

CITY OF EUHARLEE
CALLED CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
JULY 11, 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.

Approval of Minutes

Council Member David Duncan motioned to approve the minutes for the City Council Meeting, 06.06.23, and Called City Council Meeting/ City Council Work Session, 06.20.23 Council Member Greg Free seconded the motion. The motion was carried with all voting in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

1st Reading Stormwater Management Post Construction Ordinance – James Stephens

City Manager James Stephens stated the 3-page document the council had in front of them, is required by the state to be in compliance with the city's stormwater management construction proceedings. It is considered the 1st reading, and the 2nd reading would be finalized on August 1st with all the captions updated to reflect the city of Euharlee.

Traffic Study – James Stephens

City Manager James Stephens stated a two-page document was included in the council package titled task order. It is an agreement put together by EXP engineering, which some may have met at the GMA conference. As the council continues to study the possibility and the need for updated traffic study information, he received a proposal from EXP. It takes the four corridors of the city and will impact traffic based on ongoing projects and other speculative items so they can speak to traffic concerns in an educated fashion for future developments. For city wide, the cost would be not to exceed \$40,000, and approximately \$10,000 per location. If the council decided to wait, an EXP representative could be at the next meeting for further details. It is a significant amount of money but believe it is information the city will need. He recommended tabling until the next meeting to speak with a representative.

Council Member Tim Abbott stated he liked that the city is doing it and not depending on the county or GDOT and recommended the traffic study. Mayor Craig Guyton asked after hearing from EXP at the next meeting and it is approved, is there any idea when they could get started. Mr. Stephens said with the increased staff, they indicated they could get going pretty quick. Council Member Greg Free asked what the normal duration of the traffic study was. Mr. Stephens said he was not sure and would refer to the representatives. It is a concise document, but the actual proposal is much more significant. The representatives will be available on August 1st to answer any questions and to proceed.

Council Member Greg Free motioned to table the item until August 1st meeting. Council Member David Duncan seconded the motion. The motion was carried with all voting in favor.

Campfire Trail – Council Member Greg Free

Council Member Greg Free stated that there were conversations about the roads, when the striping was taking place in the city, and the severity of some roads over some others. He appreciated the city for posting the road information on the website which helped clear up some misinformation about exactly what was going on in the city. One of the roads on the list was Campfire Trail and listening to an issue one of the residents mentioned, he asked for it to be an agenda item because the road has seen some better

days. The road was resurfaced in 2017 prior to the completion of Shaw Roads and prior to the weight limit passed in the city. He wanted to discuss resurfacing the road with some immediate attention.

City Manager James Stephens stated a priority list is included in the package, and Barry Atkison was there to help answer any questions. Mr. Stephens added the first survey prepared by Mr. Atkison did have some deterioration quickly. Campfire Trail was labeled as fair but requires work and more than what was done in 2017, which was putting some oil on a squeaky wheel at that time. Campfire Trail was rated as the third highest road and Covered Bridge Road as the highest, but waiting to see what happens with the potential project at Osborne Park. The third item, based on the current condition has moved up to top priority and not to waste money on a road that may need repairs after heavy traffic equipment. Mr. Atkison said he sees it as top priority; the road has deteriorated even more since the assessment in late December. He thinks the one two punch is Covered Bridge Road, Campfire Trail and the third one Milam Bridge. They all need repairs. Council Member Free said Milam Circle falls in the same boat as Campfire Trail. However, not knowing what the future holds for that area and if something is done now, they may have to redo it like they are doing Campfire Trail. It needs something.

Mr. Stephens said EXP is currently working on a quote for recommendations on Campfire Trail. Council Member Free also mentioned Setters Pointe in Hunter's Landing. Mr. Atkison said it was rated as fair but has some significant problems. He called it the 5-year LMIG plan, but hopefully then can look at it in fewer years. Mr. Stephens it will be fewer with the millage funding available. Council Member Joe Turner asked if it could be a small repair and Mr. Atkison said it could be a small repair. Mr. Stephens said that EXP is working on an estimate and the city will have funding from the millage in the budget for road improvements to cover the cost.

Council Member Tim Abbott stated the city should have an annual road plan and it should be ongoing not waiting until it gets to this point; get the roads to the standard they should be and monitor it as it goes. Mr. Stephens added it is also in line with the millage the council had the fortitude to pass last year, which is helping substantially to put in place.

Council Member Turner asked when Covered Bridge Road would be paved and roads striped. Mr. Stephens stated not until the Osborne Park project takes place and is completed. The roads that needed resurfacing will be striped with regular paint and hope to start soon with resurfacing in 2024.

Frankie Harris Park Change Order #4 - Barry Atkison

Barry Atkison stated change order #4 was for some housekeeping which entails changing some yard hydrants sizing. It is not associated with the campsites themselves, and a change in the sewer size for the lateral. Due to the paving work behind the Euharlee Outfitters resulted in a credit back in the amount of \$473.32. Also, the \$9,000 that was needed for the pedestals that was on back order showed up and is included in the net. Since they are now available, they went ahead and ordered pedestals for Osborne Park.

Council Member Greg Free motioned to adopt the change order. Council Member Tim Abbott seconded the motion. Council Member David Duncan asked about markings and putting a line down the main road. Mr. Atkison stated it was decided to go with signage and not road markings. Mr. Stephens stated that Mr. Shepherd was working on pricing for the overflow parking at the boat ramp. With no further questions the motion was passed with all voting in favor.

Bid Negotiation - Osborne Park - James Stephens

City Manager James Stephens stated the council received an updated email summarizing the potential funding for Osborne Park. The bids were opened on June 29th and the lowest bid was \$3,158,500. He provided options that would utilize the American Rescue Funds, Urban Development construction account balance, and SPLOST downtown development funds. Mr. Bell will explain some of the differences. If the city forgoes with one of the two bath houses in the original design and utilize those categories of funding proposed, they would be able to build the project taking out one bathroom and changing out light fixtures from a very decorative pattern to a basic pattern and there would still be \$347,000 left available for contingencies or for future projects when this is complete.

Council Member Joe Turner asked about the asphalt parking lot and the runoff. Mr. Stephens stated the bid included an asphalt parking lot, deliberated on gravel but hoping to still do asphalt. It will be away from the big field, further away from the water. Zack Bell added there is a retention pond between the asphalt and the creek and will hold the water from the creek.

Mr. Bell continued and shared again that the bid came in at \$3,158,500 with the efforts to look at some cost savings without sacrificing the overall design and looked at value engineering and deductions that Mr. Stephens shared. Removing the toilet house was a savings of \$273,000 and lighting, collaborating with Georgia Power with a savings of \$109,000 with a total project cost of \$2,776,500. Mr. Stephens stated that would be the amphitheater as originally designed and includes the dog park that will be funded by Bartow County. Therefore, \$347,000 is understated because the dog park is included in the bid total. If the council is not comfortable in using the three funding sources, there are other deductions to be discussed. He would love to see them build it as close to the original design as practical.

Council Member Turner, Council Member Free, and Council Member Abbott all shared ideas on amphitheaters that are in other cities that could be cheaper than the current amphitheater. Council Member Free stated it did not have to be as big to save money, but nice and not half done.

Council Member Abbott asked if approving the amount would lock them in if they found an amphitheater deduction, it does not preclude them from paying less or does it; or a change order to reduce cost. Mr. Stephens stated marching orders were needed on what to do. It would be more equitable to the lower bidder if they knew what to scale back.

Council Member Turner shared his thoughts on the location of the amphitheater to be added on the other end of the park. He had a concern that the amphitheater would be too far away from the playground.

Mr. Bell shared the location of the amphitheater is utilizing the slope of the land, connecting to the public sidewalk, great views of the covered bridge, facing to the north to prevent the stage from the sunlight opposed to pushing the amphitheater to the back of the park. Mr. Stephens stated they were not asking to relocate. The mayor and council continued the discussion on the amphitheater, the location, and the purpose.

Mayor Craig Guyton asked if they could go back and remove the topographical concrete areas and leave the stage where it is and make a grass slope or grass venue to see if the cost would be different. Mr. Bell said it could possibly work, but a concern would be the accessibility to each seat. The council continued the discussion and suggested waiting until the August meeting to make a decision. Mr. Stephens summed up the discussion to make sure it was clear for Mr. Bell. He said they are attempting to keep the paving in tack, comfortable with forgoing with one-bathroom, what savings are involved in the topographical artificial turf seating, keeping the riverwalk, and everything else including the dog park. Council Member Greg Free stated the city cannot do this halfway as they have. It has to be done right. If waiting, then to wait until August 1st is a good idea to do it correctly.

Council Member Greg Free motioned and tabled the item to see what changes they come back with. Council Member David Duncan seconded the motion. The motion was carried with all voting in favor.

Council Member David Duncan took a few minutes to say thank you to the city of Euharlee on behalf of Euharlee Baptist Church for their support in making the July 4th firework celebration a success. They could not have done it without the support from the city. Council Member Free said he received feedback from citizens that it was a top-notch event and looked forward to doing it again. Mayor Craig Guyton said he was appreciative of the first-class event and the way the church handled it. He stated if they did not want to do it again, the city would be interested in talking about it. Council Member Duncan said he heard from his Pastor they would be discussing it again.

Public Comments

Resident Fred Werner shared in 2012- 2013 there were discussions about Five Forks Road due to an increase in traffic from Joe Cowan Park. It was discussed to handle in three phases including the bridge, the intersection, and further on up at Cowan fields. An emergency meeting was called in 2013 to approve a \$73,000 drainage issue, and years from now there will be an increase in traffic. He feels the need for

them to be addressed. The intersection needs to be corrected and sidewalks added. They have increased vendors for Food Truck Friday, RV Park, Drowned Valley, Farmers Market, and Osborne Park Redevelopment to increase traffic, and need to add it to the list of roads. It is a safety issue, and the drainage has not been corrected. Mayor Craig Guyton added phase one was completed with the drainage, but the other two phases were not neglected, it was due to funding.

Resident Ron Hartman discussed and recommended the following:

Public Comments. Mr. Hartman stated he heard there would be a recommendation made by Kathy Foulk in the Planning and Zoning meeting to limit public comments to three minutes per person. He said that three minutes would not allow appropriate input from the public. He recommended three minutes per agenda item.

District format for elections; four districts for council and Mayoral at-large. He opposed an at large election. He had a concern about equal representation in the city on the council. Shaw Woods has three members and is a different feature in several aspects, opposed to what the typical city looks like. A possibility exists when a decision has to be made to favor decisions based on where you live, and he is concerned. He would like the discussion to be added to the August agenda with the attorney present for discussion. Council Member Greg Free stated, currently the right to voting act is being followed and he feels a district would not satisfy that any more than an at-large election. Mr. Hartman provided a state code for review, recommended attorney come in and explain the process, and discussed several scenarios for his proposal for district voting. There are cons in this process, but the pros outweigh the cons.

Mayor Craig Guyton added a point in reference to being able to vote for four members opposed to only being able to vote for one person in your district. There will be two votes every two years to one vote every four years and appears to be less of a voice in the government.

Mr. Hartman shared the trailer park would have someone to represent them, no one to represent Milam Bridge and there would be a specific person to go to.

Council Member Free shared some election data, three people until recently from the same neighborhood were members of the council. However, they have had three people on the council that lived within one mile of each other and two in the same neighborhood. This will always be the flow and the great things about municipal elections, anybody can qualify, have a voice and a vote. Surprisingly, Shaw Woods does not make up the number of votes you may think it does. It is not the turnout you think, it is citywide. These are facts and Shaw Woods does not elect the majority of the people. Mr. Hartman said it was a very small number 221 votes, and more affluent people are voters and Shaw Woods can elect the candidate from Shaw Woods.

Council Member Tim Abbott said that could hold true to other subdivisions as well. The point being made does not hold water to the map. Your sentiment about fairness is welcomed, the math and the finger pointing at one subdivision creates division even if it is not the intention. Two brothers-in-law sat on this council for a long time, three members within one mile of each other and are fine. The sentiment is unfair if you look at the geographic area.

Millage Rate - Mr. Hartman stated the audit for last fiscal year is needed to decide a millage rate. The recommendation based on the current funds and the number of months of reserve is to roll back to zero. No millage is needed due to the expected revenue from the RV campground, tax from Cherry Wood subdivision and a decrease in taxes.

Frankie Harris Park – Mr. Hartman asked when the campground would be in operation. He has a degree in civil engineering, and he knows a little about construction. He visits the park at least twice a week. On the last three visits, he saw only two workers, and the project is 65 days behind. It shows no sense of urgency. He had concerns about reservations, amenities, and future entertainment. He also shared rates for RV parks and feels the \$65 the city plans to charge will not be competitive with the \$45 rates for other campgrounds.

Barry Atkison shared the weather had been the largest issue. Also, Georgia Power has to make electrical repairs and he had been speaking to them on a daily basis for weeks. It also causes them not to be able to do the lower grading on the road with GAB. This week GAB with the pad is supposed to be completed. The

paving was scheduled for the week of July 17th but waiting for confirmation. It is concluding. The park was walked prior to the meeting. He had some of the same thoughts about the number of employees, but right now it is heavy equipment work with truckloads of GAB, just finished the paving so it does not require a lot of people. Mayor Craig Guyton asked if Georgia Power agrees to come in the next two weeks what is an expected date for completion. Mr. Atkison stated, with weather permitting, he said it before, August 1st.

Council Member Greg Free said he liked the comment about pricing for the RV campgrounds. The prices mentioned are core engineer state park pricing. The privately owned, the city is comparable or cheaper for full hook up.

Traffic Flow Study - Mr. Freeman had issues with the way the traffics study is being conducted as a city only opposed to working with GDOT and the county on the entire length of Euharlee Road. The quantity and the flow will impact the city. A document called HCM, abbreviated, traffic and road engineers use, based on stats, shows the city is over the limit for daily recommended use. He is hopeful for the city to expand the traffic study with GDOT and the county.

Mr. Hartman said kudos to Council Member David Duncan for research on a rumor of a new subdivision. It was determined an owner was clearing the land. Mayor Craig Guyton stated this is still America and this city government is not coming to your house to ask you what you are doing on your property. This government will not get involved with asking property owners what they are doing with their own personal property. If a subdivision were being built it would have to come before the council. He apologized to the gentleman and shared he is allowed to clear his property without a member of the government coming to ask him what he is doing,

Resident Peter Piliero suggested using grass instead of spending the money for the seating venue at Osborne Park. Make sure a sprinkler system is installed to water the grass and consider a seating venue in the future.

Council Member David Duncan motioned to adjourn. Council Member Greg Free seconded the motion. The motion was carried with all voting favor.

With no further discussion the meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm.