

**CITY OF EUHARLEE  
CALLED CITY COUNCIL MEETING & WORK SESSION MINUTES  
APRIL 18, 2023**

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.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND NEW BUSINESS**

**Campsite Pricing – James Stephens**

James Stephens, City Manager reminded the council of the discussion at the work session on the campsite pricing at \$65 per night, and \$55 per night discount for seniors, and Euharlee residents.

Mayor Craig Guyton stated the discount would also include first responders and veterans.

Council Member Greg Free motioned to accept the prices discussed. Council Member David Duncan seconded the motion.

Peter Piliero asked questions about the profit that would be made from charging \$65 per night. Council Member Joe Turner said operation would need to start to determine the actual cost. Council Member Tim Abbott stated he agreed with profit, and it was a very good start with a market competitive analysis. If changes are needed, they can be made. Council Member Abbott said he appreciated Mr. Piliero's concern for the city, and Mr. Stephens is an excellent city manager and accountant.

Council Member Greg Free asked Mr. Stephens to share how the campground was funded. Mr. Stephens stated the construction was funded with SPLOST, under the category of facilities in the downtown area, approved by a referendum of a county wide vote, and the city will not go into debt with the campsites. There is a master meter for water and electricity, but not a meter on each campsite. He anticipates the monthly charge, will be a minimum charge for water, sewer, and electricity divided by twenty-six sites, and is far less than \$65. At that time, he did not say the exact amount of profit per site but assured the \$65 was not a loss point. The motion carried with all voting in favor.

**Jolly Building Drop Ceiling Quote – Barry Atkison**

Barry Atkison, Program Manager provided the council with a cost chart for the Jolly Building. The total estimated cost to complete the Jolly building is \$56,497.56 with a \$6,400 deficit for the drop ceiling that was not included in the original estimate presented to the council. The roof is completed, and they did a good job. The HVAC, Plumbing, and the interior disposition are complete. Going forward to be completed is some drywall that is needed, the drop ceiling, if approved, LED lighting, HVAC return, the aspects of flooring, and the interior. Mr. Atkison requested the council to approve the additional cost up to \$60,000 to complete the project at the Jolly building for the drop ceiling, and any unforeseen change orders that may occur. The main concern was the electrical, and to include some equipment to mount the projector. Council Member Turner asked the completion date. Mr. Atkison stated they were shooting for mid-May but will have to extend that date.

Council Member David Duncan motioned to approve the budget from \$50,000 to \$60,000. Council Member Tim Abbott seconded the motion. The motion carried with all voting in favor.

**Liability Insurance Renewal – James Stephens**

City Manager, James Stephens provided the council with a copy of the spreadsheet that summarized the general liability, automobile, crime, property, and umbrella renewal quote for the upcoming year. The renewal quote for the liability, auto, and umbrella is \$136,492 compared to last year's \$126,811; in the \$10,000 increase, the property values have increased by 27% for replacement cost in the event of a claim.

The workers compensation quote was \$34,093 compared to \$40,844. The total renewal comes in at \$170,585 which is only \$2,935 more than last year. It is a phenomenal renewal, and he recommended the city council to adopt and approve the renewal with Apex through Starr Matthews. Council Member Joe Turner motioned to accept the renewal. Council Member Greg Free seconded the motion. The motion was carried with all voting favor.

**FY22 Budget Amendments- James Stephens**

City Manager, James Stephens stated each year there are budget amendments to look at. The state Code of Annotated Title 36-81-3(d)(1) requires a city to adopt a balanced budget. In addition, it requires the city to monitor the budget throughout the year, and if any changes are needed it should be brought before the elected board depending upon the level of authority authorized to the staff. The charter allows him to make line-item changes but with him being a transparent city manager, he always presents the full proposed budget amendment before the council even with him being authorized to do it himself. The budget amendments presented to the council totaled \$347,379. He pointed out the beginning year fund balance per the 2021 audit; it was \$889,414 in the general fund, unassigned balance that equates to 4.88 months of annual expenditures. The original budget for 2022 was \$2,172,200. The amended budget totals \$2,519,579 and is compliant with O.C.G.A. 36-81-3(d)(1). In addition to the budget amendments, the city had a favorable operating variance for the year. When the audit report is presented in June, it will include a \$287,400 increase in fund balance which increases the months of unassigned fund balance to 5.57 months which is very healthy. The city increased the balance by more than the tax levy that increased by \$423,000. Mr. Stephens recommended approval of the budget amendments to comply. Council Member David Duncan motioned to accept the amended budget. Council Member Joe Turner seconded the motion. The motion carried with all voting in favor.

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading – Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance- Katie Gobbi**

Katie Gobbi, Community Development Director stated in the Legislative Session 21-22 the Georgia General Assembly passed HB 1405 which made changes for compliance on the zoning ordinance and the changes were provided to them. It is really looking at quasi-judicial bodies and agencies. In terms of the city's zoning ordinance, Section 14.10.1 will change from 15 days to 30 days for publications for appeals variances for public hearings; Section 14.10.2 the mailed-out notices changed to 30 days instead of 15 days, and Section 14.11.4 for time limits, each shall be granted equal time. Mayor Craig Guyton asked if that would bring them in compliance with the zoning ordinance. Ms. Gobbi said yes, and they have until July 1<sup>st</sup>. It was reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission at their last meeting. Mayor Guyton said they will take it up at the next council meeting.

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading – Amendments to Floodplain Ordinance Management Ordinance- Katie Gobbi**

Katie Gobbi, Community Development Director provided the council with a copy of the Floodplain ordinance adopted in 2007. There is an opportunity for the ordinance to be updated, after receiving a call from EPD, to address a call EPD received from a concerned citizen. She highlighted the changes throughout the 28-page document. Some of the changes pertained to adding, and for consideration, requirements for future condition floodplains, as well as, adjacent to future conditions, and to firming up the language throughout the document. There are a lot of changes to be reviewed over the next couple of weeks and addressed during the second reading at the May meeting. Council Member Tim Abbott asked if she had any concerns. Ms. Gobbi stated the document was from a model ordinance that was passed from federal to state legislation and came from the Metro North Georgia Water Planning District, and the city of Cartersville and Bartow County are both a part of it. Ms. Gobbi said in section two there are a lot of highlights that may be helpful.

**Mass Texting/Communication Plans - Katie Gobbi**

Katie Gobbi, Community Development Director presented the council with a spreadsheet listing three companies with many options for mass notifications/texting. Ms. Gobbi recommended Everbridge, which

is also the company, that service Bartow County, and Cartersville. She discussed some of the details to include the cost at two cents per message, and the package quoted to allow the city to send 100,000 messages that will far outweigh the need. It also included unlimited emails and at the same rate to text and for phone calls. The company can also provide public data, only for public safety concerns, to reach residents, however they can opt out. Another benefit is to geo-frame; an example provided was the ability to eliminate phone numbers as needed for protection. Ms. Gobbi did not see that to be something that would be needed, however, to have access to it. Mayor Guyton asked about the cost per message. Ms. Gobbi explained the cost was two-cents for each message. She also shared, the company could provide up to twenty-one-hundred public safety phone numbers and texts local governments have used for the same service. Council Member David Duncan asked if the annual cost would stay the same each year. Ms. Gobbi stated it was not guaranteed to stay the same. She spoke with the city of Cartersville, and Everbridge was easy to work with and very competitive with pricing. Council Member Tim Abbott said what he understood, anybody can option in or out to receiving anything from the city to a hazard, to a meeting or city event, there is a public safety message that is not an opt in or out, and the geo-fencing identification, which identifies phone numbers. Ms. Gobbi added it can be set up as an opt-in or out. Council Member Abbott liked that it allowed citizens to receive what information they want or not want. Ms. Gobbi said they can sign up by text, phone, and email. She further explained the cost per message and the credits received per message. Ms. Gobbi also shared there are marketing packages available from each company to assist with a detailed set-up.

#### **LED Transition for Tennis Courts - James Stephens**

The City Manager, James Stephens, on behalf of Becky Pruitt, Parks & Recreation Director, presented the council with an email Ms. Pruitt received from Clowers Electric. There are lights out at the basketball and tennis courts at Joe Cowan Park. The park has been in operation since 2012, and the recommendation would be to change the tennis and basketball lights to LED lighting. Clowers Electric quoted \$7,200 which includes everything except the lift. The city would rent the lift in conjunction with other items the lift can be used for, at a cost under \$500 and would bring the total to \$7,700. Mr. Stephens stated it is a work session, but if he could get a con-census that it would be acceptable to let them know what to tell the electric company prior to the May 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Council Member Tim Abbott stated he was not familiar with Clowers and had questions about longevity, replacements, and if it comes with an agreement for maintenance repairs. Mr. Stephens said he did not have the answers and would be willing to wait until the May 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Council Member David Duncan asked if the balls hitting the lights could be the cause of the lights not working. Mayor Craig Guyton said with a baseball, but not likely with tennis balls. Mayor Guyton asked Mr. Stephens to get more information about replacement and the life of the LED lights. Council Member Free stated it will be an upgrade, but it was a battle at Shaw Woods with the lights getting knocked out. Mayor Guyton stated it would be discussed at the next meeting.

#### **Public Comments**

Peter Piliero stated from a previous meeting it was said the city was in a good financial standing, and proceeded and asked back-to-back questions about the sewer; what fund pays the monthly payment, the repayment plan, the number of people on the sewer, how will they collect money from the sewer on the new homes, and is the pay based on coming in and going out. Mayor Craig Guyton and Mr. Stephens responded to his questions. The sewer is funded with SPLOST funds, at a cost of \$10,000 per month with a repayment plan not to exceed 20 years or if the council opt to pay it off, and there are currently two businesses with sewer hook-ups.

Mr. Piliero addressed that he was upset at the last meeting because he did not like the results of the vote on lot size. He stated the city council is elected to speak for the citizens and they would have to know what he wanted to vote for. He was disappointed because he did not agree with the 10,000 square feet lot size and criticized the council for making the decision. There should not be four houses on an acre. They put in the sewer, change the zoning for a developer to come in and exploit Euharlee. He thought it

was a personal decision and not one for the citizens. He continued sharing his views about the council's responsibility to the citizens and the growth in the city.

Council Member Greg Free stated back in 1990 when his family moved there, citizens were complaining about the people that were moving to Euharlee because they did not want anybody else to live there. The argument has been happening since the beginning of time. In 1990 he stated his parents were sitting in the same seats saying not to build Misty Forest, they did not want all those houses built. It has been happening forever, it is not new. The argument to be the last house in, no one can make that argument. As much as he would like to think the council controls all of that, they do not. They have limited control. The council is responsible for looking at the market, and what it dictates. It does not mean that anybody is going to come to Euharlee and build neighborhoods. It means that the ordinances that are ten and twenty years old need to be updated. In reference to the sewer, the only reason a city would want sewer is that they know growth is coming, they want to attract businesses and people want sewer. He does not want to pay taxes and there is nothing to offset it, and the citizens should not be okay with it either. It would be paying money for something never used. If the development that is going on around the city takes the capacity to the sewer, the city will continue to pay the debt with no money to offset it. The whole county around the city is growing, and the need is to prepare for the future by having discussions and planning. There will never be a hundred percent perfect scenario.

Mayor Guyton stated the people in this area with property, have a right to sell their property.

Ron Hartman commended the city on the FY22 budget surplus but wanted to know what made up the \$287,000 surplus in the general fund. Mr. Stephens said the largest portion came from Local Option Sales Tax (LOST), which was about 60% of the budget. It exceeded the budget substantially. The city was fortunate enough to receive two local grants from Bartow County which totaled \$47,000; one was for a bridge repair not budgeted and for the construction of the disc golf around Joe Cowan Park. In addition to that they did implement a millage rate that brought in \$264,000.

#### **Executive Session - Real Estate**

Council Member David Duncan motioned to go into Executive Session at 7:58 pm. Council Member Greg Free seconded the motion. The motion carried with all voting in favor.

The council returned from Executive Session at 8:50 pm. Mayor Craig Guyton stated there were no votes taken and no further actions needed going forth.

Council Member David Duncan made a motion to adjourn. Council Member Tim Abbott seconded the motion. The motion carried with all voting in favor.

With no further discussion the meeting adjourned at 8:51 pm.