

**CITY OF EUHARLEE  
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES  
JANUARY 18, 2018**

Mayor Steve Worthington called the meeting to order followed by a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

City Manager James Stephens called the roll and the following were present: Mayor Steve Worthington, Council Members Craig Guyton, Tracy Queen, David Duncan and Joe Turner. City Attorney Boyd Pettit was not present.

**Solicitor -James Stephens**

City Manager, James Stephens stated that the municipal court judge has recommended that we engage a solicitor to present our police department's cases in court. The proposed budget does include funding for the recommended solicitor position. The cost of the solicitor will be \$200 per court date. The anticipated loss fines should more than pay for this \$200 cost. Additionally, Joe Turner pointed out that we will experience of savings in officer's compensation because we will not be required to have as many officers present for every court date. The City Manager pointed out that he realized no official action can be taken at the work session but was asking for consensus approval in order to have the solicitor available for the February court date. Council provided consensus approval for the funding of the solicitor position.

**2018 Budget Discussion - Mayor Steve Worthington**

The 2018 budget was discussed with Mayor, council and the city residents who attended the meeting and was granted the opportunity to come to the table to review the budget and interact with council throughout the discussions. They had a lengthy deliberation in regards to ways to maintain the budget, how to eliminate the city's deficit and maintain 3 to 4 months of fund balance. Below are the summarized topics, items and information they discussed.

- Property Tax  
Elect a property tax of 1 mill, 2 mill or no property tax. Council does not like the idea of property tax but feels it may be necessary for continued operation.  
Fund balance decisions on what amount or number of months needed. Also, a fund balance policy.  
How to handle the funds if a property tax is agreed upon.  
Why a tax is needed and why a tax is not needed.
- 3% Employee raises. The discussion included options for employee raises or no raises for 2018.
- Capital Projects, maintenance, repair and infrastructure line items discussion.
- SPLOST payoff to free up funds in 2 years for capital projects and infrastructure.
- 2020 SPLOST approval
- Sound foundation for the city and a very tight budget for the next 2 years.
- Sewer and anticipated projects and revenue for the future of Euharlee. Also, to include 2 subdivision developments.
- Ways to get the city deficit down by a decrease in budgeted line item cost and spending. Maintain old cars and not purchase new cars.
- URA monies currently in the bank could be used for future infrastructure projects and emergency capital projects as needed.
- LOST anticipation amounts and prior year decreases due to unforeseen incidents.

Consensus of the council was that the proposed budget should be modified to provide for a minimum of 4 months fund balance of annual operation expenses.

### ***Project Status List - James Stephens***

James Stephens, City Manager stated in light of a new Mayor and Council Member he wanted to make sure he had an understanding of actual and pending projects verses projects that are dead. There has been talk that we have lot of open projects we need to finish. We recently opened bids on the Lowry Mill at \$2.89 million. We were hoping it would be closer to \$1 million. We were looking at alternatives on that project to phase it. He does not consider that necessarily dead, but he does not consider it active. He is looking for guidance from council, because there is not really any active projects he is actively pursuing. The county is handling the installation of the sewer line. Euharlee Five Forks Road in 2013 and 2014, we used LMIG funds for phase 1 of that project. He has not found anything in the records where Phase 2 was ever bid. He was told by the project manager and other staff members that everyone knew it was not enough money to finish phase 2 of Five Forks Road. On the current comprehensive plan that was just adopted, Five Forks Road was shown in the accomplishments anticipated funding not available. He is looking for guidance of what the council is looking at as active projects.

Council Member Craig Guyton said, the number of projects they have started and completed since he came on included Joe Cowan Park, Dobson Drive boat launch phase 1 and phase 2 which expanded the parking, the trail grant phase 1 and phase 2. Phase 3 we did bid out and at that time it was going to be a lot more money than was deemed worth crossing the creek. That project was killed due to lack of necessity according to council. Euharlee Five Fords Road phase 1 was completed. Phase 2 was the same thing, it was a lot more expensive than they thought it was going to be. He doesn't remember if they did bids. Council Member Joe Turner said, Ron Goss, Project Manager, brought in bids and they never accepted or voted. Council Member Guyton continued, the Grist Mill we got the 1<sup>st</sup> phase done which was the masonry and the foundation. Phase 2, which was the building which council said the numbers were way too high. He said, those are the projects he knew of and none of them are currently open. They were either finished, completed, paid for or dead in the water due to the amount of money and did not warranted.

Council Member Duncan said, Euharlee Five Forks phase 3 was that the intersection of Five Forks and Covered Bridge Road. Council Member Guyton said it was phase 2. Phase 1 was completed and phase 2 was never done.

Resident Marshall Aiken said, phase 2 was the intersection and running the sidewalks.

Resident Eric Smithey said, he didn't think they had a phase 1. The bridge fell and then the rest of phase 1 was building of the road. Council Member Guyton said, he thought phase 1, it turned into such a structural problem they didn't realize and that became the entire encompass of phase 1. So then, phase 2 came in, to build up the roads at an angle for safety and build the sidewalks all together. As far as this council and his concern, they do not have any open projects.

Mayor Steve Worthington said, we don't have anything hanging around they need to address. He said, that is good news.

Mr. Stephens said they have a drain issue at Joe Cowan Park that needs to be addressed. Some of the council may have been involved in an attempt to fix it. He will get more information to address the council. Council Member Turner said, there is an area after entering through the gate, along the walkway at the trail to your right, coming off the hill or is it another one. Mr. Stephens said, the area he is talking about is near the staff building, behind the field that is directly behind field 1. Mayor Worthington said, he is aware of that and he has never seen water run up hill which is what they were trying to do.

Council Member Guyton said, the only other thing they were looking at and they got numbers from Ron Goss, was a partial phase 2 on the Grist Mill for a water wheel and an observation deck. So we have numbers, but it's not an active project. Council Member Turner said, there is money appropriated for it, but it is on the wish list. Mayor Worthington asked if Mr. Stephens had an idea what it will take to fix this problem. Mr. Stephens said, not at this time.

Resident Eric Smithey said, if the Grist Mill project is dead does the chain fence serve a purpose at this point. He thinks it is open. Council Member Guyton said, if the council decides it is fully dead then we will

not carry on with the wish list and some point take it down. Resident Marshall Aiken said, if you take the fence down, pull the front fence back where you can get to it. People are crossing the fence and walking on top of the foundation. He is not sure how they will approach that.

Council Member Guyton said, that will be discussed at a later date.

Council Member Tracy Queen said, they need to get out to the public they are not giving the ball field away. There has been a lot of talk and people have pulled back their contracts. Mr. Stephens stated, they had two coaches that historically practice with them, went to Cartersville because of writings in the local paper covering their meetings. They paid more money for what they thought was an uncertainty. Council Member Guyton said, if no one has an objection, he would love for Mr. Stephens to call Neil and tell him the ballfields in the City of Euharlee have a foreseeable future. Mr. Stephens said, he may try to get him to do a big article on the park.

With no further discussion the meeting was adjourned.