- Mayor Barbee stated he received a letter from Anne Shaw the Secretary of Jones County Arts about the upcoming plays.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.