

**MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION CALLED MEETING
October 20, 2022**

A Called Meeting of the Cordele City Commission was held on October 20th, 2:30 p.m., 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
Tommy Coleman, City Attorney	Janice Mumphery, Recording Secretary

Media present: Cordele Dispatch – Chris Lewis.

Call to Order: Commission Chair Joshua Deriso called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

Invocation: Prayer was rendered by Mr. Don Cole.

Pledge Allegiance to the United States Flag: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Rainey.

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		✓

Commission Chair Deriso: “Before we start this Meeting, I have said that this Meeting is not properly done because I did not get notification until this morning. So, this call Meeting is actually out of order. I did not get notification, the right way, according to Section 2.19, until this morning. You guys cannot send me an Agenda and say one of the Commissioners called the Meeting. The only person single handedly can call a Meeting is the Chairperson. It takes three Commissioners, in writing, to notify the Chairperson or any other Commissioner that did not sign on that a Called Meeting or Special Meeting will be had. I did not get notification until this morning. I have it in a text message and I sent it in email. So, if you all want to proceed with this Meeting, you’ll can proceed with this Meeting, but you you’ll did not do it in the right order. I did not get notification and when I text, what was said was, I will send it in the morning and I got it in the morning.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: “Do you speak with the Chairman on yesterday.”

Janice Mumphery: “I did speak with the Chairman.”

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: “Did you inform the Chairman, that we were having this Meeting?”

Janice Mumphery: “Yes, I did.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: “What time was it?”

Janice Mumphery: “It was between 11 and 12.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “What you said ma’am, that the checks were ready and I asked about the Meeting.”

Janice Mumphery: “No.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “I informed you of this process, basically, you can’t send the Agenda first, without telling me and you said Commissioner Reeves called the Meeting.

Janice Mumphery: “He did.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “He can’t call it by himself, he has to be that official document.”

City Manager Angela Redding: “Don’t we have it in writing.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “Yea, but I got it late, yea. You can have the Meeting tomorrow in 24 hours and you can have it on Monday.

City Manager Angela Redding: “it says by telephone personally.”

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: “That’s exactly what it says.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “Yes, and that’s fine, but I said who else called the Meeting? Because Commissioner Reeves can’t do it.” Then you said, I think Commissioner Shephard and Commissioner Rainey did. But, you had to give me notification first. You lead with the checks, being the main reason you call me. You can’t do it that way.”

Janice Mumphery: “I called you and I said, we went through the little spill that we go through and then I said the checks are ready, Commission Chair Royce Reeves has called a Meeting for tomorrow, and that’s when you proceeded to tell me that they can’t do that. You asked who called…”

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: “Motion to Proceed.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “No, we are going to finish, I am the Chair, you can’t do that. We are talking. You are right, you are exactly right. It is not about you and I, what I believe the rest of them have led you wrong. Because again, the problem is this, the way you presented to me, it has to be presented by telephone specifically who called the Meeting. You led with only Commissioner Reeves and he can’t call a Meeting by himself. I speaking to you, but I am really speaking to the Commissioners up here. It’s not you, trust me, but it has to be done properly and in order. Now a motion can be made that we proceed with this Meeting. But, I want on record, in these minutes, what has been done, and what have occurred.”

Janice Mumphery: “It will be.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “Oh! I know, that’s why I am putting it on the record,”

Commission Chair Deriso: “Is there a motion you all would like to make?”

Motion: Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to proceed with the Meeting; seconded by the Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved by the Commission.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. First Reading of an Ordinance Repealing Article XII of Chapter 2 of the City Code of the City of Cordele in its Entirety and Adopting a New Article XII of Chapter Entitled “Ethics”; Repealing All Ordinances in Conflict Herewith; and For Other Purposes. Commissioner Reeves moved to approve the First Reading of an Ordinance; seconded by Commissioner Shephard.
Commission Chair Deriso: “I would like to say for the record, the problem I have with this, it has not been a problem when this Commission looks like this and all of a sudden when I have some Ethics Complaints people want to change it up. I have a problem because we had two people on the Ethics Committee that didn’t belong on the Ethics Committee and that should have been caught. But, it was stacked against me when Commissioner Shephard brought her complaint because of the people who was on the Committee. I called it out when people had to be removed. But, then all of a sudden, we want to change the whole process. This Body always

had the authority to do two things, there is standing committees and then there is special committees. We could appoint people, just like Commissioner Reeves at first for a temporary solution to hear my Ethics Complaint. But the Chairperson always had the responsible to appoint one person with no confirmation by this Commission and then another person with confirmation, for months that was not done. So...just like our City Attorney tried to pass in the City of Camilla to try to stack the Ethics Committee against some City Council people there, he is trying to do the same thing to us and that's not right and I want the people to know that. So, I have a problem all together about why we are doing this and the reason we are doing this and ...what the people elected. Rather the people like it or not, it's cutting their power from them. And I just would like to say that is not okay. I don't think we should pass it and that's the reason why we shouldn't pass it. And furthermore, this Meeting again, is not in the right order, but as far as, the Ethics, we have a Democratic Process, which we select people and those members can be recused if we have issues with them. I had no problem with the Ethics Committee going on with my complaints. I just said because someone wrote an article, defaming me, what was on the Ethics Committee they should be recused and that was fair, that was fair and all I asked for. But we are letting somebody choose, that's not the five of us, what we are going to do.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: "Chairman, no Ethics Committee have ever removed a Commissioner, never. My problem with it was, as you say, you have a problem with a person being on the Ethics Committee that wrote an article and said some things about you. There is another person that you appointed to the Board, that had somethings to say about Commissioner Shephard.

Commission Chair Deriso: "And he should be recused."

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: Okay, that leaves one somebody on that Board, whom we did not have. So, again, no Commissioner has never been removed from the seat from the Ethics Committee. I felt with all fairness that we bring somebody in here that has no skin in the game to hear these Ethics complaints. That's the purpose for the Committee, if the people have a problem with it and don't understand it. I might not know what I am talking about, but it seems to be fairness things to all of us. I don't want people to hear your Ethics complaints that text back and forward with you and friends with you, I don't want them to hear your complaints. That was my purpose for this, it's not to be against no one, but to be for all and that's the reason I said we should do it. Through social media, they call it social media and the things that have went forth. This Commission has been the most talked about Commission, whether good or bad, in my nine years of office and to think of my nine years of office, I can't think of a time, where there was an Ethics complaint filed on a Commissioner in nine years before this Commission. So, like I said this is not against you, in my opinion, this is for you. Because I don't want somebody on this Ethics Board, that has made up their minds, that they don't like Joshua Deriso, I don't want somebody to come in here and feel that way and not hear the Ethics complaint because they have it made up in their mind that they don't want to have anything to do with you...when I came back, when you allowed me to speak. I came back and I want to be fair to us all. Let us talk about being fair to us all, we are all human beings, we all got elected, and I see no one on this panel up here that is better, than anyone else. I do not see anyone up on this panel with no more authority than anybody else, I don't see that, I see each and everyone. I am going to continue to do my best, in spite of what's being said as the Senior

Commission. I feel it is my duty to be the bridge between us, I feel like that's my duty here and I am going to continue to do that. If anybody who opposes what I do in three years' time, if I go to Court and lose, it will be before three years' time. Anything I have done and the people are not satisfied with it, they can come and vote me out. During my suspension, I sat back and watched these Meetings and I saw disrespect from all ends. I didn't like it, I've been embarrassed and I continue to be embarrassed, mostly certainly embarrassed in the last Meeting. This Meeting was called to, I asked for a Called Meeting because, as you see these things we are talking about tonight, they were on the Agenda for Tuesday night Meeting. The name of the game is for us to take care of the business for the citizens and that's why we were up here Tuesday night to take care of the business. But, we are going to continue to be disrespectful to each other, we are not doing the people a decent service. This Meeting is for the Chairman to conduct, but the Meeting belongs to the people, without the people, there will not be a Meeting. We have to put our differences to the side and take care of the business. I do not want to talk about the Recall up here, because the Recall happened outside those doors. I want to be fair.

Commission Chair Deriso: Did you all thoroughly read over the Ordinance? Do you all know who make the list for the people that you all will be appointing? That has been delegated to the City Manager to come up with a list.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: "That was my intention."

Commission Chair Deriso: "The last page does not say Chairman and Commission, so it is sloppy work, it says Mayor and Council.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: "Mayor is another word for Chairman and Council is another word for Commission.

Commission Chair Deriso: "It is sloppy because what happens is the people copy this, they work in other Cities and they just copy and paste the thing right over and forgot to go to the last page and change Chairman and Commission.

Amended Motion: Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to amend the motion to make sure the terms used in in the Ordinance, where it says, Mayor and Council be changed to Chairman and Commission; Commissioner Shephard stated one can be identified in Section 2.279, Bar Against Subsequent Complaint. Commissioner Rainey seconded the Amended Motion.

Commission Chair Deriso: "Sir, don't interrupt my Meeting."

City Attorney Tommy Coleman: "I am not interrupting your Meeting, I am having a side bar.

Commission Chair Deriso: "You can have a side bar outside. If you need to speak you need to say Chairman.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman: "Alright..."

Commission Chair Deriso: "No sir, do not interrupt my Meeting, I will gavel you out."

City Attorney Tommy Coleman: "This is the First Reading..."

Commissioner Chair Deriso: "No, no, no, you can't take over my Meeting. Keep talking, if they want to waste time and bring an illegitimate Meeting, that's what we are going to have. If we are going to play games, we are going to play games today. Let's play games. If you all want to leave, go, because nothing will be conducted during this Meeting. Because this whole Meeting is illegitimate. It's not by Ordinance and I told each and everyone and call each and everyone and said they didn't do it right. So this gavel is in my hand, I am Chairman, if they want to proceed, they have the opportunity to send the notice right like it suppose to, in twenty-four hours in advance. But the Charter will be followed.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: “She said that, this lady isn’t telling a lie, it says, in writing or by phone call, She called you.

Commission Chair Deriso: “Were you on the phone call? She didn’t call for that purpose. With the section, you all have it right there.”

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: “You carried a motion.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “This is a discussion. Yes, I carried the motion. We can discuss, but it is a Meeting that does not line up with the Charter. So if you want to go back and do it right, I will be all for it. But you did not do it right.”

Dr. Ruby Jackson: “You know what, this is just ridiculous.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “It is, it is ridiculous from the origin, but please, please don’t talk...”

Dr. Ruby Jackson: “You can put me out too.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “I am not going to put you out, but what I am saying to you, is the ridiculousness started when I asked them to send me the proper notification and they did not.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: “I asked for a Meeting, they are right.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “But, I did not get it to this Morning.”

Commissioner Rainey: “Chairman, this is just to pass it, we have to do a couple more Readings of this.

Commission Chair Deriso: “Sir, the Meeting itself is not the way it supposed to be.”

Commissioner Rainey: “That’s your opinion.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “That’s my job, I am doing my statutory job.”

Commissioner Shephard: “Mr. Chairman, but we moved to conduct the Meeting.

Commission Chair Deriso: “That’s right, and just who get to move it forward, me, I preside over the Meeting.

Commissioner Shephard: “Yes, sir.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “Yes, ma and this Meeting like I said, I called you today. What conversation did I have with you.”

Commissioner Shephard: “You advised me that this Meeting was illegal and I could be subjected to an Ethics complaint and I could be unseated, whatever.”

A person in the audience said something.

Commission Chair Deriso: “Don’t say nothing, leave it alone.”

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: “I thank you.”

Person in Audience: “While you sitting up there doing...”

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: “Are you going to have her removed?”

Commission Chair Deriso: “I let people talk all the time without removing them.”

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: “But she is sitting there talking to me.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “Sir, don’t...”

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: “I am an elected official, you are not going to tell me what to do. You try that with them, you don’t try that with me. Okay, talk to your sister.

Commission Chair Deriso: “I did just talk to her. Well, say something to her”

County Commissioner Larry Felton: “Commissioners, let’s hold it down.

Commission Chair Deriso: “Sir, you out of order too. If they want to play games up here, see the truth is they final got somebody up here and they have been doing and what they haven’t been doing, now they are upset. It has been a lot of collusion and that’s okay, but I am not going to have it and the people gonna know. Thank you all for recording it. Thank you, Cordele Dispatch for putting it on. If we are going to do it, we are going to do it right and we

are not going around nobody power to have it done, that's my problem. Even when the Forensic Audit and the Confederate Statue was up here Tuesday night, those are things that I wanted to happen, but I carried that motion because it was presented in a Meeting, the way it was supposed to be presented. I am going to do my job, but the rest got to do theirs too. During this phony Meeting like this, that ain't gonna work, So when you'll do it right, I will be happy to oblige and do what we supposed to do, but until that happens, til I get a notification in twenty-four hours, we won't have a Meeting. I called each and everyone of you all before I gave text messages, emails letting you all know, but you still want to show up here. That's a sign of disrespect, everybody wants to talk about disrespect, its been backstabbing. Commissioner Reeves, you had Commissioner Rainey and Commissioner Shephard on the phone, even before we took our oath of office.

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: "Are you going to carry the motion or not? Are you going to carry the motion? Are you going to carry the motion? You have told us how you feel about. Are you going to carry the motion? So we can move on."

Commission Chair Deriso: "This whole Meeting is out of order."

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: "So, you are not going to carry the motion?"

Commission Chair Deriso: "That's right, I am not carrying nothing today because it is out of order."

City Attorney Tommy Coleman: "Call the motion."

Commission Chair Deriso: "He cannot carry a motion, that's your problem down there..."

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: "Ms. Mumphery, did you talk with him about the Meeting yesterday?"

Janice Mumphery: "I did talk to him about the Meeting yesterday."

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: "Did you inform him about Meeting yesterday?"

Janice Mumphery: "I did inform him about the Meeting."

Commission Chair Deriso: "Did you tell me the reason for the Meeting? You did not tell me the reason, you said only he called the Meeting."

Janice Mumphery: "You asked me and I told you."

Commission Chair Deriso: "What you suppose did, you had to call me, you had said Commissioner Reeves, Commissioner Rainey, Commissioner Shephard called a Meeting to discuss xxx. You did not do that."

Janice Mumphery: "that's not what the Charter says, it says a personal phone call from someone."

Commission Chair Deriso: "But you did not call me on that regard."

Janice Mumphery: "Yes, I did, I did say that the checks are ready, but I called you on that regard, Yes, I did."

Commission Chair Deriso: "I should not had to ask you."

Janice Mumphery: "You did not ask me, I told you."

Commission Chair Deriso: "Check the email, you said you left it on your desk."

Janice Mumphery: "You did, you got a phone call, I am not going to argue with you."

Commission Chair Deriso: "And I am not going to argue with you."

Janice Mumphery: "I called you."

Commission Chair Deriso: "I am sorry you are in this situation, I really am."

City Manager Angela Redding: "I called Commissioner Owens, I personally called Commissioner Owens."

Commission Vice Reeves: “Commissioner Owens did you get a phone call yesterday between 11:00 and 11:30?”

Commissioner Owens: “Yes.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “She called me about checks and I said to what’s this Meeting.” I had to say can’t send me an Agenda, you got to send me the official notification, where it says three Commissioners called this Meeting, that’s what is about.”

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: “So you saying, three Commissioners didn’t call this Meeting?”

Commission Chair Deriso: “I was told in email, we can go back and forward, I email, you all can open records request, it says, Commissioner Royce Reeves called the Meeting.” Commissioner Royce Reeves can’t call a Meeting by himself.”

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: “It should have said, Commissioner Royce Reeves asked for a Meeting, and I got two more...”

Commission Chair Joshua: “It should have said that, but it did not say that. When you speak, you say Chairman.”

Commission Vice Chair Reeves: “The Meeting was at my request, but I needed two more of the Commissioners, in order to have this Meeting and I successful did that.”

Commission Chair Deriso: “We can sit here until the sun come up.”

Adjournment: Commission Vice Chair Reeves moved to adjournment the Meeting at 3:03 p.m.; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved by the Commission.

No other items on the Agenda were discussed.