

Minutes
Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council
City of Chattahoochee Hills, Georgia
August 4, 2020 / 6:00 p.m.

Call to Order

Mayor Reed called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers in attendance were Ruby Foster, Richard Schmidt, Laurie Searle, and Alan Merrill. Troy Bettis arrived at 6:10 p.m. Also present was City Attorney Rick Lindsey. The meeting was held via videoconference/teleconference for the public.

Review and Approval of Agenda

Mayor Reed called for a motion to amend the agenda as follows:

- 1. Add Item 20-025, Approval of Joint Representation and Cost Sharing Agreement with the cities of Fulton County against Fulton County regarding CARES Act Funding*
- 2. Add a report on the City's Policing Policies by Councilmember Foster and Councilmember Merrill.*

Councilmember Schmidt made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Councilmember Foster seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

- 1. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 7, 2020*

Councilmember Searle made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 7, 2020. Councilmember Merrill seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Presentations/Proclamations

- 1. Report on the City's Policing Policies – Councilmember Foster and Councilmember Merrill*

Councilmember Merrill said in light of George Floyd's death and Black Lives Matter protests, he and Councilmember Foster looked into the City's policing practices and policies. Chief Little's leadership sets the tone for the department, and he consistently advocates for community policing with the goal of enhancing the quality of life for citizens and visitors. Some of the practices he has put into place are changing the uniforms to be consistent with community-oriented policing, department policies now accessible on a digital system, and added training to provide EMS support as first responders.

Councilmember Foster said Chief Little's policies include high speed chases only allowed in extreme cases and issuing tickets for offenses that effect the safety of the public and not to be a profit center. All officers wear body cameras, and Chief Little reviews random samples of each officer's body cam footage every month. The department is currently working toward becoming a state accredited department. Officers keep in touch with citizens through self-initiated calls, professional interactions with everyone, and Facebook posts.

Both Councilmembers Foster and Merrill commend our policing practices and policies and Chief Little's commitment to community policing and continuous improvement.

Councilmember Bettis arrived at 6:10 p.m.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Staff Reports

Financial Update: City Manager Robbie Rokovitz

Mr. Rokovitz reported on the updated financials as of July 31, 2020. The city is 8.5 percent through the new fiscal year. Not much revenue has been collected since we are at the start of a new fiscal year. Total expenditures for all funds are 6.9%. The city is currently in the middle of preparing for the audit. Most of the audit will be completed remotely via a new software called Suralink. He also said he will start including a report on Municipal Court activities each month. The monthly court date has been changed from the first Tuesday to the first Thursday of the month.

Fire Department Report: Greg Brett

Chief Brett reported that there were 49 incidents for July. Confirmed and suspected COVID related calls account for 54 percent of medical calls. The Lucas Chest Compression device has been put into service. The City of South Fulton City Council approved the Automatic Aid Agreement on July 28th. He is continuing to work with the Fulton County Emergency Services on the development of a cell tower that will expand public safety's signaling. He also gave an update on COVID statistics for Georgia and Fulton County.

Police Department Report: Jim Little

Chief Little reported that calls in July were down about ten percent from the same time last year. One officer is back from light duty and Officer Queen has completed field training, so the numbers for self-initiated calls should go back up. Citations and warnings are down, but the officers are focusing more on aggressive driving behavior. The motorcycle that was stolen from Serenbe was recovered by Palmetto Code Enforcement and has been returned to the owner.

Public Works/Parks Report: Darold Wendlandt

Mr. Wendlandt reported that work on the Campbellton boat ramp has started and should be complete in two to three months. He met with T2, the company that provides service to the kiosk at Cochran Mill Park, to discuss upgrades to the system. The old John Deere tractor is down, and one of the New Holland tractors is getting repaired and will be back in-service next week. Crews have cleaned out cross drainpipes on several roads.

These minutes are provided as a convenience and service to the public, media, and staff. It is not the intent to transcribe proceedings verbatim. Any reproduction of this summary must include this notice. Public comments are noted and heard by Council, but not quoted. This is an official record of the City of Chattahoochee Hills City Council Meeting proceedings.

Community Development: Mike Morton

Mr. Morton reported there were a total of 22 building permits issued in July, with 13 of them for single family dwellings. There also were six certificates of occupancy issued during the month. The Campbellton Historic Crossroads planning is still ongoing. He encouraged everyone to visit the project website. There will be a public hearing for the Deer Hollow rezoning application at the next Planning Commission meeting. The first read was at the April City Council meeting, and the second public hearing will be at the September 1st City Council meeting.

Public Hearing

1. **Item 20-022:** Public Hearing on an Ordinance to fix the Ad Valorem Tax Rate for Fiscal Year 2021. *(No action taken.)*

Mayor Reed opened the public hearing.

There was no public comment.

Mayor Reed closed the public hearing.

City Manager Robbie Rokovitz presented the item. Due to the timing of the required advertisements, the public hearing and adoption of the millage rate has been postponed. There will be a special called meeting for a public hearing and adoption of the millage rate on August 20th at 6:00 p.m. Two additional administrative public hearings will be held on August 13th at 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The recommended millage rate remains at 10.00 mills.

There was no action taken.

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

New Business

1. **Item 20-023:** Award contract for Wayfinding Signs Program Services to ASI Signage Innovations.

City Manager Robbie Rokovitz presented the item. Staff recommends the contract be awarded to ASI Signage Innovations. They provided a proposal for both design and an estimated fabrication in the amount of \$107,700. The project will be paid for using Hotel Motel funds. David Bodzy from ASI Signage Innovations was available via videoconference and answered questions from the councilmembers.

Mayor Reed called for a motion on Item No. 20-023. Councilmember Merrill made a motion to approve Item No. 20-023. Councilmember Foster seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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2. **Item 20-024:** Resolution Authorizing, Among Other Things, the Execution of Documents Relating to the Acquisition of Land and Disposition of Land for a Park and for Other Related Purposes.

City Attorney Rick Lindsey presented the item. The resolution gives the Mayor and City Clerk the authority to sign the closing documents.

Mayor Reed called for a motion on Item No. 20-024. Councilmember Schmidt made a motion to approve Item No. 20-024. Councilmember Bettis seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Item 20-025:** Approval of Joint Representation and Cost Sharing Agreement with the cities of Fulton County against Fulton County regarding CARES Act Funding. *Mayor Reed presented the item. Per the language of the CARES Act, the distribution of COVID Relief funds goes to the county when there are larger population numbers in the county. Fulton County received the funds that should have been distributed to the cities (except for City of Atlanta, which received the funds directly due to their population size). However, Fulton County budgeted to spend the funds instead of distributing them to the cities. The cities of Fulton County have joined to file a lawsuit against the county. This agreement lays out the terms of the agreement and cost sharing, which is based on population. Mayor Reed said he is asking for authorization to sign the agreement once it is in its final draft.*

Mayor Reed called for a motion on Item No. 20-025. Councilmember Merrill made a motion to approve Item No. 20-025. Councilmember Searle seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Reed said that before moving to Mayor and Council comments, he wanted to mention the discussion in the Work Session regarding adding two people to the Public Works staff. There is a consensus among councilmembers that two additional staff should be added to the department. City Manager Robbie Rokovitz said that the additional salary and benefit costs can be handled with a budget adjustment. Mayor Reed directed staff to start the hiring process now.

Mayor and Council Comments

Councilmember Searle said she wanted to follow up on the recent discussion regarding allowing the use of city owned equipment for gravel road maintenance on private roads. She said she initially supported the idea but has changed her opinion after giving it more thought.

Councilmember Schmidt said he knows that staff puts in a lot of hard work but he would appreciate more transparency. He said the job as elected official is to report to the citizens, and it is staff's job to make sure they have the correct information.

The City of Chattahoochee Hills Mayor and City Council encourage citizen participation in the government process. Should you by reason of a disability need a special accommodation or need accessibility information, please contact the City Clerk's office at 770-463-8881.

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Councilmember Foster thanked the staff for their work and thanked Chief Little for giving her and Councilmember Merrill the opportunity to discuss the policies of the police department.

Councilmember Searle announced that the District 3 Town Hall meeting will be on September 17th.

Mayor Reed commented on the internet situation in the city. He said it is particularly important to people now because kids are getting ready to start back to school virtually. There has not been any great change in a good direction, but there are several possibilities that might help a year from now, such as Greystone service, new public safety tower, Starlink, and AT&T wireless internet and rural internet programs.

Councilmember Schmidt asked if it would be a safe option to open city hall up for citizens to use the internet as was discussed before. Mayor Reed asked staff to come up with a procedure for safely managing that service.

Executive Session

Councilmember Schmidt made a motion to move to into Executive Session to discuss legal matters. Councilmember Bettis seconded. The motion passed unanimously at 8:10 p.m.

Councilmember Merrill made a motion to convene the Executive Session. Councilmember Foster seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilmember Merrill made motion to come out of Executive Session. Councilmember Schmidt seconded. The motion passed unanimously at 8:55 p.m.

Councilmember Searle made a motion to reconvene the Regular Meeting. Councilmember Foster seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn Meeting

Councilmember Merrill made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Bettis seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Approved this 1st day of September, 2020.

Dana Wicher, City Clerk

Tom Reed, Mayor