

MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING
April 6, 2021

The regular scheduled meeting of the Cordele City Commission was held on April 6th, 5:30 p.m., Cordele City Hall Courtroom, 501 North 7th Street, Cordele, Georgia with the following present:

John Wiggins, Commission Chair
Royce Reeves, Commissioner
Wesley Rainey, Commissioner
Janice Mumphery, Recording Secretary

Jeanie Bartee, Vice Chair
Vesta Beal-Shephard, Commissioner
Roland McCarthy, City Manager
Tommy Coleman, City Attorney

Staff present: David Wade, Police Chief Lewis Green, Irene Cantrell, Fire Chief Augusta Telfair, Debbie Wright, Debra Perry, Jack Wood, Sr., Jeremy Taylor.

Staff absent: Steve Fulford.

Others Present: Velesia Grant, Danny Ross, Alissa Wilkerson, Isaac Owens, Marty Rountree, Ben Drennan, Adam White, Charlie Butts, Mary Beal, George Whitehead, Jr., Kenya Williamson Whitehead, Ricky Dawson.

Media present: Ricky Smarr – South GA TV; Cordele Dispatch – Neil McGaHee.

Call to Order: Commission Chair John Wiggins called the meeting to order.

Invocation: Prayer was rendered by Rev. Isaac Owens.

Pledge Allegiance to the United States Flag: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Proclamation – Honoring Rev. Dr. K. Williams: A Proclamation was presented to Commissioner Shephard for Rev. Dr. K. M. Williams for his 30 years at Greater Morris Tabernacle Baptist Church.

Mr. Ben Drennan – Concerns about the O’Neal Historic Neighborhood: Mr. Drennan presented to the Commission his concerns within the O’Neal Historic District. Mr. Drennan stated that there is a disconnect between the Historic Preservation Committee and the City of Cordele. Mr. Drennan wanted to get some clarity about whose responsibility it is to enforcement the guidelines in the Historic District.

Mr. Danny Ross – Chair of the Cordele Historic Preservation Committee: Mr. Ross expressed him concerns about the O’Neal Historic District and ask the Commission to assist the board with enforcing the guidelines.

Commission Chair John Wiggins stated, “ he is not going to respond to the concerns right now.” Commission Chair Wiggins asked the City Manager to research the concerns and prepare a response to be given to the Commission at a later date.

Commissioner Reeves inquired about legal action taken against the City. Mr. Ross clarified that some of the O’Neal residents are conversing about taking legal action against the Board and the City. Mr. Reeves stated, since the Commission appoint all City Board Members, he recommends to disband the Board and whatever issues that the O’Neal and Gillespie Historic District have to bring it before the Commission.

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Commission Chair Wiggins stated, since legal matters are being discussed, he would like for the City's Attorney, Tommy Coleman to look into this matter.

City Attorney Tommy Coleman stated, the Board is created by the Commission and the City of Cordele Ordinance is almost verbatim of the State Law; the Ordinance was created by a Public Hearing. Mr. Coleman stated to abolish the Board, the City will probably have to have a Public Hearing. Mr. Coleman stated that he conversed with GMA and they advised for the City Commission to be cautious about abolishing the Board because a person could have gotten tax benefits for restoring their property. Mr. Coleman stated he has already started to work on this matter. Mr. Coleman advised the Commission to have the City Manager, Roland McCarthy to look into this issue and report back to the Commission.

Mr. Drennan asked for a date and time of a meeting; Commission Chair stated a date and time will not be set as of yet, the Commission cannot specify a date and time, but will alert the Board and residents of the Historic District of the date and time when a meeting is scheduled.

Approval of Minutes of March 16, 2021: Commissioner Reeves moved to approve the meeting minutes of March 16, 2021; it was seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the meeting minutes of March 16, 2021 were approved unanimously by the Commission.

Old Business: Commissioner Reeves inquired about bids been received on the 8th Street sidewalk project. City Manager, Roland McCarthy stated, pre-bid information is been prepared, to start the bidding process.

New Business: Commissioner Rainey requested a Work Session to examine Holiday Events at 11th Street (Joe Wright) and 24th Avenue West, where the Commission can get Community involvement to discuss. Commissioner Rainey moved to have a Work Session to discuss Holiday Events at 11th Street (Joe Wright) and 24th Avenue West; seconded by Commissioner Bartee. Commission Chair John Wiggins stated he will accept the motion if it is stated to discuss Holiday Events for the entire City. City Attorney Coleman, if they want to change the verbiage of the motion, a substitute motion has to be made. Commissioner Shepard move to substitute the motion to have a Work Session to discuss Holiday Events for the entire City of Cordele; seconded by Commissioner Bartee. Commissioner Reeves stated that his concern is, the Commission will bring people from the City that "has not been affected by this" and they will come in with a bias opinion about what should or should not be going on. Commissioner Reeves stated, he knows for a fact that certain people want to stop the gathering on Easter Sunday and July 4th. The substitute motion was approved unanimously by the Commission. Work Session for Holiday Events in the City of Cordele will be Tuesday, April 20th at 4:30 p.m. Commissioner Reeves requested a date to be set for a meeting with the Historic Preservation District. Commission Chair stated for the City Manager, Roland McCarthy to bring information to the next Commissioner's meeting concerning the Historic Preservation District and a date and time will be set. Commissioner Rainey requested clarity on who enforces the Historic District Guidelines.

Commission Priorities – In Progress: Roland McCarthy, City Manager reported.

1. **Sidewalks on 8th Street and 13th Street (Joe Wright Drive) south of 24th Avenue –** Currently funds are available for sidewalks on South 8th Street. Sidewalks on South 13th Street will be completed as funds become available.
 - 8th Street, South 24th Avenue West
 - 13th Street, South of 24th Avenue

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2. **Sidewalk for Pecan Street:** The City has completed their portion of the sidewalks. The City is now waiting on CSX Railroad to complete their portion of the project. Steve Fulford stated the CXS Railroad supposed to complete this project in the next two weeks, which will be the end of March.
3. **Inflow/Infiltration Program for Wastewater Collection/Treatment Project in Progress –** SPLOST funds committed for project and the City has been approved for the GEFA Loan to rehabilitate the Trickling Filter System.
4. **Gillespie Selden Rehab Project/Urban Renewal:**
 - **2018 CHIP (Community Housing Improvement Program) Grant:** Work is currently being performed on the Environmental Documents for the potential housing rehabilitation of the home located at 307 South 12th Street. The CHIP Housing Inspector has been contacted to schedule dates for the next two home inspections located at 107 Ross Street and 509 West 18th Avenue.
 - **2020 CDBG:** All CDBG paperwork has been submitted to the State and the City has been approved for the drawdown of funds. Lanier Engineering is currently working on the project design and should be furnished within a few months. When the project design has been completed, we will be ready for the bidding process.
 - **Historic Gillespie Gardens:** This project will be done in the Gillespie-Selden Historic District, developers have filed tax credits to pursue project.
5. **Demolish Dilapidated Structures/Remove Abandoned Vehicles:** In Progress with UBPO Cases. Landbank Authority Board has had their second meeting. Code Enforcements Officers will continue to work on cases. City Attorney is also working on dilapidated property.

Commission Priorities – Future Projects:

1. **16th Avenue Widening** – This is on a TSPLOST Referendum that the City will be working on in the future. DOT is paving West 16th Avenue. (From West City Limits to 5th Street Vicinity) (15 years)
2. **11th Street Improvement Project - (North – South to City Limits)** 2018-2022 SPLOST Funds are committed to this project.
3. **DOT Study Request/Extend Ga. 300** – This is still on DOT radar. Requesting Update.
4. **Widening US Hwy 280 from Cordele to Americus (has been put on the DOT's TSPLOST approval list.)** TSPLOST approval list. Bridge over Lake Blackshear is completed.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES – Roland McCarthy reported.

Approval of Resolution for Banking Signatories: Commission approval is requested for a Resolution regarding banking Signatories. Joy Lynn Causey, Finance Director, will be added as signatory on accounts of the City. The Signatory roster will include the Commission Chairman, City Manager, Assistant City Manager, Finance Director and Assistant Finance Director if approved. Commissioner Bartee moved to approve the request for Joy Lynn Causey, Finance Director, to be added as a signatory on the City of Cordele accounts; seconded by Commissioner Reeves; the motion was approved unanimously by the Commission.

CITY MANAGER REPORT:

Approval of a SPLOST Expenditure: Commission Approval is requested to purchase a Falcon 4-ton Recycler Hot Box at a cost of \$40,950.00, this is for the Public Works Department. This machine will

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allow Public Works to repair pot holes better than the cold patch, which they are currently using. This item will be paid with SPLOST Funds and within a year this machine will pay for itself. Pending your approval, we will proceed with the expenditure. Commissioner Barteo moved to approve the request to purchase a Falcon 4-ton Recycler Hot Box; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved unanimously by the Commission.

Approval to purchase three trucks: Commission approval is requested to purchase three trucks, one for Code Enforcement, two for Public Works.

Griffin Ford	Brannen Motor Co.	Sunbelt Ford
Dodge \$20,700 each	Ford \$22,650 each	Ford \$22,785 each
x 3 = 62,100	x 3 = \$67,950	x 3 = \$68,355
delivery app. 90 days	delivery 12-14 wks.	Delivery 16-18 wks.

It is recommended that the vehicles be purchased at the low bid – 3 from Griffin Ford. Contingent upon your approval, purchase orders will be placed. Questions were asked about Griffin Ford's location. After a short discussion about variance, it was suggested to table this item. Commissioner Reeves moved to table this item; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved unanimously by the Commission to table this item until the next Commissioner's meeting, which will be Tuesday, June 20, 2021.

Approval for LMIG (Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant) 2020 and 2021 Projects:

Commission approval is requested to accept the low bid of \$339,765.02 from East Coast Asphalt LLC. This project is to resurface roads in the City. Bids for the LMIG 2020 and 2021 Project were opened on March 23, 2021; East Coast Asphalt LLC had the lowest bid and was awarded the contract. If approved by the Commission, the company will be given the notice to proceed. Commissioner Reeves moved to approve the low bid of \$339,765 from East Coast Asphalt LLC; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; motion was approved unanimously by the Commission.

Approval of an Event Permit: Commission approval is requested for an Event Permit for Autism Awareness. The permit is requested by Monica Rentfrow, Cordele Main Street Director. This is a Family Event to be held on April 17, 2021, 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon at the Perry Busbee Walking Track. There will be games and other activities for the children. Upon the Commission's approval, Monica Rentfrow will be notified. Commissioner Reeves moved to approve the Event Permit for Autism Awareness; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; the motion was approved unanimously by the Commission.

Approval for Utility Service Fees Increase: Commission approval is requested for service fees to be increased; the fees will increase from \$15.00 per service (water and gas) to \$30.00 per service (water and gas). If approved I will alert the Utility Billing Clerk. After a short discussion about this matter, the Commission stated, this is not a good idea at this time; will revisit in about six months.

Approval for Vacation: Roland McCarthy requested vacation days May 3-14, 2021. Commissioner Barteo moved to approve vacation; seconded by Commissioner Shephard; motion was approved unanimously by the Commission.

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Commissioner Reeves expressed his concerns about the prison crew coming back to assist the City with clean-up; he stated that he does not want to use the prison crew anymore. After a short discussion a motion was made.

Motion: Commissioner Rainey moved to do one (1) prison crew, in addition to, the sub-contractors the City already have; seconded by Commissioner Bartee. The motion was approved with a 3/1 vote. Commissioner Reeves vote nay.

City Attorney Report: Tommy Coleman reported.

There was a court session on July 23rd. An order for abatement at 207 W 25th Avenue, 2075 East 14th Avenue, and 902 South 4th Street. Presented a petition for the Peanut Gin.

Finance Director Report: Joy Causey reported.

- Revenue is UNDER Expenses in FY2021 to date: (526,495)
- On April 1st, Utility Billing started partnering with Elavon. Elavon is assisting the City with online transactions. In the past the processing fees, the City had to absorb, which was 2.9% per transaction. Partnering with Elavon the expense will be passed to the customer, it will save the City approximately \$45,000 a year.
- The Customer Service is now accepting credit and debit cards at the window.

**Please see report that was submitted for additional information.

Fire Chief Report: Chief Augusta Telfair reported.

Three structure fires, one possible structure fire, assist with 2 EMS calls, vehicle accident, two electrical outlet fires, one smoke investigation, four activated fire alarms, one extrication call, one fuel spill and one dryer fire.

***Please see report that was submitted for additional information.

Housing & Urban Advancement Director's Report: Irene Cantrell reported.

- CHIP 2018 – The CHIP Grant Administrator, Ms. Brenda Wade, has heard from DCA regarding Ms. Diane Ford's (211 West 27th Ave) Environmental and Noise Assessment Reports and has submitted the requested additional information.
- Also Ms. Wade has finished the Environmental Assessment and Noise Study Reports for Ms. Mattie Gary's home (107 South Ross St) and needs a letter signed by the City Commission Chairman and the home owner to submit the Pre-set-up Form and the supporting documents to DCA for review.
One Housing Rehab Contractor has submitted a bid each on the two homes located at 211 W 27th Ave and 107 S Ross St).
- BZA - A Board of Zoning Appeals hearing has been scheduled for Thursday, April 15, 2021 at 10:00 a.m., in the Cordele City Hall Courtroom to consider a conditional use permit to allow an existing structure zoned as Mixed-Use District (MU) to be used as a law office building and to allow a sign to be erected at 801 East 14th Avenue. The property is owned by Mandy K. Mercer and will be occupied by the law firm of David Forehand, Jr.

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- Planning Committee will meet on April 29, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. The Committee will consider Manufactured Homes being approved in two residential areas, which is R-75 and R-4.

***Please see report that was submitted for additional information.

Chief Codes Official Report: Jack Wood, Sr. reported.

Harry's Liquors completed. Job - \$350,000.

***Please see report that was submitted for additional information.

Personnel Director Report: David Wade reported.

**Please see report that was submitted for information.

Police Chief Report: Chief Lewis Green reported.

**Please see report that was submitted for information.

Public Works Director: Steve Fulford not present.

**Please see report that was submitted for information.

U T & C Director's Report: Debbie Wright reported.

**Please see report that was submitted for additional information.

Other Reports: No other City reports.

Adjourn: Commissioner Bartee moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 p.m.



John E. Wiggins, Chairman



Roland McCarthy, City Manager

4/6/21

Date