

**CITY OF EUHARLEE
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 19, 2023**

Mayor Craig Guyton called the meeting to order. Council Member David Duncan said a prayer, followed by 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.

Public Hearing

Rezoning Application RZ2023.1- Parcel No. 0034-0753-002

Environmental Overlay - Parcel No.0034-0753-002 & 003, 0034-0668-002, 0034-0752-001

Mayor Craig Guyton stated the applicant for Rezoning and the Environmental Overlay Parcel No. 0034-00753-002 from RE1 to R1 requested a deferment due to not receiving information needed from Bartow County Water Department in time for the meeting. The next Public Hearing will be on Tuesday, October 17th and Tuesday November 14th. He was aware that people had signed up to speak so he allowed them to do so during public comments.

Mayor Guyton stated he received some criticism that he does not give enough information in a timely manner, and during the planning and zoning meeting there was a lot of talk about growth, the city needs to slow down or stop growth, so he prepared a brief PowerPoint to share some ideas about growth. Below are some of the talking points and facts he share about growth.

- Census report 2010 -2020 the city of Euharlee grew by 3% over 10 years, ½ percent per year.
- The largest source of funding comes from sales tax, 3.85% of LOST which equates to \$1.3 million dollars. LOST reduction went from 4.13% to 3.85%. What happens if only there is 3% growth over the next 10 years. LOST calculation is no longer based only on population, there are seven other negotiators and Euharlee only bodes well with one category. If there is no growth the amount could reduce to 2.25% which equates to \$754,000 and the city would have to find \$546,000. Property tax would have to be increased by 3.21 mills of tax in addition to the current 1.6 mills.
- Traffic Study from Bartow County for Euharlee Road with the three new developments in question, would have no major impact on Euharlee’s traffic zones. Futuristic study shows that if all land were sold and developed in the area Euharlee would be able to handle it with only minor adjustments.
- Euharlee will conduct its own study at intersections and any adjustments needed will be made.
- Road maintenance will be completed with or without growth. Every road in the city will be resurfaced within 5 years.
- Bartow County School Capacity – New development will not impact the schools. Woodland Middle School is at 78% capacity and Euharlee Elementary School is at 68% capacity.
- Current staff level for police officers is 11; Industry standard is two officers per 1,000 residents. 30% growth would mean 2 to 3 more officers over 10 years.
- If the city needs growth, families are selling property to developers, and there is proof it can be handled, the city could grow by 30% over the next 10 years. 3% growth each year is well planned, reasonable, and manageable. The population currently after annexation, 5,268 and the increase would be just over 7,000.

Public Comments – In opposition to Etowah Bend and Euharlee Growth

Several Euharlee residents spoke In-Opposition of the Etowah Bend, growth and the comments are summarized below.

- Misinformed about city operating budget and LOST. It was discussed and LOST process explained.
- The growth on Milam Bridge and does not want the same growth and demographics as Emerson, Georgia.
- Not in agreement that classrooms are not at capacity.
- Surprised that Euharlee can handle the additional growth with the number of additional homes and are not over capacity.
- Not in favor of road shortcuts that will occur with traffic overflow.
- Does not want growth to stop but how will it impact public workers and first responders.
- Not in agreement with 300 homes in Etowah Bend and the change in demographics.
- Not opposed to growth but opposed to congestion and high-density growth. Do not give in to high density growth.
- Increase in crime and longtime residents will relocate.
- Controlled development destination for people that want to live in Euharlee. Give them somewhere to live and not pack them in. Do not worry about the growth around them. Surveyed 200 people that does not want growth.
- The sewer was not needed. It was costly and to bring in more people.
- Doing what is not good for the people.
- Milam Bridge, Etowah Bend - ordinance waiver for the development; 7.18 clause in the ordinance
- Administrative receipt of notice for the Etowah Bend Project and 1244 Milam Bridge project.
- Administrative legal remedies the council has to slow down the development of large subdivisions.
- Disappointed with sewer connections with no return on investment.
- Calculation differences in the number of future housing occupancy.
- Euharlee Road and the schools are over capacity
- Against massive growth over 5 to 10 years and studies are just guesstimates.
- Over five years ago children rezoned to another school from Euharlee Elementary due to overload and shocked at the current numbers presented for school capacity.
- Rural areas do not need massive growth.
- Expenditures for law enforcement to exceed revenue for the city from Etowah Bend.

UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS

1st Reading Preliminary Plat for 1244 Euharlee Road – James Stephens

James Stephens, City Manager stated the city has received an application and a preliminary plat at the said location. The site plan shows 310 houses for the property already zoned R1, with no special conditions or rezoning. The minimum lot size exceeds 10,000 square feet and anticipates having a sewer capacity letter from Bartow County Water and Sewer. It is the 1st reading for the preliminary plat. The only request from the city would be a sewer easement included on the October agenda. Mr. Adam Baker was present for any questions.

Council Member Greg Free asked about traffic data for the specific potential and if GDOT had a counter on Euharlee Road. Mr. Stephens stated they do, and SA Land Group provided the city with a traffic study where they were looking for the decel lanes and the need of turn lanes. Council Member Free said the

counters have been there for a long time and runs constantly so they receive constant feedback. Mr. Stephens said the traffic study presented utilized that counter. Adam Baker said the traffic study recommended the southern entrance for a decel lane and accel cell lane, but did not recommend on the north, but they included them on both. He shared details on the plan. The property has R1 zoning and has 25 ft. rear setback and a proposed self-imposed 25 ft. undisturbed buffer for any kind of neighbors and a self-imposed 75 ft. setback on rear buffers which is a significant buffer. He heard the audience that is not in favor of high density, and he respects that. The engineer could put more houses; the average lot size is 12274 feet, and the largest one is just under an acre. Some will be smaller, but they will have a variety, nice amenities and it is a well laid out design.

Five Year Soccer Contract – Becky Pruitt

Becky Pruitt, Parks and Recreation Director said Covered Bridge Soccer requested a 5-year contract opposed to the 1-year contract since 2018. They have spent \$20,000 on the soccer fields fertilizer program, sod, hydro-seed, and the fields are cuts with their own equipment. The soccer group is getting national recognized teams and the number of teams have increased from 1 to 15 teams since 2018. All the games are streamed, they have a vested interest in the park and the soccer fields, and it is a great partnership. The staff recommendation is to change from a 1-year contract to a 5-year contract.

Council Member Greg Free asked if they used the fields on both sides of the road. Ms. Pruitt said they use the two top fields, the bottom field, and one is left for the citizens. Covered Bridge Soccer allowed Excel to use the soccer fields and will allow any school to use the fields.

James Stephens, City Manager noted for correction on the contract in the third paragraph which states items 23 and 24, should be items 21 and 22. A couple of citizens asked about the concession that could be a great revenue source. Ms. Pruitt stated the concession is open and baseball and soccer games coincide with each other.

Council Member Free asked if there are other team rentals. Mr. Stephens added that Excel did one year with an MOU prior to Ms. Pruitt.

Mayor Craig Guyton asked before the next meeting to check numbers for rentals. The city is putting a lot of money in the fields and may need to renegotiate. Ms. Pruitt said she would check with Cartersville; Bartow County does not rent soccer fields. Council Member Turner asked about Food Trucks. Ms. Pruitt stated it was discussed but do not think the city would profit from it. Council Member David Duncan asked about the age groups. Ms. Pruitt stated 6-15 years of age. Council Member Free asked if it would be a permit fee for Food Trucks. Mr. Stephens said a permit fee could be charged per the amendment made to the ordinance a couple of years ago.

Campfire Trail – James Stephens

James Stephens, City Manager provided the council with a copy of the task order from EXP for Campfire Trail and so there were no misunderstandings, the figure is just for the engineer and putting the job out for bid which is \$25,000. It does not include the actual resurfacing and improvements on the road and could be another \$30,000 and the project does include the full length of the road. Mayor Craig Guyton stated the reason for the engineering is because the sub grading needs to be done and several roads will have to be all the way to the base. He reminded to add resurfacing on Setters Pointe when doing Campfire Trail. The bid will need to be approved or not approved in October for the project. Council Member Tim Abbott asked about a partnership with Bartow County. Mr. Stephens said yes there is a partnership. They resurfaced recently for \$4,000, it did not go well but the city is grateful for the relationship.

With no further discussion the meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.