

MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 27, 2022 @ 5:30 PM

The Cordele City Commission held a Work Session on September 27, 2022 at 5:30 PM, Cordele City Hall Courtroom, 501 North 7th Street, Cordele, Georgia with the following present:

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

MEDIA PRESENT: Cordele Dispatch – Kerri Klatt.

CALL TO ORDER: Commission Chair Joshua Deriso called the Work Session to order at 5:30 PM.

ROLL CALL: A quorum was established.

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

INVOCATION: Prayer was rendered by Mr. Don Cole.

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

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- To discuss creating an Office of the Chair which reports to the Chairperson with a budget of \$500,000 for four positions:** Community Advancement Manager (CAM), Business Development Manager (BDM), Administrative Assistant, and Marketing and Social Media Manager.
Commission Chair Joshua Deriso: Commission Chair Deriso stated, he requested this item to be placed on the agenda. He stated, he asked the Commission to restructure the Government, where it will reflect a future of investment in the City of Cordele for growth. Commission Chair Deriso included his certificates, degrees and transcripts for the Commission and the citizens to see. He stated he has conversed with representatives from GMA frequently and he had a lengthy conversation with a representative today, a lot of things are left to interpretation, but the Charter is clear, the Chairperson is just not a Commissioner; there are certain powers and responsibilities that the Commissioners have and there is certain authority that the Chairperson has and there is certain authority that the City Manager has. But the Charter is clear that the three are not necessarily not the same. Commission Chair Deriso stated in this proposal, he is not asking for a penny

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more, but he is asking for more responsibility. Commission Chair Deriso stated, the Office of the Chair would be very beneficial on a pilot year, this will only be for one year, for the City of Cordele.

Commissioner Wesley Rainey: “Basically, in the 80’s, the City of Cordele was in a federal lawsuit that structured the Government that way it is structured. So, that is what set us up on the Commission structure and the City Chair at large was by a federal lawsuit. Now, as for this proposal, I am adamantly against it because, we have got the IDA, you have not attended meetings locally; I don’t see hiring anyone to go to meetings when you can go to them yourself. You have not made those meetings, that is the department of the Chair, in the Chapter when it says spokesperson for the City, you should be going to the meetings. You have not gone to Ribbon Cuttings for any new businesses in the City. Mrs. Angela has attended everything, as much as possible and she has been the voice and spokesperson for this City. As a whole, at these meeting, I’ve attended as many as I could, Mrs. Vesta has and Isaac; Royce, but he has just been limited to do his status, but he has always attended meetings. Be at your job, be at where you live, you are not able to attend, then I don’t see hiring people to do the jobs that you should be doing. The Marketing and Social Media, I do not have a problem with that, you are trying to put Mrs. Angela over day-to-day and not go anywhere, according to this proposal. A lot of people want to talk to the City Manager.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “Sir, you are grossly informed; (1) The City Manager and I usually coordinate when there is a Ribbon Cutting, I let her know whether I am able to make it, if I don’t make it, she goes. Grant and I have phone conversations on IDA and IDC and I have been to half of the Meetings of the IDA. When they send an email, if it is on Thursday I will not be attending, by the way we do not have to be a part of the IDA or IDC. They do great work, but we pay also a \$100,000 a year to them and I think the industries that are coming, there are going to pretty much come anyway. I mean that is something we voluntarily pay to them, but, as far as attendance, sir, you haven’t attended many trainings this year. So, if we are going to talk about who attend what, there is mandatory trainings by the GMA, Carl Vinson Institute that you also have not attended this year. I have a host of lawsuits that says I do not suppose to get out in the Community and I don’t suppose to be doing anything without the Commission. If you look at Section 2.32 of the Charter, the last item says, “Fulfill such other executive and administrative duties as the City Commission shall by ordinance establish.” The Commission can establish an Office of the Chair by ordinance.

Mr. Ronald Michael: “Mr. Chair, where will the money come from to fund these things?”

Commission Chair Deriso: “Has I said earlier, we have the budget up here. There are things we pay for that we are not obligated to pay for. We just ended our 311 services; we might have to consolidate some things to get us to the money. But we definitely have the money in the budget. It is certain things I believe; we shouldn’t be paying for from the City. We pay for people membership fees, that we shouldn’t be paying for. The City Manager has found a host of things that we shouldn’t be paying for, since her tenure her. So, there is money, we have to prioritize growth and development. For the people in

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poverty, yes, we can talk about Economic Development, for instant, one thing I would like to see here is a Child Care Program. We cannot tell Walmart and McDonald's to pay people more, that's above our authority, but if we tell big companies like Big Tex, and Griffin, can you chip in and help people to afford child care; and if they give a \$100,000 a year, that person that is making \$2,000, that's paying \$600 for child care and we can have a program and we cut that in half, you've just grown to those people's income. Those are the initiatives I would like to see done and plus if people start hearing that the City of Cordele has a Child Care Program and I can get my child care cut in half, because the industries is saying that, that's going to bring people and industry here."

Mr. Ronald Michael: "So these new positions, are they going to be coming from the inside the City or you going to hire somebody from outside?"

Commission Chair Deriso: I am going to hire competent people that know what they are doing. But most likely, since they are new positions, probably outside the City (City employee)."

Mr. Michael Waters: "Mr. Chair, I guess this is related to the old Commission. As our local government, every one of you all are elected officials, right? So that mean Government is for the people and by the people. We representative the people, so if the people are speaking and saying that we want a change or we want to see a difference because the same old system has been going on. I am the type of person like this, now I understand the vote is important and when you all are asking for our vote, we are not voting, just to say, we are voting, I'm not. So, we just need some kind of change. I mean the Chairman is proposing is a great idea, if you ask me. But I am a community stakeholder, so I am putting it on the record that I declare myself the leader of this new generation and I speak for a lot of people that scared to come up here and speak. But we want to see a change, we want to see something different. I mean it's gang related activity in our City, but are we asking these kids to stop participating in that? Then we got to offer them something, we got to create more jobs, look at the housing conditions. We live in mobile homes, it's a difference on the east side and the west side, this just reality. So, I don't know where this get at, but I had to get that off my chest. Because at the end of the day, elected officials work for the people, the people do not work for them. So, we got to clarify that and now it is time for us to start accountable, I mean each and every one of you all. I don't show no favoritism, I can communicate and relate to each one of you all Commissioners, but it is time for some accountability, somebody needs to be held accountable for their actions and I feel like that has not been going on.

Mrs. Rosie Watkins: Being a Community Leader for twenty-five years and a certified non-profit, knowing a lot of things about the County and City and how things are structured. We have to be able to get money and waive for bringing in other money and get the money that's already here and I would like to see new money coming in for the new things that needs to come in because, right now we don't have enough money to do what we have to do. Focus on how we can bring in new money to take up new things and then you will see the change. Every City is mandated to have a Comprehensive Plan and our Comprehensive Plan starts from 2009 to 2029 and every five years we work in increments to get to the twenty-years. If you look at the Comprehensive Plan for Crisp County, Cordele and Arabi, because it is all in one big

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plan, you look at the plan and it is all written out. I make sure that I am in education in the community, so that's part of the plan that is already here. So how will your plan affect the plan that's already in process from 2024.

Commission Chair Joshua Deriso: That is the playbook, but the problem we have had, you have not had execution of the plan. Commission Chair Deriso stated he believe those positions can execute that playbook.

Mrs. Rosie Watkins: How would you institute to the plan that's already here?

Commission Chair Deriso: The reality with that Comprehensive Plan, it has steps and things you want to do each year. Community Advancement Manager will be charged with doing some of that, we would have to go through and look at it and ask what can we assign to each. The Business Development Person will do the same. The Market and Social Media will bring the City in today's advertising outlet. But that will be essential a playbook, that we will look at and see how each of these positions help for that to come into fruition.

Commissioner Rainey: Chair I think we need to hear the City's Attorney position on this.

Commission Chair Deriso: The City Attorney can speak at any time.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: I know we are talking about doing for one year. I am curious about what the projection is in the years' time?

Commission Chair Deriso: When you say projection, do you mean figures or numbers, the money, the budget?

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: From where we are now, in a year's time, what do we expect?

Commission Chair Deriso: One big measure is, more money coming into the City. Are our people better able to afford lights and water by working on classes, such as budgeting. If you have non-profits dedicated to teaching people those skills, when people start developing, I think we will be in a much better place to not only educate our people, but have a better quality of life. So, the projection is, I think one big thing is the money, the businesses coming in.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman: Mr. Chair in answering his question, City can certainly create any position they want to do, that is in the authority in the Charter, but the City Manager is the supervisor of all employees in the City and that authority is reserved for that position and can't be put under the Chairman under the current Charter.

Commission Chair Deriso: When I talk to GMA and they disagreed. What has been happening is, the last bullet point under Chair is not just there. When it says other executives and administrative duties.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman: That's true, Mr. Chairman, but the Charter reserves, you can't assign a duty that's already reserved for City Manager to somebody else.

Commission Chair Deriso: Sir, I have other lawyers looking at because you have not been fair towards me.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman: I am the City Attorney, right now.

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Commission Chair Deriso: Well, right now, that can be changed and my thing is, even in the media you have said things that have not been true. Your interpretation is not the same as other Attorneys.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman: It stands, the City Manager is in charge of Personnel in our Community. You can change the Charter, ask the General Assembly, right now she is in charge of your Personnel.

Commission Chair Deriso: She will be in charge of all Personnel, except this office.

Mrs. Velezia Grant: My problem is, this is why we can't get anything done, because we argue with each other about who's in charge of what. We need to know who can do what.

Commission Chair Deriso: Every one of these positions, I have submitted four times to this Commission to have under Community Development. So, this is not the first thing I pushed forward. As far as being over Personnel, I didn't want it and I tell you all, all the time, I really didn't want to come back and run for Chair. But the reality is every one of these positions, as far as we talking about who is over Personnel, I submitted a restructuring, when Commissioner Shephard and I had that exchange, that a lot of people got mad with me about, that's what that was about, Section 3.10 who get to make the decision to restructure. So, it's not me trying to say I want to run anything, every one of these positions have been sent in emails and minutes to this body to approve and every one of these positions would have been under the City Manager, but what I saw was, an unwillingness almost to make those changes, so I asked for it, for myself later. I didn't want to come in and say, hey, let me do this, but if you all go back and look at the Meeting Minutes you will see or you can Open Record Request it, that I submitted each and every one of these positions under the City Manager. But what I got through emails, attitudes and responses is they didn't want it that was, so, I presented it this way, so I just don't know anymore.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: I heard Commissioner Rainey say he would accept two of the four items. I support change, I think the only issue we have here is who these four positions would report to. I heard the Chairman say a minute ago, that he brought these positions earlier to be under the City Manager. The important thing is, will the positions work? I don't care who they will report to, will the positions work. We have the City Attorney say, we can't do it under the Chairman. If the Chairman has brought it before the Commission to be under the City Manager, let's tweet the positions and put under the City Manager.

Commission Chair Deriso: Here is the problem, it is my vision. The fact that I submitted something four times and I was told in email, restructuring if any, would be done under the budget. I have a problem because, then what's going to happen is, if someone else is over the position, then if it doesn't work like its design, of the person who design it, then it will be easy to cancel out and say it did not work, it failed. But the person who is going to push it, needs to be over it.

Mr. Crandall Postell: I had the opportunity to read it and I interpreted. The City Attorney works for the Board, he does not have any authority. This is what I am having a problem with, I am sitting here listen to what everybody is saying, we should be asking Mr. Deriso to do what he is asking us to do. If you are doing one thing and you continue to do, you are going to get the same old results. You gotta change, in order to get

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something new. Now, we have someone who has a vision and showing you how to do it and you are fighting him on it. We need to stop bickering; we need to get things done. I will request my Commissioner, for my Ward, please vote for what Mr. Deriso is asking. I will ask Commissioner Isaac to do the same thing, vote for what Mr. Deriso is asking. I would ask for Mr. Reeves to do the same thing, vote for what Mr. Deriso is asking.

Ms. Carolyn Johnson: I want to ask each one of you Commissioners, including my Commissioner; What was your vision when you ran for office? What was your vision, for your Ward, when you ran for office? Because in other words, I am putting on the table now. There is not much I've seen in my Ward, some of it, yes. But there is a lot to do in my Ward and pretty sure. it might not be in Commissioner Rainey, but I know it's a problem in Commissioner Reeves and Commissioner Owens. We need change because, since I've been here, I've been here seventy years, yes, I did tell my boys to leave Cordele because, there was nothing here for them. We voted for change, give this man the opportunity.

Commissioner Shephard: The question was asked, what did I see for my Ward and the City of Cordele. When I came on board, I too had a vision. I said I would be the change that happened here. I have made a few changes; I promoted a few changes. I am looking for an amphitheater over in Williams Field. I am looking for a Civic Center in Cordele. I've always had a vision, I want to tear down all these delapidated houses over here, the Gin, one we got down, over on 10th Street. I am still working on the one on 11th Street. But in my Ward, the houses are the original house from 1889. So, no one is rehabilitating these houses. The people who own these are letting them go to waste. They are properties that are owned by 19 family members and you cannot get anything done. Oh true, we have the worst Ward, as far as, visual, but I have the best people in my Ward. I have a good community in my Ward. I asked for \$5000 a few years ago for each Ward to make general improvements once a year, but that didn't go through. It's not that I am sitting looking and not asking, but when I vote, I need to know what I am voting for and how I am voting. Now, the issue that is on the table now, the one reason for being reluctant is the budget, we have not examined the budget, we have not gone through the budget, as a Commission, the five of us. Do we have these funds that we can appropriate now? The thought is good, do not get me wrong, I like some of the ideas, true enough, but we have to make sure, we have enough resources to cover these. We have not gone up on taxes, five years, four years? We have to look at the whole picture, it's not that I am against what his visions are, but now I am saying, what is our budget? Do we have funds that we can appropriate now? If don't work this year, that means, we have lost \$500,000. I mean it's a chance we are taking true enough, that's in any aspect. Okay, we are saying \$350,000 for salary and the other \$150,000 for other programs. Is that including insurance, is that including life insurance, health insurance, all of the other benefits that comes with the City. We have not sat down at the table and looked at this, it's not that I am abstaining for anything. It is one I really like, it's the Marketing and Social Media Manager, it's the one I can relate to. Where are we going to put all these people? Do we have space to accommodate these offices?

Commission Chair Deriso: What I will say, the \$350,00 is Personnel cost, the \$150,00 is very low, that will be Operational cost. When you look at departments, they usually

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have the two things, Personnel and Operational. So, salary, pay, benefits, training, travel and reimbursement, is all covered in that \$350,000. I will say, this is why I brought the Budget myself and the positions, in what we be paying. We have a lot of things, which is the restructuring plan I submitted. Even before I got sworn in, I talk with some people and the reality, we have a Clinic that we have a Budget set aside for \$235,000 for the employees, that's one thing we pay. What I want the people and the Commission to know, I think this is the first time the Chair has a degree in Government. So, I will not throw anything together that is not sound to reason. So, the reality is the things we pay that we don't have to pay. So, it is a priority decision. Now, whether we want this or whether we want that. Our Budget is going to be our Budget, that's true enough. You got to look at, it is a priority decision. What I am saying, it is some things in here, which is why I have been asking that we get in on the Budget from the start, but not just cruising on the back end, is because the people vote for us to say the priorities. Now there are certain things we have to take care and pay for. We cannot let certain Departments go, then we will not be classified as a City anymore, like Police, Public Works, if you cut so many departments then you will not be classified as a City. But there are certain things we are paying for that we are not obligated to. We have to take a look at, what we have to pay for and what we don't have to pay for and see which way we want to go.

Commissioner Shephard: Okay, say we prioritize what you have here tonight, if I say prioritize, I would say, Social Media Manager and Community Advancement Manager, the other two can wait until next year or another two years. We do not have to do all four of these at the same time. Have we ever considered that? As a method of going into this program.

Commission Chair Deriso: What I bring to this Commission, is always consideration. I go ahead and put it in the plan, I can't vote for it by myself. That has been part of the misconception, I put it in a plan and I don't mind about people tearing it apart. I think out of all of them, the Community Advancement Manager is the priority, if I had to choose. I agree, we do not need them all and I think whomever we have working with business, we can finesse, still get some things done with business.

Commissioner Shephard: I know our City Manager is more familiar with our Budget and if we think we can sit down as a group to see where our Budget will go with this. I do not want us to go over our Budget.

Commission Chair Deriso: I think there are things where we can negotiate and get the essentials for these positions and we will not have to raise people's taxes.

Mr. Don Cole: I just want to make a couple of observations; (1) a year to implement this, I don't know if you would have enough time to really do a good measurement on it. I think maybe six months just to get things in place and then a year after that; (2) My experience over the years has been that government tends to take on a life of its own and you put something in place, even if you have a sunset out there. By the time you get to that sunset, you might be adamantly opposed to keep it going, but the thing has taken a life of its own, so that is a caution to look out for; finally, I believe this is a vision that you have, if you get the votes on the Commission, then it becomes the Commission vision, I, personally, not worried at all about what or not a professional City Manager that we've got would carry this thing out as if, it was her vision, and her idea altogether. I

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would not be worry about that, I believe the other Commissioners know that it is your vision and they get behind it, as well, then this thing will fly and we don't need to worry about who is in charge of it.

Commission Chair Deriso: But you have not had the experiences I've had, these last seven or eight months. The Office of the Chair, will not be able to make any broad decisions by itself. If things need to be done, it will still have to come back to the Commission for a vote.

County Commissioner Larry Felton: The problem that I see here tonight, can't nobody get along. Everybody is worried about who calling the shots and when this Board changed, that is when things started to happen in this town. It's not about black or white, the decisions we make, make it right. I have learned a lot from this young man, since he has been on this Board. Especially, when he started talking about that Charter. I begin to wonder if everybody knows the Charter, if you don't, it still does not mean that they have not read the Charter. I would like to see this City to stop fighting. It's time for us to move on.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: What you call a fight is the Democratic Process, we have here in America. I learned a long time ago, that if, every vote, the whole Board is in an agreement, somebody is not being represented, that's why five of us got elected. You have five people up her with five different opinions, so it is not a fight, it's a difference of opinion.

Mrs. Rosie Watkins: I have been here for twenty-five years and there was no one on my side, but we did it. Follow the money; Cordele and Crisp County are twins, representing together. The money that comes through here, you need to know how much money is coming in, it is not about Cordele or Crisp County, they did it together. Before you do GRANT Writing, you take a picture and take a look at what you got here.

Mr. Devontae Hunt: On this topic about, who does what and what who's role is what about thirty minutes. What does it mean when the Chairperson is the Chief Policy Advocate and What other duties and responsibilities does that entails?

City Attorney Tommy Coleman: The City makes a decision who's the advocate to make the decision for the unified body. He does not have management responsibilities, it's delegated to the City Manager.

Mr. Devontae Hunt: So, in that definition that sounds like that's supporting the policy that the Commission put in, but not advocating for the policy of the City.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman: Actually, the Robert Rules of Order says the Chairman is a neutral arbitrator of the Commission as it debates and then once they all debate, supposedly they supposed to adopt the City's position and move forward together.

Mr. Devontae Hunt: And all other Executive duties.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman: So, they can assign him Chief Executive Administrative Duties, they can't assign him some duties, by Charter, given to somebody else. Of course, Charters can change, General Assembly can change it. They can petition the General Assembly by Resolution, this is the GMA Standard Council Manager Form. But all the personnel functions are delegated by the Charter to the person the City has hired to operate the administrative function of the City.

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Mr. Devontae Hunt: So, if I am understanding correctly, you are saying that the Administrative duties and Executive duties that Chairman possesses, are only giving to him, if the Commission allows to give them to him.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman: If they are not delegated to the City Manager, she already has them by Charter. I know this is complicated, but there are hierarchies of what the Charter is controlling. You can't pass an Ordinance, in conflict with the Charter, if you do the Ordinance is void.

Mr. Devontae Hunt: So, you have the Community Advancement Manager, the Business Development Manager and the Marketing Social Media Manager, most of those things are out sourced.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman: Well, if they sign a contract with somebody, the Contract is a permission function, but if they are an employee, then they work for the City Manager. Those maybe perfectly fine positions, but I did not say we shouldn't have those things, if we do, Mrs. Redding is the one that has to manage it under the Charter, as it is currently drafted.

Commission Chair Deriso: Our Charter does not say not one time the City Manager can sign contracts in certain things, but it has been done, and who said it can be done? The City Attorney, that's why I say, we need a City Attorney who's going to be consistent on the legal principles and not go the way where he like or who he doesn't like he go against. So, the reality is everything he just told you, if that applies there, it should have applied then.

Mr. Devontae Hunt: I would like to hear the City Manager speak back on that.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman: The City Manager called, the Chairman was not available and couldn't execute some documents for the DOT. The City Manager told me the City was threaten to lose the Grant; the Chair was not available or he would not sign, so, I told her DOT was okay with it and she should call all the Commissioners and each one gave her permission to sign the contract. It's not exactly in the Charter, but the City would have lost a couple of hundred thousand of dollars. Sometimes, it's called the "rule of do"; the City Manager needed to save the money that was getting ready to expire.

Commissioner Owens: In reference to the proposal that the Chairman has made; if the record would reflect correctly. As the Chairman use the word "consideration" as he propose these things. I motioned each time that we would consider these items for that purpose. In further discussion with the Chairman, I also asked that it not be something that we look at doing as long-term things. I asked the Chairman to make the proposal of doing it for a year or a metric where we are able to measure to see if it works. We are all in an agreement that something is wrong, but we have to accept the fact that the only way it's going to get corrected or get right, we have to give and take, it is an element of compromise; whether it be the Chairman needed to compromise, whether it be us as Commissioners need to compromise, but the redundancy of what we continue to do is ridiculous at this point. I think that as a Commission; Commissioner Reeves offered an element of compromise; Commissioner Shephard offered an element of compromise; so I think since we have heard some forms of compromise; Commissioner Rainey offered an element of compromise, the entire Commission offered an element of compromise. But,

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now we have offered the elements of compromise, we have to hear them and then we have to react to them and we have to see what we can do to give way to it. There is nothing wrong with moving forward, but you stay stagnant because nobody wants to accept the fact. The other purpose of the Work Session, so we would have the time, where everybody would be able to hear and we would be able to get the insight of what other people think and I think for no other reason, that has been the value of what this meeting has taken place, we have heard from the stakeholders and Commission, so I think it has been prudent for what we need to do.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: We need to tweet the Office of Chair.

Commission Chair Deriso: I am not opposed to any compromise, if you ask me, the Community Advancement Manager will be the most important; I think the Social Media and Marketing will be second; I think an Administrative Assistant is necessary if you are going to have it to keep things together, Business Development, I think we will be able to move and suffice around and without it. But the Community Advancement and what I heard from most of the Commissioners that Social Media and Marketing is definitely something we want to look at doing. We have to start somewhere, and just as I said, this is just a consideration.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: I honestly feel with the timing, I say do not put it on the Agenda, workout the necessities and be ready to move forward at the beginning of the year.

Commission Chair Deriso: The problem with that is, if our budget pass before that, then it won't be no room in the budget for this, so that's pretty much killing it by time, with that solution because if we pass a budget in October and this is not in the budget. our Fiscal year does not start the calendar in January. My definition, you are killing it, because then, there is no money.

Suggestions from Attendees (Citizens): Work remotely.

Genivieve (Janice) Mumphery: How will the positions effect raises for the current employees?

Commission Chair Deriso: You want a raise by merit base. They will not be paid outside their merits. We might have to raise taxes if we want more and that is the reason we have to sit down and prioritize. In my mindset, we have to do two things; take care the people who actually do the work, which is the employees; and then take care of the people who government it is, which is the people who vote for us. The number, as far as, the raises, for you all, like I said, I am not looking to raise taxes, I am not looking for you all not to get raises. That is why I printed out some of the things that we pay in large numbers. We might have to consolidate some things, positions. What I have heard from some departments, certain positions are a waste anyway. I heard at Public Works, one department has too may people and another department does not have as many, but they say we need an additional meter man. So, we have to look at, what government usually do, once you start something in government, you doing it because that's the way it has been done. If the Commission priority, is we want to give every City employee a certain amount of money for a raise, then that's the way it should go, and I agree with it. I am a

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big fan of, when you take care of your people, things will be done right. As far as the numbers, I will be honest with you, if this pass, it will impact how many people will get raises and who will get raises, it will impact the numbers, it will impact the budget, you have to have the money coming in from somewhere. I don't want it to come in at a cost of the employees getting raises. But the other thing is, are we going to continue to neglect the things that the City and the people need together. But I will say if it does come to that and we have to grow the City and there are more industries coming in and you have more businesses coming in, this will grow the City's budget and then we can pay people more. But that would be the last thing I want, for it to come at a cost of people getting raises. But I do believe that 's a lot of fat we need to trim.

Commissioner Rainey: From a dollars and cents perspective, based on our budget and past budget, we do have about \$26,000,000 in new construction and new industry coming into the City of Cordele, that is under construction, currently, that's going to be paying City taxes and everything. Right now, I see no problem with the Marketing and Social Media position being added, but all of them, until the other industries get on our tax roll, I don't see where we can absorb that and give the employees raises and see to the needs of Public Works.

After a lengthy discussion:

Commission Chair Deriso asked for all the Commissioners opinions on the Office of the Chair which reports to the Chairperson with a budget of \$500,000 for four positions: Community Advancement Manager (CAM), Business Development Manager (BDM), Administrative Assistant, and Marketing and Social Media Manager.

Commissioner Rainey stated his option would be, Marketing and Social Media Manager under City Manager Angela Redding.

Commissioner Owens stated he is in favor of the Commission moving forward with Marketing and Social Media Manager and the Community Advancement Manager. But we need to give serious consideration to who they will report to, I definitely think we should move forward in creating these positions. I am not against the other two positions, but as we are doing this, if we do two of them, then we can see what we are working with and that we will have a chance, that would give us some progress toward moving to where we are trying to go to.

Commission Chair Deriso: This is what I am asking you all for, come up with a figure and let me decide what positions I want to prioritize. The number one position for me is the Community Advancement Manager.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: I do not have a comment at this time.

Commissioner Shephard: As I stated, I think we need to prioritize and I will go with the Community Advancement Manager, in that order; if we go with a second, I will say Marketing and Social Media Management. Providing that our budget prevails, we have to look at the budget.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: I go with Commissioner Shephard.

Commission Chair Deriso: I guess it will be table until we look at the budget.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: We need to be clear about who these people will report to.

Commissioner Shephard: If I go home and rethink it, I vote my convictions that day. I just can't swear that I will say, yes, at the next meeting. Don't hold me to that because that's why we are not voting tonight. I might go home and read and think some more. You just can't say, oh, Vesta Shephard said that she was going to vote for these, because I did not say that. I said, "those are the two priorities I would like to see."

Commission Chair Deriso: I will say this, as far as, the money in the budget, it's going to be a squeeze, but it is about prioritizing. What I will ask each and everyone of you all to do is go home and read my restructuring plan, even the chart where it saves the City about \$300,000 because that was the first time. Again, I was not over none of this when I submitted it. The reality is that was the win, win, but now, I'll tell you, it is almost to the point, if I presented something to people four times and we have not really looked at it seriously, I don't feel confident with my name on it, if it is going to go to some people who had four opportunities to pass it and now they getting on board, for me it is hard because I am saying, what energy and effort and passion will be put into it, cause I want to make it work. The way it works, we can set a budget and everything else will have to be worked out. We don't have to look at the budget first. I am going to tell you what don't have to go in our budget, but we pay a lot of membership fees. This clinic doesn't have to be in our budget, at some point, you all decided that we'll take care of our clinic, but I am going to be honest with you, some employees may get mad at me, but if they have health insurance, I feel like, we have given the City employees a clinic that they can go to and get things for free, when we have too many people struggling with hospital bills that they can't afford to pay. We took \$235,000 to give free healthcare to the City employees. One Commission did that and that's almost half for what I am asking for, we talked about \$350,000. So, this body has the history of saying we are going to make this a priority, I am just like, that money is the people money. So, we don't have to necessarily say, well let's look at the budget first, no if we decide here to that we are going to do it, we are going to do it with this amount of budget, then things will have to be worked out in the budget.

Commissioner Vesta Shephard: You said you brought these positions to us, four times before. But this is the first time, we have had a discussion, a discussion on these four, this is the first time we have sat down and discussed this as a group.

Commission Chair Deriso: No, this is not.

Commissioner Shephard: I do not understand why these employees will not go under the auspices of the City Manager as opposed to the Chairman. It is so many things I need clearance on. Is there a specified reason as to why they will not go under the City manager.

Commission Chair Deriso: The specified reason is, because it is my plan. When I sent it to you all, you all did not see it right away.

Commissioner Shephard: So, you think she can't handle it, is this what you are saying?

Commission Chair Deriso: I think it is my plan, I think I see how it will work and because it is a clause in our Charter that we don't suppose to give directives to personnel under the City Manager, then I couldn't come in and say it doesn't suppose to work this way.

2. Discuss Ethics Ordinance.

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City Manager Angela Redding asked for clarity on the Ethics Ordinance: is it three paid officers that would come in and hear the complaints? City Manager Angela Redding stated, what was before you were an Ordinance for an Ethics Officer, so clarification is needed. The Commission mentioned three people coming in, are you all talking about three people coming in from outside the Community, who you all expect to volunteer their time to come and hear the cases? Or are you all referring to three individuals who will be paid and if it is temporary or permanent?

Commission Chair Joshua Deriso stated, he thinks it was getting people outside, like a jury duty and not pay a lawyer to come in.

City Manager Angela Redding asked the Commission, if they were expecting people who live outside Cordele and the County to volunteer their time, come in and hear the Ethics complaints. Mr. Redding asked if this is a case-by-case basis, not looking to change what is in the Charter, as far as, the Ethics Committee, you are saying for cases where there might be a conflict of interest, that three people from outside. City Manager Angela Redding asked for those three people from outside, what are the qualifications you all want from the individuals?

Commission Chair Joshua Deriso stated to stick with the Democratic Process. City Manager Angela Redding suggested to look for retired individuals in local government to volunteer to come in and hear the cases, as long as they understand to the Ethics Ordinance. Clarifying qualifications, outside the Community, temporary and experienced in local government.

3. To discuss Waste Management Contract: The contract with Waste Management ends December 31, 2022.

City Manager Angela Redding inquired from the Commission, if they wanted to renegotiate with Waste Management or advertise for bids. The contract ends December 31, 2022, we have between the 1st and 3rd of October to let Waste Management know the direction the City will be going in according to the contract.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves stated to bid it out.

Commissioner Rainey stated to bid it out.

Commissioner Owens stated to bid it out.

Mrs. Redding stated this will put them on notice to let them know the direction the City will be going in. Commissioner Owens stated that Waste Management will have the opportunity to bid again. This item will be on the Agenda to vote on at the meeting, October 4, 2022.

4. To discuss a Public Hearing on the Solar Panel Ordinance.

The Solar Panel Ordinance went before the Planning Commission, they have held a Public Hearing, so the last step before approval is a Public Hearing by the Commission. Public Hearing on October 11, 2022 at 4:00 PM.

5. Board Appointments

The following Boards need Board Members:

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- Board of Zoning Appeals – Board member appointed in February is unable to attend meetings due to work schedule
- Community Clubhouse Coordination Board – Board member resigned from board
- DDA Board
- Southwest Georgia Railroad Excursion Authority

Names are needed for the Board appointments from the Commission. Please bring recommendations for the Boards.

6. To discuss Personal Time Off (PTO) for the Police and Fire Department.

City Manager Angela Redding stated the Personnel Director, David Wade and herself have been working together to see what other Cities are doing for Police and Fire PTO. There are some things that need to be looked at, as far as, hours accrued for Police and Fire.

Some Cities accrual at 1.04 times the rate of normal employees and then some work it different with vacation. Vacation is okay with the Police and Fire Departments, the Personal Time Off is being accrued differently for them. We will have to look at it some more, so we will have a concrete solution for Police and Fire to accrue PTO, since they work 12 and 24 hours shifts.

7. To discuss Five Year History and Tax Levy.

According to the guidelines, a Public Hearing for approval of the Millage Rate must be held one week before the actual approval of the Millage. Public Hearing at October 11, 2022 at 4:00 PM.

8. To discuss the preliminary budget figures.

City Manager Angela Redding stated information is being pulled for the 2023 Budget. Departments along without adding any other departments, we are right at \$18,000,000 and this includes for some departments some capital items, but there are still other expenditures that need to be brought on line. We are also building in a COLA for the employees because they have not had increases in some years.

9. ADJOURN: Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to adjourn at 8:00 p.m.; seconded by Commissioner Owens; the motion was approved by the Commission.