

**MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
November 7, 2023**

The City of Cordele Commission held a Regular Meeting on October 7, 2023 at 9:00 AM, Cordele City Hall Courtroom, 501 North 7th Street, Cordele, Georgia with the following present:

Joshua Deriso, Commission Chair	Royce Reeves, Sr., Commission Vice Chair
Wesley Rainey, Commissioner	Vesta Beal Shephard, Commissioner
Isaac Owens, Commissioner	Angela Redding, City Manager
Tommy Coleman, City Attorney	Genivieve Mumphery, Recording Secretary

Staff present: Rusty Bridgers – Finance Director, Fire Chief Todd Alligood, David Wade – Human Resource Director, Police Chief Jalon Heard, Steve Fulford – Asst. City Manager/Public Works Director, Irene Cantrell – HUA Director, Debbie Wright – UC&T Director, Jackie Walker – Municipal Court Clerk.

Media Present: Sarah Brown – Cordele Dispatch

Call to Order: Commission Chair Joshua Deriso called the Meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

INVOCATION: There was a moment of silence.

PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES FLAG: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Shephard.

ROLL CALL: A quorum was established.

Attendee's Name	Title	Absent	Present
Joshua Deriso	Commission Chairman		✓
Royce Reeves, Sr.	Commission Vice Chairman, Ward 2		✓
Vesta Beal-Shephard	Commissioner Ward 1		✓
Isaac Owens	Commissioner Ward 3		✓
Wesley Rainey	Commissioner Ward 4		✓

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – November 7, 2023: Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to approve the Agenda for November 7, 2023; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved by the Commission.

APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – October 17, 2023: Commissioner Owens moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved by the Commission.

APPROVAL OF WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES – October 17, 2023: Commissioner Owens moved to approve the Work Session Meeting Minutes; seconded by Commission Vice Chair Reeves; the motion was approved by the Commission.

APPROVAL OF CALLED MEETING MINUTES – October 24, 2023 at 9:00 AM: Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the Called Meeting Minutes, held at 9:00 AM; seconded by Commission Vice Chair Reeves; the motion was approved by the Commission.

APPROVAL OF CALLED MEETING MINUTES – October 24, 2023 at 6:00 PM: Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to approve the Called Meeting Minutes, held at 6:00 PM; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved by the Commission.

PUBLIC HEARING

Notice of Proposed Property Tax Increase

1. The City of Cordele has tentatively adopted a 2023 millage rate of 11.060, which is the same millage rate the city has adopted for the past four years. Without this tentative tax increase of .010%, the millage rate would be no more than 11.049 mills.

The proposed tax increase, without a rollback, for a homestead property in the city with a fair market value of \$100,000 is approximately \$0.42 per year, the proposed tax increase without a rollback, for a non-homestead property in the city with a fair market value of \$300,000 is \$1.33.

NO COMMENTS WERE MADE.

SPEAKERS APPEARANCES: Speakers will have five (5) minutes: No Requests.

SPEAKERS ON A SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEM: Speakers will have three (3) minutes.

Mr. Benjamin Gatliff, 101 East 13th Avenue, Suite A: Mr. Gatliff is the Program Director for All Safe Driving Clinic Risk Reduction/DUI School, located at 223 South 7th Street. All Safe Driving Clinic is owned and operated by Grizzly Grove Entertainment, Inc. All Safe Driving Clinic Risk Reduction/DUL School is regulated by the Georgia Department of Driver Services, Conyers, GA. It is located directly across the street from 13th Avenue, less than 50 ft. of the subject property notated on the Agenda, as Agenda Item #4. Mr. Gatliff expressed his concerns regarding the establishment, which is a Convenient Store, but will be selling Beer and Wine Off Premises. Mr. Gatliff stated; “per our Agreement with State of Georgia, rule 375-5-16083, clearly states the following, no program applying for certification shall share the same interest with or be immediately adjacent to a facility where alcoholic beverages are sold or distribute.” The State Law for this is O.C.G.A. 3-3-21, Sales of Alcoholic Beverages near churches, school buildings or other sites. Mr. Gatliff stated granting an Alcohol License to AJ’s or any other business at 305 South 7th Street, Cordele, Georgia, will be a conflict of interest to us and it is a violation of Georgia Law.

Mr. Larry Perlis, Perlis Realty: Mr. Perlis stated that Perlis Realty has leased the building to Mr. Michael for about six-years. Mr. Perlis stated that Mr. Michael is licensed by the state and if this Alcohol License is granted, this will jeopardize Mr. Michael’s license. Mr. Perlis stated, he knows that Mr. Michael cannot operate being that close to a business that sells alcohol. Mr. Perlis advised the Commission to do their homework well on this matter and to table this for another Meeting until the legalities are fully understood before an action is brought forth.

Commissioner Owens: Commissioner Owens inquired regarding the owner of the property where AJ’s will be located, 305 South 7th Street.

Mr. Perlis did not know the answer.

Commissioner Owens asked Mr. Gatliff, has another business sold alcohol at that property in the past. Mr. Gatliff answered, no not to his knowledge.

Mr. Ronald Michael, Sr., 701 East 27th Avenue: Mr. Michael is the General Manager for All Safe Driving Clinic. It is a Risk Reduction, a Driver Permit School and Clinical Psychological Services; they is located at 101 East 13th Avenue Suite A and 223 South 7th Street, which is directly across the street from 13th Avenue, less than 50 feet from the subject property, noted in the Agenda item #4, which is 305 South 7th Street. Mr. Michael expressed his concerns regarding the Alcohol License.

City Manager Angela Redding stated that there was a Meeting held and at that Meeting, it was determined that this does not apply to that establishment. A couple of things that was noted, it states, a program applying for certification. City Manager Angela Redding asked if they have to recertify every year.

Mr. Michael stated that they have to recertify every year.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman stated that this is not a school that has to comply by the Alcohol Code. Mr. Coleman stated he contacted a person with the Department of Driver Services and it was stated, this is not a school that will prohibits the City from acting on the applicant's request.

Chairman Deriso asked, if we were violating a State Law.

City Attorney Coleman stated that the City is not violating the Alcohol Law, Mr. Michael might be correct regarding ATF. If the Commission want to grant the Alcohol License, they can, it may result in having Mr. Michael to move and this is something that Driver Services will have to determine. Attorney Coleman suggested for the Commission to table this item until he can contact this company in Atlanta to see what their actions might be, you all will have full information on this matter.

DEPARTMENT HEADS REPORTS:

1. FINANCE DIRECTOR: Rusty Bridgers Reported.

LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX (LOST)

9/30/2022	218,847.17	August
10/31/2022	230,872.11	September
11/30/2022	228,292.88	October
12/29/2022	228,919.79	November
1/30/2023	237,469.63	December
2/27/2023	213,693.35	January
3/30/2023	204,834.30	February
4/28/2023	247,792.98	March
5/30/2023	218,788.37	April
6/29/2023	225,004.69	May
7/28/2023	247,284.48	June
8/30/2023	247,433.94	July
9/28/2023	204,631.16	August
10/30/2023	244,359.40	September

SPECIAL PURPOSE OPTION SALES TAX (SPLOST)

9/25/2022	235,043.57	July
10/25/2022	212,136.34	August
11/23/2022	223,016.01	September
12/19/2022	221,910.45	October
1/30/2023	222,089.70	November
2/24/2023	228,904.97	December

3/28/2023	207,086.70	January
4/24/2023	198,730.99	February
5/22/2023	240,741.01	March
6/20/2023	211,944.08	April
7/31/2023	218,103.45	May
8/28/2023	240,433.14	June
9/16/2023	243,707.02	July
10/27/2023	198,640.37	August

TRANSPORTATION SPECIAL PURPOSE LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX (TSPLOST)

9/30/2022	29,444.86	August
10/31/2022	30,007.53	September
11/30/2022	28,683.20	October
12/30/2022	29,474.82	November
1/31/2023	33,427.28	December
2/28/2023	26,894.52	January
3/31/2023	28,042.50	February
4/28/2023	31,510.17	March
5/31/2023	28,935.47	April
6/30/2023	29,283.20	May
8/1/2023	30,471.24	June
8/31/2023	32,988.99	July
9/29/2023	34,002.30	August
10/31/2023	29,716.36	September

2. FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Fire Chief Alligood Reported.

Reporting Period: September 27, 2023 – October 31, 2023

1. Calls for Service: Total 70

STRUCTURE FIRE	0
GRASS FIRE/RUBBISH	6
VEHICLE FIRE	0
CANCELED IN ROUTE	14
FIRE ALARM	15
MEDICAL ASSIST	20
MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT	9
SMOKE SCARE	6

2. Department News

- Cordele Fire is now using ImageTrend incident reporting and the CAD integration is working well.
- Painting is finished on the outside of Station 1. Special thanks to Vice-Chairman Reeves for helping paint the letters on the front of the station.

- Engine 2 was hit on I-75 while working a traffic accident. **Update** – The Adjuster looked at Engine 2 on November 6th, it is not damaged as bad as it looks. Hopefully, repairs will move quickly on Engine 2.
 - Pole barn construction for the storage of Ladder 3 is complete.
- Fire Safety Month was a success.
 - Smoke Detector Blitz 10/7
 - Cordele Fire Clown Brigade presented Fire Safety Programs to Cordele Primary School.
 - Attended several other events with Cordelia Manor, ABC Wrecker, Crisp Co Elementary, and the Downtown Spooktacular.
 - Blood Drive today from 1:00 – 6:00 PM at the Community Clubhouse.

3. HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT – Irene Cantrell Reported.

a. BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS:

The Board of Zoning Appeals has scheduled a public hearing and a meeting on December 7, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., within the municipal courtroom. A copy of the legal advertisement is attached for your information.

b. HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION:

The Historic Preservation Commission is preparing for a tentative meeting for Wednesday, November 29, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

c. CORDELE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION:

The CPC is tentative planning a meeting to address a Zoning amendment request upon the receipt of additional information from the property owner.

d. CHIP 2018 GRANT PROGRAM:

The CHIP 2018 Rehab Grant Program has successfully completed two of the three homes and now we are anticipating a memo from the DCA office to proceed with the next home.

e. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REVOLVING LOAN FUND

LIST OF LOANS

Hobo Café' – First Loan

Hobo Café' – Second Loan

Ray Ray's Restaurant

The Grant Building

R & D Lawncare

We have had several persons to request and receive EDRLF Applications, however, they have not returned a completed EDRLF Application to date.

f. CDBG 2020 SEWER IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT:

The McLeod Subdivision sewer improvements project has been completed.

4. HUMAN RESOURCE DIRECTOR – David Wade Reported.

City of Cordele has the following positions vacant:

Plant Operator

Equipment Operator – Street Department
 Marketing and Social Media Manager
 Community Advancement Manager
 Distribution Mechanic – Water & Sewer Department
 Police Patrol Person and Sergeant

October 23, 2023: The Workforce Needs Assessment kick-off meeting was held. Sixteen (16) employees attended. Statistics regarding headcount, retention, turnover, job openings and demographics are being compiled for the next meeting scheduled on December 1, 2023.

October 25, 2023 Began gathering information to submit the EEO-1 component report which is due December 05 ,2023.

5. MUNICIPAL COURT – Jackie Walker Reported.

Total Traffic Cases	85
Total Criminal Cases	28
Total Court Cases:	113
Bench Warrants Ordered:	5
License Suspensions Ordered:	12
Total Fines Collected	\$27,293.72
Total Cases Transferred to Superior Court:	1
Total Defendants Incarcerated	0
Total Days Jail Sentenced	0

6. POLICE/CODES DEPARTMENT – Police Chief Jalon Heard

a. Code Enforcement – Numerical Breakdown – September 27 – October 31, 2023

Type of Activity	Number of Incidents
Abandoned Vehicle	19
C&D (Construction & Demolition)	1
Curbstoning: Vehicle sales	0
Dilapidated Property	8
Inspection	11
Business License	1
Alcohol License	0
Trash (Dumping, Limb & Debris)	17
Overgrown Grass/Weeds	21
Panhandler/Loitering	0
Parking	2
Utility Complaint	1
Other	18

Departmental News

The Code Enforcement Division is continuing to put out door hangers in the Community in an effort to bring awareness on our local codes.

We are currently in the process of re-evaluating permit fees comparing them to other similar communities.

Our Code Enforcement Officers are currently studying for Inspection Certification and looking for additional training opportunities.

b. Police Department – Numerical Breakdown – September 27 – October 31, 2023

Type of Activity	Number of Incidents Reported
Part I Crimes	30
Robberies (Armed by Force/Strong Arm)	1 (Dollar General)
Motor Vehicle Thefts	1 (2 recovered)
Aggravated Assault	5 (1 arrested, 4 warrants issued)
Larceny (Thefts)	17 (7 entering auto, 6 shoplifting with 7 Arrests 4 other theft)
Burglary	5 (3 residential and 2 businesses)
Part II Crimes	46
Incidents Reported	126
Community Contacts	39
Citations Issued	65
Warnings Issued	42
Totals Calls for Service	1,212

Departmental News

We are working on painting all the doors in the Police Department.

Detective Eddrica Gary recently completed the “Child First Class” in Forsyth. She is now a Certified Forensic Interviewer which allows her to interview children that are victims.

During the past few weeks, our department has participated in Red Ribbon Week Festivities, Downtown Spooktacular and three Truck or Treat Events. Two of our Officers greeted a class from Crisp County Elementary School that stopped by during their field trip. We have started planning on the Christmas Parade, our department’s Christmas Party and Shop with a Cop 2023. We will be assisting GSP on November 17th for their “Toys for Tots” Event. These toys help our local “Adopt an Angel” Toy Drive, which we will also be assisting with.

Codes and Animal Control have new logos. We are currently re-branding some fleet vehicles and are also ordering uniform shirts for Codes Officers.

7. PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR: Steve Fulford Reported.

Public Works started clean-up of the City, this will be approximately every weekend. Public Works is concentrating on the alleys and ditches.

2023 LMIG Program is underway, it should be completed this week.

Cemetery & Parks are putting up Christmas Decorations.

Working very close with Express Disposal; Express Disposal should be up and running on January 1, 2024

8. UC&T DIRECTOR – Debbie Wright Reported.

Water Treated – 53,000,000 gallons

Wastewater Treated – 60,000, 000 gallons – this is the lowest flow that the Treatment Plant has had in over a year.

We received the results of the Lead & Copper sampling and we only had 1 sample that was over the 15 ppb (parts per billion) limit. This does not put us out of compliance. This data goes by the 90th percentile, which we were not over. We also collected VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) samples from all the wells.

We had our Clarifier components inspected by the manufacturer. They will provide us with a report on the condition and possible improvements that we can make. This was a free assessment.

Well levels have dropped about 10 feet in the last 2 months. We will be monitoring them closely this fall`.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Swearing In to Board of Zoning and Appeals: Mr. Ronald J. Michael.
Chairman Joshua Deriso recused himself from swearing Mr. Michael in to serve on the Board of Zoning and Appeals.
Commission Vice Chair Royce Reeves, Sr., swore Mr. Michael in to serve on the Board of Zoning and Appeals.
2. Consider and Approve an Event Permit – Historic SAM Shortline Railroad Cordele Holiday Train: Saturday, December 9, 2023, Friday, December 15, 2023 and Saturday, December 16, 2023. Police Chief Heard approved the application on November 2, 2023.
Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to approve the Event Permit; seconded by Commissioner Shephard.
Commissioner Shephard voted aye; Commissioner Owens voted aye; Commission Vice Chair Reeves voted aye; Commissioner Rainey voted aye.
The Event Permit was approved by the Commission.
3. Consider and Approve an Event Permit – Collection For Toys for Tots. Sponsoring Organizations: GA State Patrol, Cordele Police Department, Crisp County Sheriff Office. November 17, 2023, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM at 16th Avenue/Pecan Street and the Corner of Walgreen’s Parking lot. Police Chief Heard approved the application on November 2, 2023.
Commissioner Owens moved to approve the Event Permit; seconded by Commissioner Shephard.
Commissioner Rainey voted aye; Commissioner Owens voted aye; Commission Vice Chair Reeves voted aye; Commissioner Shephard voted aye.
The Event Permit was approved by the Commission.

4. Consider and Approve an Alcohol License: AJ's, 305 South 7th Street, Cordele, GA. Owner – Anand Vijay Kumar Patel, 404 E 15th Avenue, Cordele, GA. Beer and Wine Consumed Off Premises. Police Chief Heard approved the application on November 2, 2023. Commissioner Rainey voted to table this item until further investigation is done; seconded by Commission Vice Chair Reeves. Commission Vice Chair Reeves voted aye; Commissioner Shephard voted aye, Commissioner Rainey voted aye; Commissioner Owens voted aye. This item was tabled until further investigation is done by the City Attorney.
5. Consider and Approve the Millage Rate of 11.060. Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to approve the Millage Rate of 11.060; seconded by Commissioner Shephard. Commission Rainey voted aye; Commissioner Shephard voted aye; Commissioner Owens voted aye; Commission Vice Chair Reeves voted aye. The Millage Rate was approved by the Commission.
6. Consider and Approve participation in the “Thriving Communities Pilot Program with RVRC”. Commissioner Shephard moved to participate in “Thriving Pilot Program with RVRC”; seconded by Commission Vice Chair Reeves. Commissioner Shephard voted aye; Commissioner Rainey voted aye; Commissioner Owens voted aye; Commission Vice Chair Reeves voted aye. The Thriving Pilot Program with River Valley Regional Commission (RVRC) was approved by the Commission.
7. Consider and Approve the List of Roadways for the City of Cordele R.A.D.A.R Permit Renewal. Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to approve the List of Roadways for the City of Cordele R.A.D.A.R. Permit Renewal; seconded by Commissioner Rainey. Commissioner Shephard voted aye; Commissioner Owens voted aye; Commission Vice Chair Reeves voted aye; Commissioner Rainey voted aye. The motion was approved by the Commission.
8. Consider and Approve the Request for Items Listed from the Police Department to be Declared Surplus and to Allow the City of Cordele to Dispose of the Surplus Items via GovDeals.com. Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to approve the Request for Items Listed from the Police Department to be Declared Surplus and to dispose of them via Gov. Deals; seconded by Commissioner Shephard. Commissioner Owens voted aye; Commissioner Rainey voted aye; Commission Vice Chair Reeves voted aye; Commissioner Shephard voted aye. The motion was approved by the Commission.
9. Consider and Approve the Agreement with Government Tax Solutions (GTS) to Assist with the Collection of Delinquent Property Taxes.

Background Information

This agenda item is to request approval to enter into an agreement with Government Tax Solutions (GTS) to assist with the collection of delinquent property taxes. The services include

but is not limited to list preparation, file preparation, title examinations, levy notifications and legal advertisement preparation.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to approve the Agreement with Government Tax Solutions (GTS); seconded by Commissioner Shephard.

Commissioner Rainey voted aye; Commission Vice Chair Reeves voted aye; Commissioner Owens voted aye; Commissioner Shephard voted aye.

The motion was approved by the Commission.

- 10.** Consider and Approve the LMIG SAP Award to Peek Pavement Markings, LLC in the amount of \$373,880.50.

Commissioner Rainey moved to approve the LMIG SAP Award to Peek Management Markings, LLC; seconded by Commission Vice Chair Reeves.

Commissioner Owens voted aye; Commissioner Rainey voted aye; Commissioner Shephard voted aye; Commission Vice Chair Reeves voted aye.

The LMIG SAP Award was approved by the Commission.

- 11.** Discussion – Speeding on Residential Streets.

Commissioner Owens moved to discuss speeding on residential streets; seconded by Commissioner Shephard.

Discussion:

Commissioner Owens stated he has been receiving complaints from citizens regarding speeding in residential areas; the areas are, East 13th, 14th, and 15th Avenues.

Commissioner Shephard stated she has received phone calls from citizens also regarding speeding in residential areas.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves recommended to have a speed study done by the Police Department in the areas which are being referenced.

- 12. CITY MANAGER’S REPORT: Angela Redding Reported.**

Community Meetings with Express Disposal

Thursday, November 16, 2023

5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Community Clubhouse

Thursday, December 14, 2023

5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Community Clubhouse

Cordele Fire Department

Cordele Fire Clown Brigade presented Fire Safety Programs to Cordele Primary School.

Crisp County Care Awards sponsored by Crisp County Community Council

November 9, 2023

Lake Blackshear Resort

Red Carpet & Networking – 6:00 PM
Dinner & Program – 7:00 PM

Cordele Rail Fan Festival – 105 East 9th Avenue

November 11, 2023, 10:AM – 4 PM

Energy Assistance Program

Energy Assistance Program sign-up December 1, 2023 for elderly and homebound; sign-up begins on Tuesday, January 2, 2024 for the General Public.

City Offices Closed

City offices will be closed on Friday, November 10, 2023 for Veterans Day.

Thanksgiving Holiday Schedule:

November 22, 2023 Close at Noon
November 23, 2023 Closed
November 24, 2023 Closed

Comprehensive Plan Meeting

Kick-off for the Comprehensive Plan Meeting was held on Wednesday, October 19, 2023. This is the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Cordele, Crisp County and Arabi.

Community Clubhouse Meeting

Community Clubhouse Meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 13, 2023 at 10:00 AM in the Courtroom.

Election Day

Election day is today, Tuesday, November 7, 2023. City Commissioners are on the ballot, as well as SPLOST.

13. CITY ATTORNEY’S REPORT: No Report.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION: (For Personnel, Litigation, Real Estate): No Executive Session.

15. ADJOURNMENT: Commissioner Shephard moved to adjourn the Meeting at 10:01 AM; seconded by Commissioner Rainey; the motion was approved by the Commission.