

**MINUTES  
CITY COMMISSION CALLED MEETING  
DECEMBER 21, 2023**

A Called Meeting of the Cordele City Commission was held on December 21<sup>st</sup> 9:00 AM, City of Cordele Courtroom, 501 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Cordele, Georgia with the following present:

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

**Absent:** Chairman Joshua Deriso.

**Staff Present:** Police Chief Jalon Heard, Captain Jeremy Taylor, Fire Chief Todd Alligood.

**Media Present:** Sarah Brown – Cordele Dispatch.

**Call to Order:** Commission Vice Chairman Royce Reeves, Sr. called the Called Meeting to order at 9:01 AM

**Invocation:** There was a silent moment of prayer.

**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		✓

**Remove Agenda Item #3:** Commissioner Owens moved to amend the Agenda to remove Agenda Item #3.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman stated he needs time to draft the Resolution.

Seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved to remove Agenda Item #3 from the Agenda.

**Approval of Agenda – December 21, 2023:** Commissioner Rainey moved to approve the Agenda for December 21 2023, with the removal of Agenda Item #3; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved by the Commission.

1. Discussion - Alcohol Renewal Licenses with Exceptions Noted:

**Beer Only Consumes On Premises**

Odom Pool Room                      412 W 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue

**Background:**

City Manager Angela Redding stated, she received information regarding numerous incidents at Odom Pool Room, as well as, an incident that occurred over the weekend, but the Police Department will elaborate further on this matter.

Police Chief Heard stated, he noted some concerns, he has, from Public Safety Perspective. A packet was submitted for different calls that were received by the Cordele Police Department from that location. The Police Department just had a call recently, last week. We had two persons that were shot at that location. One of the persons that were shooting was the Security for the Pool Room and he was also a convicted felon. Chief Heard stated, having a large crowd at the Pool Room and the Security, is just a concern.

There was a total of eleven (11) calls this year at that location. Nature of the calls were; assault, disturbance, large crowd, battery and loud music. There have been multiple altercations at Odom Pool Room. Mr. Odom has been cited for the altercations at the Pool Room. Chief Heard gave a detail description of the altercations at the Pool Room.

The Control Commander attempted to make contact with the Staff at the Pool Room about Security, it was said, that it is just too much for them to hire security. Chief Heard stated that coming into a business of a Night Club, that is an inherited risk that is being taken, as far as Security, it will be an added expense.

There has also been food selling at this location and this is not included in the License.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman asked if the Owner of the Pool Room had a Health Department Permit to sell food?

Genivieve Mumphery, City Clerk answered, "no".

Commissioner Owens asked if the City of Cordele have requirements for Security or are they required to do a background check?

Chief Heard stated, the Police Department offer services for Security, the Police Department does not make them do that, they can hire their own Security.

After a lengthy discussion on the incidents; City Attorney Tommy Coleman stated, if the Commission choose to deny the License, the appropriate motion is to table it, then notify the Owner for a Hearing and then they will come before the City to show cause the reason their license should not be removed, this is when a vote is taken at that time, within about thirty (30) days.

Commissioner Shephard asked if the Manager of the Pool Room been cited for anything?

Answer, "yes".

Commissioner Shephard asked, how has the City communicated with the Owners?

Chief Heard stated, the Police Department communicated prior to citing them about the concerns that the Police Department had, then they were cited, this was recently, within the last two weeks. They will be cited for the recent incident, as well.

Commissioner Shephard asked, out of the eleven (11) incidents, how many were violent crimes, e.g., gun shot wounds, stabbing, anything in that nature.

Chief Heard stated five (5) of the eleven (11) calls were some sort of assault or fight.

Captain Taylor stated, it was the Owner's nephew managing the place; he is the same person who was managing the Player's Choice on 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue that was shut down because we had multiple incidents there too.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves stated, he has spoken with the Owner; his recommendation is to do the thirty (30) days, sit down with the Owner to see what can be done to make it better. Commission Vice Chair Reeves stated he is in favor of having an Ordinance to say if you have a Night Club in Cordele and alcohol is being served on the premises, you have to have Security.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman stated he will prepare an Ordinance, stating, you have to have Certified Security in opening a Night Club or a Business with Alcohol.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves, a person(s) will have to agree to the Ordinance to get an Alcohol License. Commission Vice Chair Reeves asked the City Attorney Tommy Coleman to prepare an Ordinance and the Commission will schedule a Public Hearing within the next thirty (30) days.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman stated, the motion should be table, pending a Public Hearing before the Commission.

Commissioner Owens moved to table the discussion on License Renewal on Odom Pool Room pending a Public Hearing; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion to table the discussion on Odom Pool Room was approved by the Commission.

City Manager Angela Redding asked for clarification on Odoms Pool Room; are they still allowed to sell alcohol during the thirty (30) days, pending a Public Hearing.

City Manager Tommy Coleman answered, "Yes, they can sell alcohol". It does not mean they can break the law; they can still be cited. They can continue to serve until the Public Hearing.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves recommended to Mr. Odom, if he plan to be open until the Public Hearing, to reach out to the Police Department to see if there are any available Officers, if there is not, reach out to the Sheriff Department.

#### **Beer & Wine Consumed Off Premises**

Quick Buy Food Store            1026 E 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Chief Heard stated, there was some concerns regarding this business, but he does not have any further concerns, all concerns have been addressed.

Commissioner Rainey moved to approve Quick Buy Food Store Alcohol License, seconded by Commissioner Shephard; Quick Buy Food Store Alcohol License was approved by the Commission.

Quick Mart #17                    501 W 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Chief Heard stated, there was some concerns regarding loitering, but he does not have any further concerns, all concerns have been addressed.

Commissioner Shephard moved to approve the Quick Mart #17 Alcohol License; seconded by Commissioner Owens; Quick Mart #17 Alcohol License was approved by the Commission.

2. Discussion - Food Trucks
  - a. Permit Fee  
Background:

City Manager Angela Redding stated that there has been discussion regarding increasing the Permit Fee; the fee is now \$100 and there is a recommendation to increase it to \$200. But also, some other discussion that seem to be feasible, as well, is instead of issuing an Annual Permit, is every time a Food Truck is wanting to set-up in the City, they would need to come in and get a Permit. I think it was \$30 that was recommended, but each time a Food Truck sets up, they will have to come in and get the Permit, pay for the Permit and then they can set-up. This will be a notification to the City and they will be charged each time they set-up.

These are recommendations that was brought up. Again, the issue that the City is having, is for \$100, we have some that have been setting up every day, every week.

Commissioner Owens inquired regarding the \$100 Annual Fee and the Permit.

City Manager Angela Redding stated, to eliminate the Annual Fee and have the Permit Fee only. Repeat offenders need to be made aware of violating the Ordinance that we have in place, that there are fines and their License can be revoked.

City Manager Angela Redding stated if the Mobile Food Truck Vendors does not come in and get a Permit, they will be in violation.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves stated the Permit will offset the number of times the Food Truck Vendors can set up, they can set-up as many times, as they would like to set-up.

A question was asked regarding paying for a Permit for a number of days and an emergency comes up, what will happen?

City Manager Angela Redding replied, the City will honor the Permit, but the key is communicating with the City.

Commissioner Rainey moved to have a Permit Fee of \$30 per day in the Community for the Food Truck Vendors; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the Commission approved the Permit Fee of \$30 per day for Food Truck Vendors, effective January 1, 2024.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves stated, this does not affect our Food Truck Fridays, these are the City Special Events.

City Manager Angela Redding alerted the Food Truck Vendors that were present; until the new Ordinance is in place, they still have to abide by what the City currently has in place. You must notify the City when you are going to set-up in the City and where.

b. Number of times a Food Truck can set up in the Community – the set-up will eliminate the times Food Trucks can set-up.

c. Identify a parking area at Williams Field for Food Trucks – Food Trucks will park in the center of Williams Field.

City Manager Angela Redding will look at Williams Fields to locate a spot for the Food Trucks to park.

3. Consider and Approve a Resolution for the Governing Body to Appoint the Chairman and Vice Chairman and to create an At Large Ward. Removed from the Agenda.

4. Discussion -Unexcused Absences at City Commission Meetings.

**Background:**

City Manager Angela Redding stated there were questions regarding unexcused absences at City Commission Meetings. She stated she was able to locate information regarding what other Cities do in regards to unexcused absences. City Manager Angela Redding stated in the literature that was provided, there is a meaning for “just cause”. For unexcused absences or absences without just cause, there is a deduction of ten (10) percent of the gross monthly compensation for each regular meeting or work session that is missed without just cause. City Manager Angela Redding stated, this is just information as to what can be done. She stated, the Commission can decide however they want to proceed with this, but again this is just an example of what other Cities are doing. It mentions “just cause” will be personal illness of the elected official or a member of their family, absence due to attending a funeral of an immediate family member, or any absence deemed justified and reasonable by a vote of the governing body. This is a decision the Commission will have to make.

Commissioner Rainey recommended twenty-five (25) percent per unexcused absences, we are only meeting on the first and third Tuesdays; at least twenty-five (25) percent should come off the salary on unexcused absences.

City Manager Angela Redding asked if this will apply to both, meeting and work session. Commissioner Rainey stated, “yes”, this is for both.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman stated, he will put this in an Ordinance form, i.e., percentage, meetings, work sessions, and bring it to the Commission and the Commission can debate about it.

City Manager Angela Redding stated the Ordinance needs to include who will the elected officials notify.

5. ADJOURNMENT: Commissioner Owens moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 AM; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved by the Commission.