

**CITY OF EUHARLEE
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 20, 2022**

Mayor Craig Guyton called the meeting to order. Council Member Tim Abbott led prayer, followed with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The following were present: Mayor Craig Guyton, Council Members Tim Abbott, Greg Free, David Duncan, Joe Turner, and City Manager James Stephens.

NEW BUSINESS

Building Inspections Fee Increase – Katie Gobbi

Community Development Director, Katie Gobbi presented a spreadsheet prepared by the Assistant City Clerk, Ashley Bailey with proposed fees for permits. She stated it was presented a couple of months ago but there has been a cost increase in permits and the change will cover the cost for the subcontractor.

City Manager, James Stephens stated it is predominantly because of the increase in the inspectors' fee which had not been changed since Mr. Stephens's employment at Euharlee. This is not an increase related to the square footage and anything they recently increased; it is strictly to cover the cost the subcontractor and adding the \$25 fee for administrative.

Council Member David Duncan asked why the rates were split and if two payments were made. Council Member Joe Turner asked for an explanation about the fees in each column. Ms. Gobbi explained there is a flat rate fee for any permit, and then an add-on fee for the specific work being performed. She also added one payment is made and not separate payments. Mr. Stephens added it was recorded separately for the uniform codes of local government and is consistent in other governments. He stated that eventually an annual report of these records makes it to the state legislature. Mayor Craig Guyton explained one column was current rates and the other column was proposed increased rates. Ms. Gobbi shared again the \$25 was the administrative flat rate fee for every permit, and the add-on fee for the specific work that is being done. She said it was to cover the cost from the building inspector's increase and it has been 14 years since he received a rate increase.

Mayor Guyton asked if there were any more questions and said to add the item to the next meeting to take a vote.

Christmas Parade – Katie Gobbi

Community Development Director, Katie Gobbi came before council to share requested changes for the annual long-standing Euharlee Christmas Parade. She stated the parade had been held on Saturday after Thanksgiving and suggested to move to Monday after Thanksgiving in hopes to increase participation from the local schools. She also asked about prize money for various categories for the potential entrants. There will be two categories this year for floats, which is a new thing. They will still welcome golf carts and tractors. They do not want to change just to enhance. The city will include a commercial and non-commercial category. There will be no entry fee this year but will leave options open for donations for a charity and will decide which charity in the future. She requested approval for \$1000 for prize money. It will be \$500 for each category with first prize being \$250, second prize \$150, and third prize \$100. If approved she will reach out to local businesses to partner, sponsor to match the prize amount, increase the prize money, and provide an opportunity to showcase the local business and organizations as well. The route will still end at the Covered Bridge, but they are still working to determine exactly what the route will be. She had reached out to various places to secure a staging area.

Council Member David Duncan asked if the Festival of Trees would still open on Saturday or will they wait until Monday. Ms. Gobbi stated to the best of her knowledge she did not think their plans had changed. Ms. Bibbings is aware of the date of the parade and did not indicate at that time they would change their start date.

Mayor Craig Guyton said he had a meeting with her and discussed that item and how the city could help enhance. First, it would be something for the face of Euharlee, our city, and to enhance the number of people that may attend the Festival of Trees. At that time, she did not indicate she would change the opening date. She would not wait to open on Monday because the city was changing the day of the parade.

Council Member Tim Abbott wanted to know again, why Monday; the kids are back to school on Monday. Mayor Guyton stated it was an idea that he had when came on board. He stated the Saturday after Thanksgiving has been historically what they have done. He mentioned that resident Marshall Aiken led it for several years. He missed the event a lot because they traveled on Thanksgiving, as well as others. Also, taken into consideration, was when the cities around them would have their parades. He suggested Monday, and if that does not work, they can adjust it in a year or two. He suggested to Ms. Bibbings that if they continued opening the festival on Saturday, they would have a big draw Saturday and Monday. Monday is normally not a big draw, and it will be another huge night for them. The major things were getting people, and the school kids involved, like the band at the middle school. They could never participate in the past because they are out of school and traveling. They hope to have a marching band for the parade.

Council Member Abbott said, these types of events are opportunities for the city, and are ideas for greatness. The events like The Festival of Trees, Christmas Parade, and anything else they can think of that does not break the bank. He is the worst party planner but the best one to show-up. It is more than a parade; it is an event for the citizens, friends, and families; it is a time for their community to come together and he will support that. The more kids and families they can get involved to show their special talents bring full joy.

Council Member Greg Free asked when the Christmas lights on the bridge would be turned on. Mr. Stephens stated if there were no special request from Ms. Bibbings, he would anticipate turning them on the night of the parade. Mayor Guyton asked if there were any more questions. They would entertain the request at the city council meeting on October 4, 2022.

Osborne Park - James Stephens & Alan Bell

City Manager, James Stephens stated the council had documentation in front of them the Bell & Associates team had been working on. It continues to be a work in progress. He appreciated them being there to get feedback and for the information to flow in both directions. Alan and Zac Bell prepared an 8-page informal PowerPoint to discuss the Osborne Park Project. Zac Bell walked the council through the site plan. He shared the following information from the PowerPoint drawings of the site plan.

- The entrance to the park off Covered Bridge Road. The plan is to keep the existing gravel parking lot within the 75-foot buffer.
- Along the river with the existing gravel parking and the Euharlee Creek, they proposed an additional river walk path to allow for fishing and scrolling along the river.
- Off the existing gravel parking, they widened the service road and created new parking off the existing service road.
- Off the parking area, it will be staged for a couple of food truck spots which will open to the park and the amphitheater.
- The amphitheater location will be just off the corner of the existing tennis courts, using the existing topography off the side to create the tier seating for the amphitheater.
- Through the parking lot to the existing gravel parking lot, on the north side of the site to connect them back to Covered Bridge Road, will be used for overflow parking.

- On the north side of the site there is an existing restroom building, which they plan to demolish and re-build at the same location to continue to utilize the existing sanitary utilities.
- Below the existing gravel lot, a proposed new playground area located next to the existing pavilion and adjacent to the parking with visible site and centrally located for the kids.
- He identified the existing flood plain line; they had to move the amphitheater up due to the contour of the land and will have to remove one of the oak trees which is about thirty feet from the root bed, which would die anyway. You must stay away from the root bed 30 to 40 feet. It will die eventually, if not immediately.
- All the other existing trees will remain. They had to lose a tree to get the amphitheater out of the flood plain. He raised the structure to get it away from the creek and out of the flood plain. The council asked questions about losing the tree. Mr. Bell explained they will lose one tree and can replace trees in the future. The question was asked about playground equipment and Mr. Bell shared they have the space for the playground area but had not designed it. The question was asked if the monument was shown on the drawing. Mr. Bell said it was not, but he would add it to the drawing. He stated they were not disturbing that area.
- Another overall view of the design sharing the location of the main stage, walking path back to the existing gravel lot and tier seating with artificial turf for a maintenance standpoint.
- Based on the square footage of the artificial turf it will seat about 245 people and enough standing room on the artificial turf.
- The way the amphitheater was designed pushing back on the hill the contour design; the people will be able to fully experience everything the people standing on the turf would experience.
- The front elevation of the stage design will utilize a wood truss system to compliment the Covered Bridge with the truss system structure.
- He shared pictures of the concrete slab stage with a pit that is thirty inches below and concrete tiers with wood structure. He reiterated the wood columns were above the flood plains. The concrete tiers and buffers are below the flood plain and believed it would be safe. He also asked if that area floods when they receive heavy rain. Council Member Turner said he had never known it to flood in that area. Mr. Bell was glad to hear the parking lot had never flooded.
- He viewed the floor plan of the proposed toilet house with a covered rest area out front, and men and women toilet room. A drinking fountain is included, a service chase that serves for maintenance of the plumbing system, as well as standard custodial products. The main thing is cleanliness. He described the height of the elevation and stated they are close to the sewer. You would not want to do anything like that on a septic tank. They will use the existing sanitary sewer line.

Council Member Abbott asked about the gravel parking lots being paved and the cost to do so. Mr. Bell stated the gravel is due to the sensitivity of the Euharlee Creek. You could open problems with the EPD with paving too close to the river. Mr. Stephens stated there are thirty-eight spots being paved and they could go around the parameter. Mr. Bell said they did not want to pave it all. They have the gravel parking, the thirty-eight paved spots, and the parking across the street next to the little pavilion which is a good bit of parking. Council Member Abbott said it is not just for parking, but a drop off space, and there is a lot of activity. He was thinking about creating space for vehicle traffic, turning around and a low-cost kayak launch.

Mr. Stephens asked if it was possible to add an additional bathroom half the size near the parking. Zac stated it was all uphill and if you wanted to add an additional toilet house, they could utilize the existing sanitary sewer and tie into it as well. They briefly continued discussion for an additional bathroom. Council Member Tim Abbott added ideas of single-use restrooms for security purposes and vandalism. Mr. Bell thanked the council for sharing their ideas.

Chief Matthews mentioned having ample lighting for security purposes. Mr. Bell stated they were going to light the parking lot up where the food trucks are located, playground lighting and even lighting near the creek where the benches and trash receptacles on that path.

Council Member Duncan asked about the two existing ball fields being demolished and what are the plans for that area. Mayor Guyton said one thing they talked about that was not on the drawing was a dog park. Mr. Bell stated he thought that was for a dog park, and they did not have a design for a dog park. He stated they did a budget based on what they thought the city could do with a budget of 1.1 million dollars from the beginning. He was not sure how elaborate they wanted to do the dog park and he had not prepared the numbers for it. It could be between fifty and a quarter of a million dollars. Mr. Stephens said he could email him a sketch Council Member Turner prepared. He asked if there was a walking trail around the two existing fields and Mr. Bell answered yes. Mr. Stephens asked if it was possible to include exercise equipment along that area to enhance it a little bit.

Council Member Turner asked about paving the small ball field. Mr. Bell said they would be looking at some money when you talk about paving, but you also risk getting in trouble with EPD because it is right by the creek. He did not say it was a no, but if you keep paving you will end up with a retention pond and you will not be happy with fencing and trying to keep people safe. He cannot say how much paving you can add but he knows it minimum. Council Member Abbott thanked him for the warning.

Council Member Greg Free asked about the overgrowth to be cleaned out for the trail to be added, what will go there or will it just be knocked down for less maintenance. Mr. Bell said they have a landscape architecture but has not gotten him too involved. There will be more details. Council Member Free said it will be cleaned up verses what is there now. Mr. Bell stated there will be some low-end landscaping.

Resident, Marshall Aiken mentioned the flood plain and the concern of the water coming off the church valley. He had pictures when there was heavy rain in 2010 that he would share with the contractors. Council Member Free stated the church should be included in that conversation.

Mr. Stephens said that he knew they were early in, but with the 1.2 million do they feel like it is feasible for the 1.2 million. Mr. Bell stated prices are going up, but they have been in touch with Mr. Benefield who has done this work before and is looking at the plan to help them with the budget.

Council Member Turner asked if they had checked the boundaries around the lodge. Mr. Stephens added they had completed thorough surveys. Zac stated they have surveys of all the property values, a thorough survey and a thorough topography survey.

Council Member Turner said he would like to start at the tennis court and work around it to have every piece of green grass for the kids to play on. Mr. Bell said if everybody agrees to slide the amphitheater back down over by the tennis courts and move more into the flood plain. Mr. Stephens stated they were not at a consensus to slide it back. Council Member Free stated they would not be losing the playground, just moving it up.

Mayor Guyton asked if anyone else had any questions. Mr. Bell said in the next two weeks get your questions to Mr. Stephens to send to them. Mr. Stephens said to send him the questions, they will have pricing coming and the discussion was a good first step.

Mayor Guyton thanked them for being there and going over the plan with them. He said again to the council to send questions to Mr. Stephens.

Streets and Parks - Joe Turner

Council Member Joe Turner provided council with pictures of six streets in Euharlee. He apologized; some pictures did not print out as he expected. He said he did not get his information prepared to talk about the parks. The city is responsible for maintaining the center line. He considered it a public safety issue and how do they go about getting them re-stripped. He mentioned a different kind of paint and wanted to discuss how they will move forward.

Mayor Craig Guyton asked if anybody on the council disagreed with Council Member Turner that the streets need to be re-lined, and they said no. Mayor Guyton asked Mr. Stephens to get three different quotes. One for all the streets with regular paint, one for all the streets with electrostatic paint, and the third one for all the streets with electrostatic paint, except Covered Bridge Road with regular paint. The purpose for that is Covered Bridge Road will need to be re-paved completely after the park is done because the equipment will tear it up. Mr. Stephens said he would not have them by October 4th meeting but would have them for the October 18th work session. Mayor Guyton asked if anybody needed any additional information other than the three quotes.

Council Member Tim Abbott said he would like to ask as they get the three quotes could they also check the condition of the roads not just the stripes and just include that. He thinks it would be wise to check the condition and market by priority. Council Member Turner said there are two or three that needs to be re-paved. Mayor Guyton said that was his point. He does not want to re-stripe it if it needs to re-pave first. Mayor Guyton asked if anybody had anything else to add to it.

Solid Waste Service - James Stephens

City Manager, James Stephens stated as they are discussing the condition of the roads, Euharlee currently permits each property owner to a solid waste company or takes it themselves. There are at least five different companies that drive heavy garbage collection trucks that are extremely heavy and a lot of wear and tear on the streets.

The council received a one-page document that proposed a monthly amount multiplied by twelve, an amount they could operate solid waste collection in-house as a city government.

The start-up cost is recommended to be funded out of SPLOST. There is also GEFA funding and loans that are available should the city council decide to pursue. In addition to SPLOST, there are other financing opportunities through the state agencies. For two trucks and tippers, the cost would be approximately, \$475,000. That is totally equipped.

Direct labor for a month would be \$6,200. The tipping fees are calculated based on mental protection agencies calculation and how much solid waste an average human generates in a day, including number of days and the city's population which is close to 4450. The tipping fee in Bartow County is close to \$44.65. Based on EPA's figures the tipping fees will run \$15,400 per month.

He included automotive expenses plus the depreciation on new equipment at \$5,000 per month; the staff and software \$1,200 per month for now, but not the consistency once the software is in place. The total expenses would be close to \$28,000 or less and would be a profit of \$8,000 monthly and \$96,000 annually. The payback would be about 6-years if the city chose to try and provide the service in-house.

He was looking for direction from the council if he should put RFPs together and get a price from an outside company verses them doing it in-house, or if they want to deliberate on the two and give him marching orders. The wear and tear on the roads alone, and five different companies bringing trucks multiple days, the savings on the condition of the roads, even with one company, would improve the quality of life in the city by even providing the service or having it contracted with one entity verses the way they are doing it now. It could also be a revenue stream that would help roll millage rate back in the future. He said it was preliminary, but he had been working on it for quite a while. It does not look like a lot on the one page, but it is not just pulled out of the air. It is detailed information. In 2018, they now

have two members that were not on the council, they had an opportunity to contract with one company that would have lessened each residents' cost by \$3.00 and provide a small stream of revenue but was not too well received by the community. The wear and tear alone are strong reasons to decide.

Council Member Greg Free asked out of all the municipalities in Bartow County, how many operate their own solid waste. Mr. Stephens said Cartersville and Emerson. Adairsville has it contracted with a large company, but not sure what Kingston and White are doing.

Council Member David Duncan stated that Kingston was city owned. Mr. Stephens stated that he used Emerson's information for the staff calculation. They have a third of the houses that is in Euharlee, but they only pick up one day. He thought one crew working 5 days can manage 1400 houses.

Mayor Craig Guyton asked if the two trucks with the tippers that are estimated, are they new trucks. Mr. Stephens said he was pricing new equipment and there would be other options down the road. He has spoken with a municipal equipment company. If they decided to move on this, the equipment could be here by late March or early April of next year.

Council Member Duncan said if they do this you may need a fee for two cans: some people like two cans. Mr. Stephens said they could structure it for residents to have options. Mayor Guyton stated you would also have a replacement cost.

Council Member Joe Turner gave Mr. Stephens credit for mentioning when it was tried before, not even 25-30% of the people were in favor of it and did not want it. Mr. Stephens said to clarify the memory and no offense to Mr. James Swift, the newspaper inadvertently made a printing error when they printed about the services. They published the price that was three times higher than what they were talking about, and he thinks that was a factor in the outcry.

Mayor Guyton said one of the things that happened, and he is not sure where Council Member Turner got his numbers, but they had twenty-five people at the meeting that day and none were in favor of it. He wants to make sure they understand they have almost five thousand citizens and that is not 25%.

Council Member Joe Turner reiterated it was twenty-five people who showed up.

Council Member Greg Free stated that one of the companies that operates in the city now, they received an increase, and he would be willing to believe most residents pay close to what they pay. The number the city is proposing is about one-third of that amount. Who would not be happy saving money.

Mr. Stephens clarified it would be about \$75 quarterly, and not an increase. Council Member Free said he would prefer the benefit to come to the city as a taxpayer. Mayor Guyton stated if they could do something as a service to benefit the city, he would rather do that than nothing. Mr. Stephens stated that citizen Werner said people like free enterprise, and he agrees fully, but most are paying for this service somewhere and, very few are taking their own garbage.

Resident Fred Werner asked for the cost of cans and stated each can is running from \$65 to \$75 per can and companies are shrinking the cans. He also added that the un-incorporated area of Cobb County was hammered as they tried to do this week ago. Mr. Stephens stated a 95-gallon can proposing \$25 per month based on the current analysis. Council Member Free said he does business in Cobb County and a lot of the municipalities operate their own service.

Council Member Tim Abbott said this is something they should explore and put it out there. Mr. Stephens agreed that there are at least four trash companies 5 days a week on the roads, for that reason, it is the right thing to explore. He would like to see what a start-up contract might be, start with a contractor and then go to ownership, just to explore it. He would love to see yard waste service and that is an extra service. Mr. Stephens said to Council Member Abbott he did not ignore the previous conversation they had, he wanted to see if the project would float or sink.

Mayor Guyton said they have received a lot of information. He would like to digest this and come back to Mr. Stephens. They will discuss it again at the October 18th work session and be prepared to give him marching orders. Council Member Duncan asked if it would be mandatory. Mayor Guyton stated if the city of Euharlee does this, it will be mandatory. Council Member Abbott explained it will be the only trash option or they can take it themselves. Mayor Guyton stated they can but will still be paying \$25 per month. Mr. Stephens said he agreed with Council Member Turner that transparency is a vital part of local government. It was a published agenda, and they will certainly put it on the website and Facebook. Mayor Guyton said to the newspaper and radio, with both present, they were welcome to advertise the information, and on October 18th they will be discussing a mandatory solid waste pick-up.

Public Comments

Resident Fred Werner stated if they are concerned about the infrastructure, the roadway, what size are the trucks. He has had an 18-wheeler going down the street in his neighborhood and they should not be in their neighborhood. Mayor Guyton said a standard size garbage truck, the same as Trash Taxi and Georgia Waste Management. Mr. Werner said they both have large trucks and BFI runs about the same size. If they are going to look at the infrastructure, they need to monitor the 18-wheelers traveling through the neighborhoods. They need to look at everything that involves infrastructure. He has no problem with the trash, but the council needs to look at everything.

Resident Steve Gray stated he was addressing a conversation that took place last week, with all this stuff going on who is going to help take care of it. He proceeded to say years ago he worked for the State of Georgia and allowed other state agencies to assist them in manpower and is referring to the Department of Corrections in Paulding County. They were certified to where they can go out in public and work. If the city wanted to participate and use the public work services, what would be the requirements for the city of Euharlee? The city would have to purchase an operational 12-passenger van with a strobe light, working air conditioner and heater. If the city decided to do this, the people would come on Monday -Thursday from 8:30 to 3:30 with exemptions of inclement or adverse weather. The hired guard would have the normal vacation days and other benefits. The van does not have to be a new one and the cost to the city would cost the city \$49,000 a year effective July 1- June 30. As of right now, he has a lady collaborating with him, and will send him a contract, if it is approved. How much would it cost to hire an employee? You can get 10 to 12 people.

Mayor Craig Guyton asked him what department he had been speaking with. Mr. Gray said the Department of Corrections Probation and Detention Center in Paulding County. Mayor Guyton stated Bartow County uses this program. He takes boxes from his business to the recycle bin across from the dump 4 days a week. For years they have used Bartow County inmates from the jail. About a year ago, they fired the Bartow County Jail, and started using State Prisoners from Floyd County. The prisoners worked harder and the people at the recycle center were thrilled. He asked if there is a cost and effort difference of what you would get from someone that will get out in six days and someone that will get out in six years.

Chief Jody Matthews stated that he does not know if Bartow County would offer this. The state sends out depending on the number of inmates they have that are considered trustees. Whether he is talking with the Probation and Detention Center, they are long term inmates. The ones from the center are typically probationers and are there from 90 to 120 days, not long term. He said he worked a prison detail before, and they work.

Mayor Guyton asked how long the contract is. Mr. Gray said for a year for \$49,000. The van belongs to the city. They would use the city van to pick them up and transport them back. Mayor Guyton said we would pay for the gas and insurance. Chief Matthews said yes and would have to include a cage in the

van. Mr. Gray said they did not mention it. Mr. Stephens stated they do not have any available at this time until next July. Mr. Gray said they do not have any available at this time. He said he worked with these people for ten plus years, fought fires with them all night long and never had a problem with them. The guards are outstanding. He asked if they had any questions.

Council Member Tim Abbott thanked him for the innovative thinking. Council Member Greg Free said and for thinking outside of the box. Mayor Guyton said he would like to get the cost for operations for this project, for a van, and prices on insurance that he would bet is an increase cost for liability coverage. Also, have a conversation with public works about when these services would be needed. Mr. Gray said he spoke with Melanie Harper and Mr. Hyde. Cedartown and Bremen no longer have these facilities. He explained the responsibility of the guard.

Mayor Guyton said he wanted to get all the facts and asked if they had any other questions.

With no further discussion the meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm.