

**CITY OF EUHARLEE
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
APRIL 18, 2017**

Mayor Dennis Thayer called the meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

City Clerk, Carolyn Banks called the roll and the following were present: Mayor Dennis Thayer, Council Members Craig Guyton, Ronald Nesbitt, David Duncan, Joe Turner and City Manager James Stephens. City Attorney Boyd Pettit was not present.

Frankie Harris Park Rental - Jeff Cook, Georgia Natural Rivers

Jeff Cook, Member of Georgia River Network (GRN), distributed a flyer of events to council. GRN is a nonprofit 501c3 organization. Paddle Georgia is the major fundraiser each year. The event is to bring people and attention to our rivers, help educate people about the rivers and raise money to support GRN'S water protection efforts and the river trail program. Euharlee is kind of the beneficiary of the GRN, who works with the Coosa River Base Initiative, and CRBI working with stakeholders all over the Etowah River Valley to put in the kiosk that you have down at the Euharlee Road Bridge. Euharlee is kind of the beneficiary to a lot of the work GRN has done to establish water trails across the state.

Mr. Cook came to ask the city council to allow them to camp at Frankie Harris Park on June 20 - 22, a Tuesday - Thursday with about 300 - 325 people. They would like to use the park as the camp site, tent camping and the pavilion for dining and program area. There will be a tent adjacent to the pavilion. The pavilion will seat about 120 people. They will provide additional shelter for the meals and programs. They would also like to rent the commissary or the old library to have the indoor area for staff and other personnel. They will take water samples and come back and test them. He reviewed the facilities and there is not enough restrooms to accommodate the people, so they will bring in portable toilets, as well as, shower trailers. They will need access to water and electricity for the shower trucks and bathroom trailers. They are happy to pay appropriate rental fees. This event is an educational venture. They have families involved, and the youngest paddler is about 2 years old and the oldest is 85 or 86 years old. There is no alcohol during the trip or at the camp site at any time. These are people that love our rivers. They will also do a cleanup. They pick up trash as they go down the river. This is a good group of people. The lights are out at 10:00 pm. People are tired and have to get up early the next day. Logistically, what they do is camp at the park in the evening and have buses to pick them up in the morning and take them to the launch site. At the end of the day, they are brought back to the camp site. As far as parking, they will have some vehicles, but not a whole lot. Frankie Harris Park will accommodate those that do. Most of the people leave their cars at the end of the trail. We shuttle them at the end, for those who left the vehicles at the camping area. It's a great opportunity to show off Euharlee. They will be spending money, so economically there is a benefit. Also, they are looking for a breakfast caterer or civic group to provide breakfast each morning. They will pay \$8.00 per head. Johnny Mitchell's is catering for lunch and dinner each evening. Mr. Cook said, he is on a compressed timeline. They've had trouble finding space. They usually stay at the schools. He has called almost every middle and high school in Bartow County and none could host. He said, Frankie Harris Park is a beautiful park and he thinks the participants will enjoy staying there. He is aware the council can't vote today, but if they could kind of give him a yay or nay that would help him.

Mayor Dennis Thayer asked if the park was available. City Manager, James Stephens stated there is nothing scheduled.

Council Member Ronald Nesbitt asked, if there was something for the upcoming weekend and Mr. Stephens said no. Council Member Ronald Nesbitt also asked, if this was an annual or one time request. Mr. Cook said, a one-time request. He stated, it is a seven day trip we do at a different river once a year.

This is the second time on the Etowah River. They did it back in 2006. It will probably be 10 years before they are back on the Etowah again.

Mr. Stephens stated, certainly the participants will be fond of the facility and will return. Mr. Cook said, this will be the first time on the Etowah for a lot of the participants. He is a big advocate for the Etowah. It is one of the best and beautiful paddling family rivers.

Council Member Joe Turner asked, if they were starting in Dahlonega. Mr. Cook stated they will start in Dawsonville down Allatoona and to Rome. One of the take outs will be Euharlee Road, Macedonia Road and finish in downtown Rome.

Council Member Craig Guyton asked, how they handle security overnight and during the day. Mr. Cook said, during the day a couple of staff keep watch over the camp site. During the evening, we don't have additional security, but we will have 300 people there. They have never experienced any problems of people coming in. They have had things stolen out of tents when camping in the urban areas, but 12 years no serious incidents. They do carry an insurance policy through the Canoe Association for 1 or 2 million dollar policy, and will add Euharlee as a rider to the policy for additional liability coverage. Council Member Guyton asked about clean up of the portable bathrooms, showers and if it would happen on the 22nd or an additional day. Mr. Cook said, they will do whatever the city wants them to do. They leave the morning of the 23rd. They rent from Johnny on the Spot and can have them to pick up on the 23rd.

Council Member Turner asked, what time will they leave. Mr. Cook said, by 10:30 am - 11:00 am on Friday. They will clean up, take trash and recycle what they can.

Mayor Thayer confirmed that it is GRN event and they are a 501c3 organization and Mr. Cook said yes. Mayor Thayer asked, what the cost would be for 3 days. City Manager James Stephens said \$1500.00 at the regular rate which is \$500.00 per day.

Council Member David Duncan asked the price for the commissary and the old library. Mr. Stephens said, he would recommend use of the commissary, because of the new carpet in the old library.

Council Member Turner asked, if the dates were conflicting with anything. Mr. Stephens said nothing is booked and no conflicts with the dates. Turner said, if we agree to this then we won't book anything. Mr. Stephens said that is correct. Mr. Cook said, they may be interested in renting the commissary and the old library. He will have to further discuss. The staff wanted to have additional space to get away.

Mayor Thayer said, he does not have a problem with this, but he has a little reservation about giving in completely free because we are going to have some cost with cleaning. He would consider maybe a 50% discount so we can cover the city cost.

Council Member Joe Turner said, the biggest expense, and he asked Mr. Stephens if we have a contract with Georgia Power, would be the electricity. Mr. Stephens said, that would be an incremental cost. We do not have an agreement with Georgia Power. Mayor Thayer said, it will be electricity, water and 3 days could be a significant amount and trash clean up. He would not want to give it for 3 solid days for nothing. As long as we cover our expenses, we don't have to make a buck on it. Mr. Cook said, they do not expect anything for free. Council Member Turner said, he agreed with the Mayor, but we will have to cover our expenses and not sure if 50% is necessary or if we could cover it for 25% he would go along with it. Mr. Cook said, they tell the schools they want it to be good for them and whatever it takes that's what we want.

Mr. Stephens said, since he is not asking for anything free, he recommended the consideration of the Frankie Harris Park at the regular rate, the commissary and the library at no charge and then once we

get all cost increments in on the electricity, we might be able to make a refund of some type if it should be reasonable. Mr. Cook said, if it goes the other way, then the city can let them know. Mayor Thayer said he was okay with that.

Mayor Thayer and Council Member Guyton said as far as they are concerned, you can start making plans and we will officially vote on it at the next meeting.

Council Member Duncan asked if they had Mr. Cook's phone number so they can contact him and let you know when they vote on it.

Council Member Joe Turner asked, so we will make a determination after the power bill comes in. Mr. Stephens stated, if the council considers it. Mr. Cook reminded Council Member Turner they used his property back in 2006. Council Member Turner remembered. Mr. Cook said, in 2006 they only had 3 access points and this year they will have 12. Thanks to the cities and counties who got behind the idea and made it accessible. It has been great for this community and we at GRN are proud.

1/2 Facility Rentals - Katie Gobbi

Katie Gobbi, Euharlee Museum Director stated the city is looking for ways to rent the Presbyterian Church more frequently, and one of the ways we can become a little bit more competitive is allowing the option for renters to rent half day preceding their wedding for a reduced rate. You can choose to rent for the one day for the current \$375.00 fee or you can tag on the half day prior to for rehearsal, for set up for an increased fee of \$550.00. We hope it will make us more competitive. Of lot of the venues don't offer this and do not allow you to rehearse or set up ahead of time, and brides are often looking for that.

Mayor Dennis asked if the total price would be \$550.00 for the 2 days and Ms. Gobbi said yes.

City Manager James Stephens said, we do have one wedding book which is what prompted this, to have access to rehearse.

Council Member Craig Guyton said, for set up he would not have a problem with instead of a half day, a 2 day rental for the \$550.00. They will have all day long on Friday unless there is a problem he is not thinking of.

Mayor Thayer said, he doesn't have a problem with it, but if someone wanted to use it during the day, if it ever got to that point and that popular, we can deal with it at that time.

Council Member Ronald Nesbitt asked, what other ways we are advertising. Ms. Gobbi said, currently on our website. Council Member Guyton stated, you have also gone to bridal expos. Ms. Gobbi said, yes we have gone to the bridal expo. Council Member Guyton said, you went last year in January 2016, did you guys go this year. Ms. Gobbi said, we went in 2016 but we did not go this year. There are a lot of ways we have discussed previously and talked about implementing in the near future and market more exclusively. Council Member Nesbitt said we need to do that.

City Manager James Stephens said, we will be seeing her in the near future with some merchandise ideas that will also help generate a revenue stream for the museum and the city of Euharlee. Council Member Nesbitt said, it is needed.

Calendar Plan - Katie Gobbi

Katie Gobbi, Euharlee Museum Director stated this plan is whittled down pretty concisely, but we are still working it out on the dates and wanted to get some feedback from council. Basically this idea is a fundraiser, a photo contest to turn into a calendar. Driving around Euharlee you see incredible sites, scenes, landscapes and people are constantly sending pictures they have taken and they are very proud of our city. She has seen a lot of places where photo contests and people submit their own work, like amateur photographers, residents and visitors and have people vote on it. From that you create a calendar for sale. In this plan, we would have a 2018 calendar. We need to get started with the contest

pretty soon to allow time for submission, voting, preorders and production. For a 12 month, 8x11 calendar, we would allow people to submit high res photos, post them on face book and maybe print them out for people who are not on face book and post at the museum and city hall so individuals can vote for their favorite photos. The first place winner with the most votes, would get the cover and a month of their choice, 2 though 9 would get the months we assign them and 2 with professional judges to choose to winner to round out the 12 months. She has already spoken with Abby Hennington, a Euharlee resident, a professional photographer who will be interested in judging and one who is not 100% committed but interested in helping us. We would get sponsorships on the back of the calendar to cover the cost of production. In this, you can accept preorders. With the design work being done in house, with just the cost of printing, and the pricing she has been able to find, are from \$7.60 per calendar up to \$9.00 per calendar. We can sell them for about \$20.00 and we will make \$11.00 to \$14.00 per calendar. If we sold 250 there is \$5,000.00 raised. She said everybody but employees can enter. It would be great to get local students involved with the parents' permission. They are great photographers just with their smart phones.

Mayor Dennis Thayer said he thinks it is a great idea. Council Member Craig Guyton asked if she was doing the fundraiser for the museum or the city. She said the museum.

Sign at Joe Cowan Park - Joe Turner

Council Member Joe Turner presented council with a map he printed from Google as a sample for a sign he would like at Joe Cowan Park. It will show everything from the Euharlee Baptist Church to the bridge. He would like to do a map similar to the ones at Six Flags that give directions at the park. He said, maybe if we put it on a 3x4 or 4x6 sign showing Lowry Mill built in 1830, Presbyterian Church built in 1853, with historic information on it and put one at the Joe Cowan Park for all the people that come here to play ball and don't know what else is around the city. He spoke with Katie Gobbi, Museum Director and would like to have one made on a poster board size you can hang in the welcome center that all the people can see. We haven't gone any further with the conversation. He said, Ms. Gobbi did offer to help him with the historic information and the design. The bottom line, is this something the city council would be interested in or thinks it is worth putting together. It will take some time. He would like to put in a picture frame type with a cover over it. Ms. Gobbi also offered to get some of the prices to print it. He said again, he wanted to know if they were interested.

Mayor Dennis Thayer said he does not think it is a bad idea, but how will we pay for it. Council Member Turner said we don't know yet and hope to have information on cost by the work session next month.

Council Member Ronald Nesbitt asked, him if he was thinking about doing just one poster board sign. He said, just one poster board to go in the welcome center and hoping to do a 4x6 or a 8x10 to put at the park, that will stand out so people can see it when they go in and know it is a historic district here and not just a ball park. He admitted he may have jumped the gun a little bit, before finding out what council would think about it before we got information together. He said, if they are interested he will try to have something put together for the next work session, but if no one wants to do it, it will be a waste of time. Council Member Nesbitt also asked, if Council Member Turner and Ms. Gobbi were doing a design or a professional designer. He said, if not mistaking, she can do some designs, a production company can clean it up and it will save some cost.

City Manager James Stephens said, we have a large number of out of state and county people that participate at Joe Cowan Park. He thinks this type of idea is exceptional, to the point that we can later talk about SPLOST which is running higher than we budgeted. It may be some money in that stream to pay for this. We can possibly look at a triangle type display whether than just a flat display. We have so many visitors here and if they knew what was available, between their games, we are totally under selling Euharlee.

Council Member Turner said, for the framework he knows someone who can do the framework and will not cost the city anything, just the printing and the glass to cover.

Council Member Craig Guyton said he liked the idea, but would like to keep it uniformed with the historic signage we already have downtown. When you talk about someone seeing it when they walk in. You do not need something 4x6 or 8x10. You need something on the same scale and put in the ground the exact same way so everything is uniformed and goes along with everything we are doing. He would be supportive of that.

Mayor Thayer said, he is definitely not against it, but concerned. We cut the budget to the bare minimum. He is not for, not doing something else we planned on to do this. He is concerned about the budget and it was not a line item in the budget. The idea is good, the concept is excellent, but it is the money issue. We need to see what it will cost and go from there. He definitely believes we should have consistency and uniformity in our signs. It is one thing we do lack right now. It needs to match what we already have. Council Member Nesbitt asked, if they could sketch it out and give them a visual to see what it will look like.

Easter Egg Hunt - David Duncan

Council Member David Duncan said thank you to all the citizens who helped with the Easter egg hunt. They had \$395.00 collected of anonymous donors. They ended up having \$100.00 left over and wants the city to keep a fund for them. They also have 3 boxes of hot dogs left over. The lodge wanted 700. We bought 9 boxes, 3 left over and they were \$14.88 a box. He figured if the city has to use them, they can donate the money back in the fund. They hid over 5937 eggs and had a lot of participation. He said, thank you to everyone for helping in the short period of time. Also, thank you to the police department for supplying the Easter bunny for them. He said, there was not enough events for the children, but thinks it was a perfect event.

Public Comments

Mayor Dennis Thayer said we are no longer taking public comments that are not completely filled out.

Financial Update - James Stephens

City Manager James Stephens provided council with a financial update through March 31, 2017. He said, for the 1st quarter in 2017, the SPLOST annual budget was \$615,000.00 and through March we received \$158,000.00 which would prorate out to a \$15,000.00 - \$20,000.00 favorable variance for the SPLOST fund. For the general fund, he said he emailed statements to council today. On the statements, the annual budgeted through March, we had budgeted a deficit of \$56,865.00. We have experienced a favorable variance, the revenue exceeds the expenditures by \$5,000.00. There are a couple of adjustments that makes that amount. In the revenue section, the LOST revenue shows a year to date figure of \$122,000.00. It does not include the January collection which is accrued in December 2016. We make that accrual each year to equal out to 12 months. We are actually at the equivalent of \$199,000.00 for 3 months of LOST, which will prorate out to a favorable variance of \$50,000.00 for a 12 month period if we continue what we have received for the first three months.

Mayor Dennis Thayer said, LOST and SPLOST is calculated exactly the same on the exact same sales tax. Mr. Stephens said it is, and the current SPLOST intergovernmental agreement takes the county wide projects that are figured in off the top. Mayor Thayer asked if we were getting the same percentage for both programs. Mr. Stephens said, it is real close, but the county deducts our portion for the radio system before we receive the SPLOST monies. Mayor Thayer asked, if we added that back in, would that be very comparable to the LOST and Mr. Stephens said yes it would. Mayor Thayer said, since the state sees it to their benefit to show us what those benefits are, and they don't, they do not equal up like they should. We have had several conversation about that, and if they are off by \$30,000.00 over a 3 month period, that is an issue. Mr. Stephens said, they are close with the exception of the net coming off the top.

Mr. Stephens continued saying, the revenue is higher than what's reflected when you take in account January's LOST is not included which would be \$199,000.00 compared to \$122,000.00. In addition to that, you see in the middle of the section, we did receive the LMIG grant in the amount of \$45,900.00 and it is restricted monies. Camp Fire Trail should be paved within 3 weeks from today. But when you add the January SPLOST and take out the \$45,000.00, it actually puts us at a favorable variance of \$42,000.00. We collected \$42,000.00 more that we spent for 3 months. We will not continue at that pace, but we are off to a great start. He complimented all the department heads and staff for operating in an efficient frugal manner. If there is something we need for citizen services and staff safety we are purchasing it. We are not sitting on our hands not spending any money. If it something that doesn't impact services or safety, if we can wait we are being deliberate. So far the revenue stream has been positive. We have placed the 7th and 8th officer on payroll. The favorable variance will decrease some, but we are trying to run a tight ship and be good stewards of the people's money.

Council Member Craig Guyton said, the current 2017 LOST is above what we projected by 8%. Mr. Stephens said the annual budget is \$750,000.00 and based on the first 3 months the rate would come in right at \$800,000.00. We are looking at a favorable of \$50,000.00 and that may improve.

With no further discussion the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.