

**MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
December 19, 2023**

The City of Cordele Commission held a Regular Meeting on December 19, 2023 at 9:00 AM, Cordele City Hall Courtroom, 501 North 7th Street, Cordele, Georgia with the following present:

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

Absent: Joshua Deriso, Commission Chair.

Staff present: Sonya Alexander – Staff Accountant, Fire Chief Todd Alligood, David Wade – Human Resource Director, Captain Jeremy Taylor – Police Department, Steve Fulford – Asst. City Manager/Public Works Director, Irene Cantrell – HUA Director, Jackie Walker – Municipal Court Clerk, Debbie Wright – UC&T Director.

Staff Absent: Police Chief Jalon Heard, Rusty Bridgers.

Media Present: Sarah Brown – Cordele Dispatch.

Call to Order: Commission Vice Chair Royce Reeves, Sr. called the Meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

INVOCATION: There was a moment of silence.

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

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		✓

AGENDA ITEM FOR CONSIDERATION:

1. Discussion - Appointment of the Chairman and Vice Chairman by the Governing Body and the Creation of an At-Large Ward.
Commissioner Rainey moved to add this item to the Agenda for discussion; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the item was approved by the Commission to add to the Agenda.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – December 19, 2023: Commissioner Rainey moved to approve the Agenda for December 19, 2023; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the Agenda was approved by the Commission.

APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – December 5, 2023: Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the Minutes of December 5, 2023; seconded by Commissioner Rainey; the Minutes were approved by the Commission.

APPROVAL OF PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES: - December 6, 2023: Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the Public Hearing Minutes for December 6, 2023; seconded by Commissioner Rainey; the Public Hearing Minutes were approved by the Commission.

SPEAKERS APPEARANCES: No Request.

SPEAKERS ON A SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEM: No Request.

DEPARTMENT HEADS GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

1. FINANCE DIRECTOR: Sonya Alexander Reported.

Achievements

Sanitation Provider Changes – Update Customer Accounts

Ms. Alexander recognized Beverly Vance and the Customer Service Staff for doing an excellent job in receiving phone calls and updating the customer's information.

Goal

2024 Departmental Goals being developed.

2. FIRE DEPARTMENT: Fire Chief Alligood Reported.

Goals

1. Provide best possible service to our citizens and visitors to Cordele.
2. Be professional in our appearance and with our actions.
3. Encourage and expand training for firefighters.
4. Get involved in our community.

Accomplishments

Professionalism:

1. Developed a uniform website with NAEFCO. Firefighters are assigned a uniform allowance yearly. The uniform website portal opens twice a year (October/March) and firefighters can order the uniform items they need to maintain a professional appearance.
2. We have now been fitted and ordered Class A uniforms for all Officers and Firefighters.
3. Developed, wrote, and implemented Emergency Response/Standard Operating Guidelines that detail how our department will respond to emergency situations, operate on, and off emergency scenes, and conduct ourselves at and away from the Station.
4. Presented two Firefighter Commendations for Life Saving Efforts (Lt. Cook & FF. Hulett).

Training:

1. Since the beginning of this year our Officers and Firefighters have attended 1,716 training hours at Georgia Public Safety Training Center (GPSTC). These hours are in addition to the annual training required by GFSTC and ISO (210 hrs.). **Developed and implemented a Career Ladder.**

2. Completed joint training for Mass Casualty/Active Shooter with Crisp County Sheriffs, Crisp County Fire, Crisp County EMS, and Cordele Police.

Community:

1. We attended over 30 community events with partners such as; Crisp County High School, Crisp County Elementary School, Cordele Downtown Council, Cordelia Manor Senior Citizens Facility, Crisp Regional Hospital, A B C Wrecker, American Red Cross, and many more.
2. Hosted a Blood Drive and distributed over 100 smoke detectors.

With Support from Commission and City Manager Redding:

1. Developed and implemented the Deputy Chief position. Had Pinning Ceremony.
2. Made repairs and painted Station 1.
3. Purchase a new Darley Spartan 75' Ladder (Ladder 1). First Push-In Ceremony.
4. Switched to ImageTrend incident reporting with CAD integration.
5. Installed HAAS Alerting devices on our Engines and Ladder to give motorist advanced warning when our vehicles are approaching.
6. Purchased an Electric Vehicle (EV) blanket that will aid in controlling fire spread at our 5 charging stations around the city.
7. Expanded our EMS and MVA response. Equipped our Engines accordingly.
8. Built a pole barn at the water tower location on Pateville Rd to store Extra Ladder 3.
9. Inventoried our equipment, organized, purchased a storage building, and removed outdated/damaged and surplus items.
10. Maintained a Full Staff through much of the year.

3. HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT – Irene Cantrell Reported.

CDBG 2019 / 2020 EXISTING GOAL AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

The Ground Installation of the Sewer Pumps and Sewer Line Improvements within the Mcleod Subdivision for the forty-eight (48) households have been accomplished as per Lanier Engineering Firm.

GOAL- CHIP 2018 – HOME REHABILITATION:

To start and complete the home improvements work for at least three (3) of the four (4) homes with the CHIP 2018 Grant Funds and be prepared to start the application process for additional CHIP Funds in the next funding year.

GOAL – CHIP 2018 – HOME REHABILITATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

We have completed the rehabilitation home repairs on two of the three homes and are preparing to start on the third home as soon as DCA gives the okay. (No changes as of this date)

GOAL: EDRLF COMMITTEE:

To discuss ways to better serve loan recipients that may need some assistance in properly managing their income, debts and assets prior to obtaining an EDRLF Loan.

GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR EDRLF LOANS:

The EDRLF Committee discussed one particular solution to offer loan applicants prior to applying for a loan to contact the University of Georgia's Small Business Center regarding

their “Business Consulting Services” at no cost to Georgia Business Owners and Entrepreneurs. This Goal of the EDRLF Committee has been accomplished.

GOAL AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS REGARDING THE OFFICIAL CITY MAPS UPDATES:

To be prepared for updating the City’s Boundary/Annexations to the Official City Map and to update the City’s Zoning Map with any new Zoning Amendments to the Official Zoning Map.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

All of the latest Annexations and Boundary Map changes were reported by the City and River Valley Regional Commission to the U. S. Census Bureau as requested in May 2023. This goal has been accomplished.

4. HUMAN RESOURCE: David Wade Reported.

The primary goal of the Human Resource Department is to effectively measure the lifecycle of all employees by providing fair and equitable employment opportunities.

Goal One: Recruitment

Workforce Needs Assessment and Recruitment Strategy questionnaires and statistical data was submitted to Georgia City Solutions. The first Work Shop was scheduled for December 13, 2023. The next meeting will be January 9, 2024, to develop a plan to achieve the goals that were identified.

Goal Two: Improving the Employee Experience

Draft job descriptions were received and under review as part of the classification and compensation study. The job descriptions have been distributed to all departments, they are under review, they are due back to Human Resources by January 8, 2024, to be resubmitted to Condrey and Associates for the final step for this process.

5. MUNICIPAL COURT: Jackie Walker Reported.

Goals for Cordele Municipal Court

- Report accurate and complete information for the court and public.
- Complete court docket for the judge in a timely manner.

Accomplishments for Cordele Municipal Court

- Training was completed for Court Clerk Recertification by both Chief and Deputy Clerk for November.
- All dockets and court dispositions were turned into the state on time.

6. CODES/POLICE DEPARTMENT– Captain Jeremy Taylor Reported.

CODES COMPLIANCE

Goals & Accomplishments:

Our overall goal is to strive to make our City more attractive and presentable to current citizens, workers and travelers. The aim is to attract new businesses and potential residents to the city.

(We are continuing to respond to complaints and going street by street to address and identify code related issues)

We continue to address and identify code related issues within the city through education and voluntary cooperation. Again, our intentions are to keep enforcement at a minimum.

We are continually looking for training opportunities and are working on getting each code officer certified on inspections.

The Code Compliance Facebook page was launched. (Cordele Code Compliance)
The first thing that will be posted is the 811 dig tickets, because we found they have not been used effectively and we will start using the tickets.

Commissioner Shephard asked about the status of the Suwanee Apartments, is anyone still living in the apartments?

Captain Taylor stated the last person moved out this past Saturday, December 16, 2023. Suwanee Apartments have been official condemned. Codes Compliance are working with the Management Company on the best way to get it back up and running, this will benefit both, Codes Compliance and the Management Company to do so. It will not be a fast process because it is a lot of problems in that building. It is forty-four (44) units in that Apartment Complex.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Goals & Accomplishments:

Our department has plans to increase the morale and manpower in the department.

(Corey Watson graduated from the police academy in Forsyth on December 15th. Corey Watson received Most Accomplished Award. We just filled a patrol slot. Jordy Contreras is bi-lingual and starts police mandate along with Ryan Chang on January 5th.)

We will continue community policing through events and public contacts.

(Shop with a Cop and adopt an angel were a success. Thank you to everyone for their generous donations for making these events possible.)

We are focusing on increasing the quality of training for our officers, by offering more in-house training class which can be specific to the city's needs.

(We are working hard on a training schedule for next year with the aim to have more in-house training.)

7. PUBLIC WORKS – Steve Fulford Reported.

Public Works is continuing to work with Express Disposal to make this transition as easy as possible.

Cemetery Sewer Rehab is the next big project for Public Works, this will start next year, 2024.

Designated Truck Parking is on the South side of 11th Avenue, there is a form that the owner of the truck will have to fill out and sign, releasing the City for any liability, this form is located at the Public Works Office.

UT&C – Debbie Wright Reported.

We completed the annual preventative maintenance on all 7 lift stations. The only big problem we found was one of the pumps at Kelly Road had to have a new mechanical seal. It has been repaired and back in service.

We received our Water Lab Recertification from EPD.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Proclamation: Parrish Lamar Preston – Honoring for Tennis Pro Hall of Fame Inductee at Clark Atlanta University.
Commissioner Isaac Owens presented the Proclamation to Parrish Lamar Preston, on behalf of the City Commission.
2. Consider and Approve a Resolution to Authorize the Preparation and Submittal of a Community HOME Investment Program (CHIP) Grant Application to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.
Commissioner Rainey moved to approve a Resolution to Authorize the Preparation and Submittal of a Community HOME Investments Program (CHIP) Grant Application; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the Resolution was approved by the Commission.
3. Consider and Approve Resolution: RC Administration FY 2024.
Commissioner Rainey moved to approve a Resolution for RC Administration FY 2024; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the Resolution was approved by the Commission.
4. Consider and Approve a Resolution to Authorize the City of Cordele CHIP Application Fee FY 2024.
Commissioner Owens moved to approve a Resolution to Authorize the City of Cordele CHIP Application Fee FY 2024; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the Resolution was approved by the Commission.
5. Consider and Approve an Agreement with Bridging the Gap Educational Services, Inc. for Use of the Facility located at 212 N 2nd Street and Standard Field.
Commissioner Shephard moved to approve an Agreement with Bridging the Gap Educational Services, Inc.; seconded by Commissioner Owens; the Agreement was approved by the Commission.
6. Consider and Approve Heating and Cooling Service Agreements with RHC Heating and Cooling.
Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the Heating and Cooling Service Agreement with RHC Heating and Cooling; seconded by Commissioner Rainey; the Agreement was approved by the Commission.
7. Consider and Approve Reappointment to Boards:
City Manager Angela Redding stated, under Cordele/Crisp Industrial Development Authority, Mr. Bob Evans will be removed, this is a County Appointment.

Commissioner Owens moved to approve the Reappointments to City Boards; seconded by Commissioner Rainey; the Reappointments to the Boards were approved by the Commission.

Animal Control Board – 5-year term

<u>Name</u>	<u>Expiration Date</u>
Curtis Lucas	12.31.2023
Todd Helms	12.31.2023
Amy Stokes	12.31.2023

Cordele Building Code Board of Adjustments and Appeals – 3-year term

Wilburn Stanford	12.31.2023
David Conner	12.31.2023

Cordele Electrical Code Board of Adjustments and Appeals – 3-year term

Willie Patrick	12.31.2023
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Cordele Fire Code Board of Adjustments and Appeals – 3-year term

Arthur Jackson	12.31.2023
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Cordele Housing Code Board of Adjustments and Appeals – 3-year term

Danny Ross	12.31.2023
Bob McCadams	12.31.2023

Cordele Plumbing Code Board of Adjustments and Appeals – 3-year term

Rob Underwood	12.31.2023
Joann Phillips	12.31.2023
Pastor Johnny Dean	12.31.2023

Cordele Tree Board – 3-year term

Willie Patrick	12.31.2023
Commissioner Isaac Owens	12.31.2023
Commissioner Vesta Beal Shephard	12.31.2023

Cordele/Crisp Industrial Development Authority

Steve Bridges	12.31.2023
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Juvenile Crime & Community Safety Committee

Pastor Terrance Walker
Summer Murray
Dr. Ruby Jackson
Courtney Oliver
Mario Kellogg

8. New Appointment Needed to the following City Boards
Commissioner Owens moved to table this item until the Commission can consider New Appointments: seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the Commission approved to table this item.

Cordele Building Code Board of Adjustments and Appeals – 3-year term

One (1) Board Member

Cordele Electrical Code Board Adjustments and Appeals – 3 – year term

One (1) Board Member

Cordele Mechanical Board of Adjustments and Appeals – 3-year term

Three (3) Board Members

Cordele Tree Board – 3-year term

Two (2) Board Members

Downtown Development Authority of Cordele – 4-year term

Two (2) Board Members

9. Consider and Approve Alcohol License Renewals. With No Exception Noted.
Police Chief Heard reviewed applications.
Commissioner Rainey moved to approve the Alcohol License Renewals; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the Alcohol License Renewals were approved by the Commission.

Beer Only Consumed Off Premises

Sunoco	1808 E 16th Ave.	Hiteshibhai Patel
Railhouse Tavern	105 S 8th St.	Adam White
Savage Quick Stop	206 S 11th St. Ste. A	Sherrod Savage
Green Pantry	502 E 16th Ave	Kavish Patel

Beer & Wine Only Consumed On Premises

16 East	1309 E 16th Ave.	Robley Morrison
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Liquor by the Drink

16 East	1309 E 16th Ave.	Robley Morrison
Railhouse Tavern	105 S 8th St.	Adam White

Beer & Wine Consumed Off Premises

Wal-Mart Supercenter	1215 E 16th Ave.	Heather Gregory
Joe's	1305 S. Joe Wright Dr.	Anand Vijay Patel
Railhouse Tavern	105 S 8th St.	Adam White

10. Discussion - Appointment of the Chairman and Vice Chairman by the Governing Body and the Creation of an At-Large Ward.

Background:

Commission Vice Chair Reeves stated he would like to see the Chairman and Vice Chairman chosen from the Governing Body and for the seats to rotate each year. The Wards will remain the same; there will not be an At-Large Seat for Chairman. The Chairman will have a chance to vote.

Commissioner Shephard stated that the original City Charter states this, that the Board selects the Chairman each year. So, we are going back to the original format. Commissioner Shephard stated, “she has no problem with it”. But it will have to go before the General Assembly.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman stated, this is a Charter Amendment, the Commission will have to adopt a Resolution and the General Assembly will have to change the Charter.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves stated, if this is done, it will not take effect until 2025 Election. He would like to see every Commissioner as the Chairman.

Commissioner Rainey stated, he thinks it is a good idea because, he thinks it is dangerous for someone to be elected into the Chairman Seat without any experience, i.e., that has sat on the Commission and worked in the Community. Commissioner Rainey stated, when the Chairman is elected from amongst the Commission, at least, that position will have the respect of the majority of the Commission. It is also giving the Commission the ability, if they do not like the direction the City is headed, a change can be made annually and the Commission do not have to wait four (4) years. Commissioner Rainey stated, “he is in favor of making that change.”

Commissioner Owens asked about what the Charter stated, have we been wrong all this time?

Commissioner Shephard stated, “no”, the Charter was amended. This is what the original City Charter stated, now we want to go back to the original Charter.

Commissioner Owens stated, “he is in favor of it”, I think it is a worthwhile idea. Commissioner Owens stated, he hates that this is being done now. The Commission did not just get wrong at this time. When we go back to other persons who served as Chair that held the seat for years, it was many things wrong under their leadership, as well, and we did not see the need to change at that point. Commissioner Owens stated, changing it, I am fine with that, based on the way it has been explained. But I just want to make a point of clarity, it is not all of a sudden, we see the light. I do not think, it is fair to those persons who have served as Chair and did not have the experience as stated, that we make them as if they were insignificant in their role.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman asked the Vice Chair Reeves, “is it by consensus for him to bring a Resolution back to change the Charter for that purpose?”
Vice Chair Reeves answered, “yes”.

11. CITY MANAGER’S REPORT – City Manager Angela Redding Reported.

City Manager Angela Redding introduced a new member of staff, Mr. Ricky Smarr, the Social Media and Marketing Coordinator for the City of Cordele.

City Manager Angela Redding presented a Power Point for her report.

Information on transferring from Waste Management to Express Disposal

Effective January 1st, 2024, Express Disposal will be your new contracted waste provider for the City of Cordele. Express Disposal looks forward to servicing the residents of the city in the new year.

You will notice the following changes during the month of December 2023

- All Carts will be delivered curbside- Trash service will no longer be provided in the alleys and all collection will be at the curbside.
- Express will deliver you a new trash cart beginning the week of December 11th - - December 15th
- DO NOT USE this trash cart until Waste Management removes their trash carts during this same timeframe.
- Please leave your Waste Management cart out after it has been serviced as a contractor will be removing the empty Waste Management cart.
- Once your existing Waste Management cart is removed the week of December 11-15 begin using your new Express cart.
- Waste Management will service your new Express cart beginning the weeks of December 18th and 25th.
- Beginning January 1st Express will begin servicing your carts.
- If you have any questions, please call Express Disposal at 229-352-4300

Please keep all carts 6 ft away from mailboxes, power poles, fire hydrants or any obstructions.

Goals

Goal 1 – Enhancing Employee Experience

- ✓ Engaged Condrey & Associates for a Classification and Compensation Study
- ✓ Approved a Memorandum of Agreement with Georgia City Solutions for a Municipal Workforce Development Strategy
- Employee Interest Groups
- Employee Surveys
- Enhance Employee Training – Create Career Paths for Employees
- Contact GMA for an update on the Retirement Plan and reestablish the Pension Committee in 2024.

Goal 2 – Revenue Recovery

- ✓ Approved an agreement with Government Tax Solutions to assist with the collection of delinquent property taxes

Goal 3 – Protecting City Assets

- Re-establish the Loss Control Prevention Committee in 2024

Goal 4 – Neighborhood Sustainability

- ✓ Revamped Code Enforcement

Action Items

1. Schedule Hearings for the following businesses with exceptions noted for renewal of an alcohol license:

Beer Only Consumed On Premises

Odom Pool Room
412 W 16th Avenue

Beer & Wine Consumed Off Premises

Quick Buy Food Store
1026 E 24th Avenue

Quick Mart #17
501 W 16th Avenue

The Commission will look at a date for this year to schedule a Meeting.

2. Change Probation Period from 12 (twelve) months to 6 (six) months.
Commissioner Shephard moved to approve changing the Probation Period from 12 (twelve) months to 6 (six) months, effective January 1, 2024; seconded by Commissioner Rainey; the Commission approved changing the Probation Period, effective January 1, 2024.
3. Consider a 2.5% Pay Increase for Employees who receive certifications in their respective Profession (Note: This has been a standard in the past but it has never been approved by the City Commission).
Commissioner Shephard asked if the increase could include degrees/diplomas.
City Manager Angela Redding responded, if that is the desire of the City Commission.
Commissioner Shephard moved to increase a 2.5% Pay Increase for Employees who receive certification and degrees/diplomas; seconded by Commissioner Rainey; the Commission approved the pay increase to 2.5% for receiving certificate and degrees/diplomas.
4. Food Trucks
 - a. Increase fee from \$100 to \$200
 - b. Limit the number of times a Food Truck can set up in the community to ten (10)
 - c. Identify a parking area at Williams Field for Food TruckA consensus by the Commission to discuss Food Trucks when a date is set for the Alcohol License Renewals.

Christmas Holidays Observed

City Offices will be closed: Monday, December 25 & Tuesday, December 26, 2023.

New Year Holiday

City Offices will be closed Monday, January 1, 2024 in observance of New Year's Day. Offices will reopen on Tuesday, January 2, 2024 for normal business hours at 8:00 AM.

12. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT: No Report.

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION: (For Personnel, Litigation, Real Estate):

Commissioner Owens moved to go into Executive Session at 10:31 AM to discuss litigation; seconded by Commissioner Rainey; the Commission approved going into Executive Session.

14. REGULAR MEETING RECOVENED:

Commissioner Owens moved to reconvene the Regular Meeting at 10:57AM; seconded by Commissioner Rainey; the Commission approved to reconvene the Regular Meeting.

- 15. ADJOURNMENT:** Commissioner Shephard moved to adjourn the Meeting at 10:58 AM; seconded by Commissioner Owens; the motion was approved by the Commission.

APPROVED