

**CITY OF EUHARLEE
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
MARCH 21, 2023**

Mayor Craig Guyton called the meeting to order. Council Member Greg Free 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 were present.

Council Recognition – Mayor Craig Guyton

Mayor Craig Guyton read the Certificate of Recognition presented to Council Member David Duncan from the University of Georgia, Carl Vinson Institute and the Georgia Municipal Association for Council for his completion of the requirements through the Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Institute. Council Member David Duncan stated that he worked very hard for the certificate. Each year he has participated, he has taken the classes offered because he wanted to work towards a goal, and not just to go to have fun. He said thank you to the citizens, and the city for allowing the council members to attend the training.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND NEW BUSINESS

Campsite Pricing – James Stephens

James Stephens, City Manager provided council with a document with RV rate comparisons per night. He shared the rates from KOA in North Georgia Full Hook up at \$55, Red Top Mountain – Dump station at \$40, Hard labor- Dump station at \$62, and Sweetwater Creek -Dump Station at \$65 per night. Based on the numbers presented, and the price for a full hook-up he recommended a nightly rate at \$55. Also, recommended a discount for local campers from Euharlee, unless the council would like to extend it in the county, at a rate of \$45.

Council Member Joe Turner said the campsite will be new and suggested a \$45 rate per night for about a year, and then increase the rate to \$55. Mr. Stephens stated the city will be a full hook-up site, and \$55 is a low entry rate into the market. Red Top Mountain is less than the \$55, but not a full hook-up site. They are already full, and have the city on their list of referrals. The \$55 is a low, competitive price.

Council Member Greg Free stated the city will attract people because the other campgrounds are booked out until the end of the summer. The facility in Emerson will not be completed before the city of Euharlee, so the city will beat that crowd. If you are looking at price for full hook-up the city is cheaper than most. In the North Georgia Mountains, you are paying \$90 to \$100 per night for full hook-up.

Mayor Guyton stated the city has Wi-Fi. Council Member Greg Free said the KOA has Wi-Fi. He asked if the county give discounts for the facilities they own, and should the council extend it to all of Bartow County. Mr. Stephens said he was not sure, but does not think so. Council Member Tim Abbott said he would like to keep it with the citizens of Euharlee, veterans, and first responders. Council Member David Duncan and Council Member Turner both agreed with Council Member Abbott. Council Member Free stated when it was discussed a year ago; they were higher than \$55 for full hook-up. They discussed trying to get it off the ground, and attract people by listing it as an overflow facility on other sites. The state has shut down a couple of facilities due to not enough hosts for the campground. Mayor Guyton stated next year it can be revisited, and possibly up the rate. Council Member Free said there should be a discussion after the first year of operation.

Overflow Parking – James Stephens

James Stephens, City Manager stated he had been working with Mark Teal since there is a significant amount of paving for the project. The second priority from the retreat a year ago was downtown parking. He received a price from SH Creel who is doing the work at Frankie Harris Park. SH Creel did not have the lowest bid on paving so he continues to negotiate through Mark Teal to try to get the quote down.

Currently, the price comes out to \$58,000 for the area behind the kayak business, but he hopes to have a firm price by the April meeting. He strongly supports it while doing the Frankie Harris Park project, and also considering to include the graveled area at the Commissary, the graveled area at the bathrooms in Frankie Harris Park, and the area by the pavilion.

Old Library /Commissary Flooring Prices – James Stephens

James Stephens, City Manager provided the council with a document that included the prices for the flooring at the Old Library and the Commissary. The commissary is in desperate need, and the old library flooring was replaced seven years ago with a low-grade carpet, and it would be a tremendous improvement to the building. The cost for the flooring at the Old Library is \$7,203.38 and the Commissary is \$5,307.80. The estimated cost for paint is listed, and does include labor. He thinks the city can handle the painting in-house. The prices will be presented at the April meeting for final approval. Council Member Greg Free stated it falls in line with some of the discussion held before, taking assessment on the facilities that are heavily rented by the public, and bringing them up to value for the cost of the rental. Mr. Stephens said the prices are quoted for high quality vinyl, 20 mil or 50 mil, thick vinyl planks. It will make both facilities look really nice. Mayor Guyton said the prices together come to \$12,574.18, not including the paint.

1st Reading Minimum Lot Size – Mayor Craig Guyton

Mayor Craig Guyton stated the Planning and Zoning Commission was requested to take a look at the R1 that has sewer hook-up available. Currently, the city's minimum lot size is 26,000 square ft. on septic and 15,000 square ft. if you have sewer hook-up available. After the review, the commission recommended 14,000 square ft. a couple of months ago, and came up with the same number at the last meeting. The council was given a document that included other local governments in Bartow County. The lowest for Cartersville, Bartow County, and Adairsville is 7,000 and Emerson is 7,500 square ft. Mayor Guyton stated he was not interested in going that low, but interested in the council changing to what the market is currently selling.

Council Member Greg Free asked if it was R1 land use with sewer only. Mayor Guyton stated that was correct. Mayor Guyton suggested if sewer is not available, the 26,000 square ft. will need space for the septic and field line. In his opinion 10,000 square ft. is a good medium density. Cartersville actually has three different levels with a 10,000 medium, and feels that would be good for the city of Euharlee. Council Member David Duncan suggested changing by 1,000 square ft. and Council Member Joe Turner said he would leave it as it is. Council Member Greg Free said what if it was zoned differently than a PUD, that housing the way it is laid out would be high density, and Mayor Guyton said that was correct. Council Member Free agreed with Mayor Guyton, they have to find a way to come to some type of change in comparison to the county, and other cities; they do not have to follow everything they do, but cannot stay where they are from 30 years ago. If the mindset is they will stop growth, they have already missed that. The city has an opportunity to prepare for the future, and have some control. He is not interested in the 7,000, and 1,000 square ft. reduction.

Mayor Guyton said there are other options, but the only one he is interested in looking at is the R1. Based on the conversations he had with several developers, Mayors, and the County Commissioner, he would be interested in changing the R1 from 15,000 to 10,000, and the width of the building line to 55 and leaving all the side and rear requirements the same. Council Member Free stated the non-sewer lots would not change; it would still be 26,000 ft. If you look at where the current sewer runs, it is not a whole lot of land surrounding it.

Mr. Stephens stated there are at least two tracts, in addition to Cherry Glen that could have immediate access. There is some property on Milam Bridge Road, and another tract on the northeast quadrant where Mr. Gray considered a senior development, off Hardin Bridge Road. He is not sure of the total number of acres. Mayor Guyton said some of that land would require some extension, meaning the sewer is currently running to it. Council Member Turner stated Shaw Woods is the best-looking subdivision in the city, why does the council want to downsize other areas that could build nicer houses with land, is it to try and get

more people in the city? Mayor Guyton said not at all. Cherry Glen, the council approved, are not smaller houses, they are on smaller lots, which is what the market is asking for.

Mayor Guyton allowed a couple of citizens to share comments at that time.

Pete Pilero said he did not understand why the council was trying to shrink the lot sizes to bring more people in, and he asked why. He stated most people move there because it is not crowded and on top of each other. He does not want to see all that growth in Euharlee. He is attending meetings to try to stop the growth that the council is trying to force on them. Council Member Turner said it was stated better than the way he said it.

Ron Hartman added there could be possibly four houses on one acre. The average size in the city is approximately ½ acre; on his lot he could have three other houses. You talk about high density what is the purpose of lowering the space, it has to be financially based. You are bringing in more people, increase taxes to keep the general fund safe, and not rely on other sources of revenue. He does not want to be like the rest of Bartow County. He suggested annexation. Council Member Free stated that would just inherit their zoning, so you have to address it now. He asked if the expectation is that Euharlee will never grow. Mr. Hartman stated no, but he wants growth that drives city revenue, and does not come from residential development. Mr. Free asked, where would it come from. Mr. Hartman said it comes from new businesses that suit the culture, and nature of the city. Council Member Free said people visits businesses, and without people it will not work. Mr. Hartman said to give the people a reason to drive to Euharlee. Council Member Free agreed.

Council Member Tim Abbott said they have options for industrial, manufacturing, commercial, but the options they do not have is at McCormick Road, which is not part of the city with no options. The council need to make some decisions, or do nothing, and not wait to see what developers do around them and then the city is under pressure. It is a good conversation, the perfect answer does not exist, but finding the median does. Mr. Hartman said that sounded like a big platitude; they are not going to industrial or commercial.

Council Member Free stated you cannot say they are not. There is a ton of open land on each side of the city, and here is what will happen if nothing changes; Bartow County can plot whatever they want on the land, the city gets the impact, and no benefits. The city will get all the police response, all the people on the roads, all of the infrastructure, and no tax revenue to offset it. Then what does the city do? The people in the city will pay more taxes, because there are not enough people to spread it out, and he does not want that to happen. He would prefer to find a middle ground. Like the Mayor stated, he does not want 7,000 square ft., and he doesn't want regulations that were approved 15 years ago and not relevant to what they have to look at now. As Mr. Hartman mentioned, there is not a lot of land in Euharlee so it should not be an impact. You cannot have it both ways. There is not a lot land to build on, but don't want to change. The city must start a plan because all the land around them belongs to Bartow County. The battery plant is six miles from the city limits; drive out Hardin Bridge Road and see all the land they are knocking trees down for houses. It is going to impact the city surrounded by growth, and discussions are needed to control it, and find the middle ground. Mr. Hartman asked for the solution. The impact is coming from outside the city, is the solution to build more residential property. Council Member Free stated the solution is to have a discussion about what they can change that can help strategically either slow or harness the growth. He said drive out McCormick Road and on the other end of Euharlee Road; when developers start to show up and write million-dollar checks to owners of the land, it will go away. It is not in our city limits, cannot control it, but the city will get all of the impact from it. If it is not believable, go ask the people that live off the Cass-White exit, and all over the county. The council cannot sit and do nothing or leave it the way it is. The council must have the conversations. He agreed with Mayor Guyton, there has to be a happy medium, and this is the long-term discussion to get to that point.

Mr. Hartman shared that the council just provided input to the latest 5-year Bartow County comprehensive plan. In the plan, it stated that nothing would be done with the 17-acres that sits on the river and the creek until 2027. There is an opportunity to draw some income, but you will wait until 2027. There is an opportunity to bring in a business, followed by other businesses, if there is an effort to bring in small business. The discussion is all about residential development. As the 3rd largest city in the county, the city should have some political impact.

Mr. Pilero would like to have a sit-down meeting about the discussion.

1st Reading Overnight Parking Ordinance

Council Member Tim Abbott stated it was not just about the overnight parking, but also during the day where cars are parked, and provide some restricted access for citizens, and emergency vehicles. In the first reading, the intent is to address street parking can be a danger, a hindrance, and an inconvenience to neighbors. Council Member David Duncan asked if they could change it from overnight parking to any time. Council Member Abbott stated that is what he addressed. It was labeled overnight, but after speaking with Chief Matthews, it was more than overnight.

Mayor Craig Guyton shared the ordinance that was before them was for all the time not just overnight. Council Member Greg Free asked Chief Matthews if it would reference when there is no space in the driveway. Council Member Abbott said if there is space in the driveway they should park there, but cannot park on the street that would cause a hindrance or inconvenience.

Mayor Guyton asked if the ordinance was reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission. City Manager James Stephens answered yes, and it is their wording from their previous meeting. Council Member Abbott asked if it needed to be worded, that it prohibits overnight parking on the street for a length of time. He was aware people park on the street as their permanent parking space. He wants to help, and not tie the hands of the police department.

Chief Jody Matthews stated if it is overnight parking it does not address parking during the day, they can enforce. It could be, at the decision of the officer, if someone has family in town and there are no spaces in the driveway, they could park there overnight if they are not obstructing traffic and emergency vehicles. Council Member Abbott stated, if it does not meet the criteria of restricting access, then overnight street parking for any duration of time is acceptable the way it is written. Chief Matthews answered yes. The biggest thing on the ordinance is it does not restrict traffic. If it is a large vehicle that obstructs traffic, even with the state law they can enforce that. It doesn't actually restrict them from having visitors overnight, as long as the driveway is full, and there is no other space available for parking. There may be very few circumstances for that to happen. Council Member Joe Turner stated a fire truck cannot go through two parked vehicles. Chief Matthews stated it is hard for buses during the day.

Mayor Guyton stated if he heard correctly, it does not give the officers any extra than what the state law already allows, and Chief Matthews said correct. Mayor Guyton said he wish not one to add an extra ordinance. Chief Matthews stated state law does not prohibit street parking, it prohibits street parking if it prohibits traffic, and it can stop people from parking in the street. The ordinance will prohibit people from parking in the street, if included, there is no available space in the driveway. Resident Rene Duncan also asked if that would include the parking at the boat ramp and Chief Matthews said yes.

Public Comments

Mayor Craig Guyton stated the regular city council meeting will be held on April 11, 2023 and the regular work session will be held on April 18, 2023.

Fred Werner, resident of Euharlee stated that he came across a social media account where negative, derogatory statements, and rumors were made about the Euharlee Police Department. He responded to the comments along with Council Member Greg Free and Mr. Hartman. He stated he did some research on other city websites to come up with a way to get more information out. Mr. Werner spoke with Chief Matthews; the website needs to be upgraded for special police notice and quarterly stats. He suggested sharing more information on the website, social media does not do everything. The rumors over the years

had died down, and they are disturbing. One stop euharlee.com for information. Some areas on the website can be updated for transparency, integrity, and streamline contact information. Mr. Werner suggested to include more information on the planning and zoning section of the website. Information is golden and will help keep the citizens informed. Mr. Werner also asked for a better audio and video system in the council chambers. It is hard to hear, and it is hard to see the presentations on the wall. The big screen was used in the past. They could follow the council better during the discussions because the citizens do not have the documents the council receives. The two requests were to update the website and the audio/video system in the council chambers.

Steve Gray resident of, and a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission shared the information he learned about the amphitheater for Osborne Park. He had a zoom meeting with the architect and found out the amphitheater was moved further up the hill. It was also discussed, not being able to place field dirt in a flood zone; it can only be moved around. He asked about moving the amphitheater to the ball field adjacent to facing the school because it will be close to the road, and was told it would cost a million dollars to do so. The amphitheater will seat 205 people, include concrete walls for noise abatement, and will cost between \$200,000 to \$300,000.

Pete Pilero, resident of Euharlee stated that outside development is the prime time for Euharlee not to develop, because people will pay the money to live in Euharlee. He lived in Long Island which is the reason he moved to Euharlee. Just like Atlanta, it is getting extremely crowded, and people are moving to the suburbs and commute to Atlanta to work. The point is, there is an opportunity to build nice houses in Euharlee. He would prefer to pay taxes than someone living right next door, and a lot of people may agree with him. Council Member Greg Free said during the summit, presenter Tamara Brock stated Euharlee is growing because Bartow County is the only county with land available, with an interstate right through it, and the Governor has made it attractive for the industry. The companies want somewhere for their workers to live to support businesses.

Zack Tyree, resident of Euharlee, and owner of Euharlee Outfitters stated in reference to the paving, he would love for the city to pay for the budgeted item. He did address the time frame for the project because he is scheduled to open the first weekend in May. If the project date is later, he would like to be informed so he can work around it, and plan accordingly. He also mentioned the entrance, front driveway needing repaired as well.

Ron Hartman, resident of Euharlee apologized for his outburst earlier in the meeting. He reminded council of him bringing a series of questions about the, and feedback on various projects that he thought was important, and the city manager graciously provided input. He had eight issues to discuss. He asked previously for the council to routinely report back to the citizens so he does not have to grill the council at the end of every meeting. He was disappointed it didn't happen. Mayor Craig Guyton stated he told him they would have a manager's report at each council meeting not the work sessions. Mr. Hartman shared the eight issues he had concerns about.

RFP for Osborne Park; Turnaround time for completion and Notice to Proceed - James Stephens, City Manager stated the RFP would go out in April, no completion date, and notice to proceed will go out after May 15th.

Cherry Glen Subdivision; Start date and 3rd Party Engineer Questions - James Stephens, City Manager said the preliminary plat was approved at the last meeting. It is a private company, and he does not have a start date. As far as the current land disturbance permit, there are still comments the developer is working through with the 3rd party engineer, before permits will be issued.

Electronic Signs; Possibility to Lower Prices - Mayor Craig Guyton stated the Planning and Zoning Commission is reviewing the sign ordinance. There are concerns about where it should go, because of the way the city is laid out. James Stephens, City Manager states it is on the agenda for the next P & Z meeting. Staff is getting additional information from surrounding areas for comparable purposes.

Beer Garden – Ms. Najarro stated on a social media site that she had submitted a proposal. Mr. Stephens stated that was correct. Mayor Guyton stated others are also looking at that facility, and submitting proposals. Hopefully a decision can be made next month.

Restriping Schedule and List of Street Priority - Council agreed for the priority list for restriping and paving to be added to the website, and note it is subject to change.

Traffic Flow Study Timeline for Full Scope of Euharlee Road- Mr. Stephens said he stated at the February meeting, it would be early summer, but has moved up to late spring. Mayor Guyton said the request will be for Euharlee city limits traffic flow, and ask the county for full scope out to Hwy. 113, but it will be at the county's discretion.

Bartow County 5-Year Comprehensive Plan - Mr. Hartman suggested the link be added to the city website. It is good information for citizens about the future plans for the city. He read through information from the plan. Frankie Harris Campground, Gateway Signs, 17- acres, Osborne Park Redevelopment, Safety on Walkways Five Forks & Euharlee Road and Trail Connect Signage. Mr. Hartman asked for some feedback on a few of those items. Mayor Guyton and Mr. Stephens shared feedback. The gateway signs were an economic development tool. The sidewalks were for the other side of the bridge to provide safety for people walking. The signage would be from one location to the another within the city. Mr. Hartman stated the 17- acres was a gold mine, and the council should not wait until 2027 to develop the property. He also suggested a citizens committee to assist with ideas for the projects in the city.

Feedback from the Retreat - Mr. Hartman said he appreciated council allowing him to attend the staff and council retreat. He suggested the traffic data received from the events in the city should be shared with the public, posted on the website, and used to draw more people to the city.

Fred Werner spoke again and suggested to update the website to include more information to cut down on the time at the meetings. He shared signage was discussed years ago, and the gateway signage would be at the end of Euharlee Road at Hwy. 113, and at Clock Tower, the roadmap to direct people to the downtown businesses to promote the city.

With no further discussion the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 pm.