

A meeting of all committees of the City of Gray, Georgia was held on Monday, March 20, 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, Fire Chief Keith Eisele, Main Street Director Ashley Roberson, City Clerk Cindy Yancey, and Assistant City Clerk Heather Brown.

**Guests:** Bert King, Sherri Rollins, Scott Jackson, Debbie Lurie-Smith, *The Jones County News*,

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

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

- Financial Update –  
97.73% of the 2022 property tax has been collected, leaving an unpaid balance of \$24,173.66.

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

- water rates
  - City Superintendent Cheyenne Morgan stated that the county has increased the water rates from 3.76 to 4.44 cent per thousand gallon and the city needs to increase its rates to mirror the charges to break even.
  - City Clerk Yancey stated the city is currently only charging 3.76 for water.
  - Councilman Fulford asked when the water rate increased. Mr. Morgan replied that the increase was on last month's bill.
  - Councilman Tufts stated that this puts the city at an unfair advantage because the city sets its budget, and they increase the rates without notice and asked if a letter could be submitted to the county asking for a notice of an increase in rates for the future.
  - Councilman Fulford asked if this needs to be added to the agenda for a vote to change the rates.
  - City Clerk Yancey stated the ordinance will need to be revised and she will change the rates and send it to the city attorney.
  - It was consensus of council to add this to the agenda for 1st reading at the April council meeting and to be voted on in the May council meeting.
- 312 Dolly Street
  - Councilman Tufts stated he received a call from the owner of this property, and she stated she was told they city wouldn't be servicing the pump station.
  - City Superintendent Cheyenne Morgan stated she is referring to a lateral from her home to the pump station that is the issue, and the City is not allowed to go on private property to repair a sewer line.
  - Councilman Tufts stated that a plumber came and told her that a bigger pipe needs to be installed.
  - City Superintendent Morgan stated that yes the plumber advised her that is the issue but the city is not responsible for this.
  - Councilman Tufts and City Superintendent Morgan decided to arrange a day to meet at the property to take a look at the pump station.
- W/S letter
  - City Attorney John Newberry stated this is a letter that has been requested by the piedmont housing group. Mr. Newberry stated that his goal of this letter was to state facts that this property does has water and sewer access that would not require any special considerations, but this is not a guarantee to award or provide water sewer capacity that the city is currently under a water sewer moratorium and expect to remain in that for taps in excess of 2" until the plant is completed in 2024. Mr. Newberry stated this is not a capacity letter to guarantee water/sewer capacity.
  - City Superintendent Morgan stated that as of right WWTP finish date is March 2024.

- Councilman Tufts stated the city is not able to give support of any developments at this point.
- City Attorney stated there is nothing wrong with us providing a letter stating facts of the current water/ sewer capacity as long as we are not awarding a letter of capacity.
- Councilman Fulford asked if there needed to be a recommendation to add to the agenda for the mayor to sign the letter.
- It was consensus of council to add this to the April agenda for voting.

#### **Plan Committee:**

- Main Street Director Ashley Roberson first thanked Council for their support of the ordinance for the open container for festivals. Mrs. Roberson also asked the council how they would like her to move forward with this.
- Mrs. Roberson asked the city attorney if this needed to be voted on before every event.
- City Attorney Newberry stated yes.
- Mayor Pro Tem Collins suggested she create a form to put in their box beforehand that formats the date and time of the event.
- City Clerk Yancey asked if Fridays on Main could be done in general or does it have to be approved every time.
- City Attorney John Newberry stated he felt they could approve the 12 dates at once and she could put it on one form outlining the dates, for the same location held at the end of each month.
- Councilman Favors stated that council told everyone it would be for events and would be voted on before every event and he wanted to stick to what they said.
- Mayor Pro Tem Collins stated that he didn't see anything wrong with voting on it each month and that it is a quick decision to be made before each event.
- Main street director Ashley Roberson stated that she would like to have it approved for the March 31<sup>st</sup> Fridays on Main for a test run before the April Festival. Mrs. Roberson stated she would like to have information cards made to pass out, that she spoke with the main street director in Milledgeville who stated they didn't do a lot of education when it came to their first Friday events and she regrets that.
- City Attorney John Newberry stated a special called council meeting will need to be called to approve this for the March 31<sup>st</sup> Friday event.
- Mayor Pro Tem Collins asked if we could put it on the agenda for Mrs. Roberson to present the application for the Spring Festival and then call a meeting for the March 31<sup>st</sup> Friday on Main Event.
- A special called council meeting was scheduled for March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023 at 8:30 am.

#### **Personnel Committee:**

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

- Handicap parking – Bert King
  - Attorney Bert King presented the council with a picture of parking outside of his office. Mr. King made a request to council to designate a spot outside of his office to handicap parking. The current space has a sign of 15 min parking space Mr. King stated he would just advance that sign one space forward and he would be happy to pay the cost of the paint and sign.
  - Chief Lowe asked Mr. King if it would be better to change it to for business only.
  - Mr. King stated he can work with it being a handicap space and moving the 15-minute space forward.
  - City Attorney John Newberry stated he wasn't aware of any requirements being it is a city street.
  - It was consensus of council to put it on the April Agenda for voting.

#### **City Property:**

- Councilman Favors asked City Attorney John Newberry if he had sent a letter regarding the rabbit farming.
- City Attorney stated he will give him a call to find out the exact location.

**Public Safety Police/Fire:**

- Fire Chief Keith Eisele stated the fire department has a recruitment event coming up on the 23<sup>rd</sup> if anyone would like to be a firefighter 7:00- 8:00 pm at the fire house.
- Chief Eisele stated they recently applied for a grant with Morris Bank community partnership, and they received that which was a little over \$11,000 to cover a car seat program in the community to train some of the firefighters, police department, and sheriff's department to be car seat technicians.
- Police Chief Adam Lowe stated he received an update on the flock cameras that the surveys will be done on March 21<sup>st</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> and the cameras will be installed by the 5<sup>th</sup> of April.
- Mayor Ed Barbee asked Fire Chief Keith Eisele what the update on the smoke detectors was. Chief Eisele stated they just received them in, and they are working on finishing everything with policy and protocol, and it will go live on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Miscellaneous:**

- Scott Jackson- property on Allen Green Dr
  - Mr. Jackson stated he recently put under contract a piece of property at Hwy 18 & Allen Greene dr. Mr. Jackson stated that they are asking the city to consider a cluster development which sounds like a lot of houses, but it will only be 12 lots. Mr. Jackson stated it will be conformed to what Natures walk and big creek preserve is doing. Each lot will be .83 or more acres and they will be kind of large but narrow lots the lots with back up will to the future development of Natures Walk. Mr. Jackson stated it will not have to be advertised for zoning, it will simply be a plat approval through council and if council sees it is something they might consider he will have the engineering firm draw in the sewers. Mr. Jackson stated that sewer is already on the property, and it will just need a truck line to tie into all 12 lots. Mr. Jackson stated City Superintendent Cheyenne Morgan contacted him regarding a test well on the property. The houses will be 1500-1900 sq ft and the price will range from \$250,000 to \$280,000.
  - City Superintendent Cheyenne Morgan stated from talking to previous engineers and well drillers that this particular spot looks like an ideal spot to drill. Mr. Morgan stated everything is dependent upon the test drilling and the pump test. Mr. Morgan stated there would have to be 100ft diameter in all directions around the well head for the well head protection plan.
  - Council was okay with the cluster development.
  - Mr. Jackson will finish the preliminary plat and bring it back to council for approval.
- CDBG – 164 Cleveland Street deed to secure debt
  - City Clerk Yancey stated she still has not been able to get this individual to sign off on the deed form a 2016 CDBG grant.
  - Councilman Tufts stated the homeowner stated the work was not completed and reason deed hasn't been signed.
  - City Clerk Yancey stated she will request another extension while it is looked into further.
  - Councilman Tufts stated he seen information about neighborhood parks and grant money becoming available for parks within neighborhoods. Mr. Tufts asked council if they knew of any areas, we could look into doing this.
  - Main Street Director Ashley Roberson stated she has plans in her office that were handed over during transition for a Turner Woods park at the old track. Councilman Tufts stated a lot of people complained of traffic.

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

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Assistant City Clerk