

City of Guyton, Georgia

Working Together to Make a Difference



Minutes of the Guyton City Council Meeting held on Tuesday, May 10, 2016 at Guyton City Hall at 7:00 pm.

Present: Mayor Jeff Lariscy, Councilmen Steve Collins, Councilmen Franklin Goldwire, Councilmen Michael Johnson, City Attorney Ray Smith, City Manager Robert Black, City Clerk Lauree Morris as well as citizens.

Mayor Lariscy called the meeting to order. A moment of repose was held for those who may practice another faith, followed by the invocation by Councilmen Goldwire. The pledge of allegiance was said.

Mayor Lariscy asked for consideration to amend the Agenda to include approval of the minutes from the special called council meeting, and for a motion to approve the Amended Agenda. Councilmen Goldwire so moved. Councilmen Johnson seconded, and the motion passed.

Councilmen Johnson made a motion to approve the Minutes of the April 26, 2016 meeting and the special called meeting Minutes from May 4, 2016. Councilmen Goldwire seconded. Motion carried.

PLANNING AND ZONING: No report.

LEISURE SERVICES COMMISSION: Chairmen Robert Hunter stated that line dancing is not going as strong but is continuing, and Zumba is also going on. The Commission held their meeting and discussed the picnic. They have developed a check sheet for the items they need for the event. He advised that he has brought a copy of the check list and the Minute (book) to City Hall.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE: Chairperson Pearl Boynes stated they did not hold a regular meeting tonight but they are continuing to discuss the Guyton beautification project, which would be a cleanup day. Mrs. Boynes has a map of the city with zones and she will assign captains for each zone. Rahn's Nursery will be on site for folks to purchase plants. The tentative date for the event is June 4.

Mrs. Boynes also discussed the importance of Guyton getting on the ball with tourism. The Chamber is making plans for visitor tours and we need to boost our tourism and participate.

Mayor Lariscy discussed painting the caboose and restoration of the door. He stated fundraising would be undertaken to pay for the efforts. Many citizens in attendance provided input on this matter by suggesting different groups that would assist with the project.

No other committee reports were provided.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mayor Lariscy led a discussion regarding candidates to fill Councilmen Eaton's remaining term and selection of same. The Mayor recapped the previous discussions. Marshall Reiser, an applicant for the seat, had requested to address the Mayor and Council. The Mayor requested he do the same at this

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time [instead of under new business].

Mr. Reiser introduced himself and provided everyone with some personal background information. He spoke of his accounting business and his experiences throughout the community including the Planning and Zoning Commission. Mr. Reiser stated that his biggest concern is the financial obligation and repayment schedule regarding the waste water treatment plant. He stated the city needs strong leadership, and he would bring a much needed skill set to the council. He also stated that the city needs to increase revenue – more businesses, more rooftops – for our continued growth. He concluded by stating that a vote against the most qualified candidate is a vote against progress for the city.

Joseph Lee, another candidate, then addressed the Mayor and Council. He also provided some personal background information. He stated that he has worked with the city through Leisure Services for almost eight (8) years. He had been asked to develop a place for the citizens to gather and that led to the two (2) rooms at Leisure Services. Mr. Lee stated that he wants to hear what the citizens want and not the Mayor and Council, and that he will work for the people. He heard that if people make mistakes that we get rid of them. Mr. Lee stated that we need to work together and not hold grudges. He stated that he wants to see the city grow and that we need sidewalks and the roads need scrapping.

Russell Dean addressed the Mayor and Council as a recommendation for Marshall Reiser. Mr. Dean stated that he is a business owner and member of the Planning and Zoning Commission, and that the expertise that Mr. Reiser has will benefit the city.

Mrs. Pat McCall addressed the Mayor and Council as a recommendation for Marshall Reiser. She stated that he would be an asset to the community with his experience in business and managing money.

Mary Connely-Woods also addressed the Mayor and Council as a recommendation for Marshall Reiser. She stated that he would be an asset to this city because of his experience and background.

After no additional comments, the Mayor called for a nomination. Councilmen Johnson moved to appoint Joseph Lee to the open council position. Councilmen Goldwire seconded. A vote was called: two (2) yeas and two (2) nays. Nomination did not pass.

Councilmen Collins moved to appoint Marshall Reiser to the open council position. After no second to the appointment motion, it died.

Mayor Lariscy called for the second, final reading and adoption of the franchise agreement with Georgia Power. After little discussion, Councilmen Johnson called to approve the matter. Councilmen Goldwire seconded and the matter was approved.

Mayor Lariscy called for a discussion of right-of-way permits. Attorney Smith reviewed our ordinances and did not find any deficiencies. However he stated the sample ordinance GMA provided was good.

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Mayor Lariscy stated we would review the same for possible adoption.

Mayor Lariscy led a discussion and approval to refinance the revenue bond. Mayor Lariscy advised that the interest rates are even better/lower now. Attorney Smith advised that we can add a project to the bond but it could affect the interest rate as well as the underwriting process. Time is of the essence on this matter, and it will take time to approve the bond. We could always add a project at a later date. Mayor Lariscy recapped the two (2) options, one of which no longer applies since we had to rebid the project. Councilmen Collins asked if we could be certain that the bond is the best rate instead of guessing. Marshall Reiser commented that if we refinance, we need to consider the payment schedule. Mayor Lariscy gave a directive to Manager Black to shop the financing and provide options/confirm which rate is best by the next meeting. Councilmen Collins moved to table this matter until the next meeting when options can be provided. Councilmen Johnson seconded and the matter passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Manager Black led a discussion regarding the ice machine at the ballpark (repairing versus leasing new equipment). Mike O'Neal, Public Works Superintendent, stated that the machine has been in use as long as he has been here, which is 23 years. A discussion took place regarding the benefit of the machine and whether or not it would be more beneficial to purchase ice as needed. It was decided to purchase ice for the next 30 days so this matter could be discussed more fully at the budget workshop.

Mayor Lariscy called for a discussion and setting date for the budget workshop(s). The tentative budget presentation and adoption timeline is as follows:

Tuesday, May 24, 7 pm – initial presentation of draft budget at regularly scheduled meeting

Friday, June 3, 8 am – budget workshop; location to be determined

Tuesday, June 14, 7 pm – first reading of finalized budget at regularly scheduled meeting

Tuesday, June 28, 7 pm – second reading and adoption of FY2016/2017 budget and adoption of associated millage rate.

Attorney Smith reminded that the readings and adoptions must be presented during a public hearing, which can fall within the regularly scheduled meeting.

Mayor Lariscy called for a discussion and approval of the City of Guyton support for the Effingham County Oktoberfest. The Mayor stated that the Chamber had contacted him to confirm our annual support, which is \$250. Councilmen Johnson moved to approve this support, and Councilmen Collins seconded. Clerk Morris brought to their attention that we had budgeted and already submitted \$250 within this current fiscal year. Mayor Lariscy stated we would back out the motion and discuss this matter during the budgeting process.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilmen Goldwire provided a financial report.

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Councilmen Johnson provided a report on streets and lanes by advising that 4th Street and Poplar are being prepared for paving. He also stated that he had spoken to Georgia Power about the stationary light. Lucy Powell asked if an additional light for the Memory Garden was also discussed with Georgia Power. Councilmen Johnson indicated that it had not, but that he would follow through.

Councilmen Collins provided a report on water and sewer. It was confirmed that the bid contracts for Division I and Division II have been received from Hofstadter. A copy of both was given to Attorney Smith for review. Councilmen Collins asked that "starting" project be defined. Attorney Smith stated there is no definition.

Fire Chief Gary Jarriel provided the police report. He also provided the fire report.

The dates to remember were recapped by Mayor Lariscy as follows:

- Wednesday, May 18, 4 pm – Guyton Municipal Court
- Tuesday, May 24, 7 pm – City Council Meeting
- Monday, May 30 – City Hall closed for Memorial Day
- Friday, June 3, 8 am – Budget Workshop
- Tuesday, June 14, 7 pm – City Council Meeting
- Wednesday, June 15, 4 pm – Guyton Municipal Court
- Thursday, June 16 – Ice Cream Social
- Saturday, June 26 – Community Picnic
- Tuesday, June 28, 7 pm – City Council Meeting

Robert Hunter added that at 6 pm on Memorial Day, flags will be placed on graves of veterans at the Guyton Cemetery. Lucy Powell asked Mayor Lariscy if the city was going to participate in the Chamber dinner on June 9, and if so, were committee members going to be invited. He confirmed.

Mayor Lariscy introduced Michael Wedincamp, the Georgia Southern University intern who hopes to be interning for us as city manager.

Mayor Lariscy called for additional comments relating to the Agenda. After none, Councilmen Johnson moved that we adjourn into Executive Session. Councilmen Collins seconded, and the motion was approved by all.

After returning from Executive Session into Regular Session, the Council briefly discussed a pending personnel matter. Councilmen Goldwire made a motion to submit a claim with our insurance company regarding the EEOC claim filed by Arlene Crittington. Councilmen Johnson seconded and the matter passed.

Councilmen Goldwire moved to amend the Agenda to consider the employment of Michael Wedincamp. Councilmen Collins seconded and the matter was approved.

Councilmen Johnson moved to offer an intern position to Michael Wedincamp for 30 hours a week, for a duration of 100 hours at a pay rate of minimum wage. Councilmen Collins second and the motion passed.

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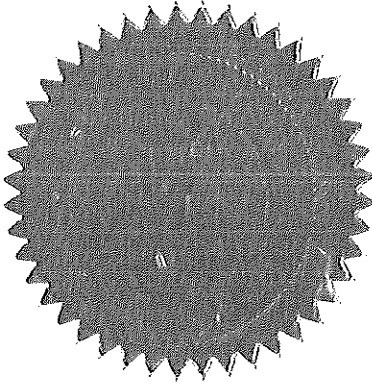
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After no additional business, comments or votes, Mayor Lariscy called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmen Collins made the motion, which was seconded by Councilmen Goldwire and approved. Meeting adjourned.

Lauree Morris
Lauree Morris, City Clerk

Jeff Lariscy
Jeff Lariscy, Mayor



City Council - Reiser Candidate - 05.10.16

Good evening -- my name is Marshall Reiser & I am here to introduce myself to this Council for the purpose of appointment to the unfilled seat vacated by Mr. Ulysses Eaton.

I am proud to say that I was born & raised in Effingham County and I can trace my family ties more than five generations to this City. I attended Effingham county schools until transferring and graduating from a small high school in South Carolina. I then attended & graduated from Oglethorpe University in Atlanta earning a Business degree with a concentration in Accounting.

After graduation, I was offered a position at one of the Big Six accounting firms and began my career at Arthur Andersen and worked with Andersen in Charlotte, NC and Atlanta. Overall, I spent nearly six years at Andersen and specialized in tax compliance for individuals, small businesses, non-profits & international taxpayers. I rose to the rank of Manager and then decided to join the partnership of a CPA firm in Alpharetta, GA , north of Atlanta. After working with this small CPA firm for four years, my wife Jennifer (who is also a CPA) and I decided to create our own firm and move closer to home. We bought our home & moved to Guyton in 2004.

Reiser & Reiser CPAs was also created in 2004 in the fast growing Pooler area. After spending four years in Pooler, we decided to make a leap of faith and open our office closer to our home in Guyton. Originally, we leased space from Mr. Bill McCall in the old drug store building but relocated after two years to our current location next door to Subway which we purchased from Carmen Cribbs of Southern Home & Land.

Our business has had much success in Guyton but we realize that we are bucking the trend. Not many professional businesses would take the risk and make the investment that we have made. We are pleased with our decision but would like to see the City do more to proactively recruit more businesses, both professional & retail, to our community in order to provide more commerce to our City. Currently, I am not aware of any actions that the City is taking to actively recruit businesses and we have the highest water rates in the County. Businesses are not coming here on their own accord. We need to do more to recruit business to Guyton.

Beyond my professional life, I spend a great deal of time with my family. Jennifer & I have three boys - ages 14, 12 & 5. Our oldest two boys are home schooled while our youngest son attends Guyton Elementary, where we have been actively involved with all of our boys for more than a decade as PTO volunteers and where my wife has served for many years as Treasurer of the PTO. I have served at various times on numerous school committees including the School Council which was responsible for input & approval of Mrs. Connelly's selection as the school's new principal after Mr. Beacham's retirement a few years ago. All of our boys have excelled at Guyton Elementary and we are very pleased with the education offered by our local elementary school. I believe that the City could embrace more collaboration with Mrs. Connelly and the school to offer our local children more learning opportunities beyond the traditional classroom experience -- such as literacy groups and mentor programs.

I am also a long-time member of various non-profit boards including Treutlen House, a home for abused or troubled boys, and New Ebenezer Retreat Center, where I serve as treasurer for both organizations. I've served on the Effingham County Chamber of Commerce Board and volunteer often with our local Boy Scout Troop 295 where my older two boys attend under the leadership of their Scoutmaster Mr. Mark Bennett. This is another organization that seeks opportunities to serve and could be an awesome partner with the City to make improvements including possibly painting the caboose or benefiting from Eagle Scout project location selection.

Most importantly, my family & I attend Guyton Christian Church where I serve as an Elder and as Chairman of the Long Range Planning committee. I've participated in many church committees and projects and am proud to say that our church began the current food pantry ministry, The Fillin Station, several years ago. The Fillin Station is, in essence, a partnership with various churches and individuals to serve a greater good. Our city was approached by the food pantry about participating as a partner but declined. I was very disappointed with that experience and would like the city to reconsider how it might be able to work with the food pantry to provide assistance to many in our community that need food and other life necessities.

Regarding my service to our City, I have served on the Planning & Zoning committee for several years including serving as Chairman. I have attended different classes to better understand the opportunities and resources for city planning. I was in a minority in City leadership when I supported Parker's moving to Guyton but believe it has been a boon to our City by providing an attractive business location while generating much needed sales tax revenues for our city. I also served on the Charette committee which, in essence, is a visioning committee for the type of City that we want to have. Unfortunately, after many hours that I and others spent on this volunteer committee, I do not believe that the Charette has been referenced in many of the decisions that have been made in recent years.

When I met with Mr. Lariscy to be interviewed for this position, I was asked to identify my biggest concerns for the City of Guyton. I immediately identified our Waste Water Treatment plant as my biggest concern. I understand that the City needs to find a solution to this problem but I am very concerned with the amount of financial obligation that our small city of less than 2,000 residents has assumed. According to the audited Financial Statements for the period ended June 30, 2014, the City has a long-term note payable of more than \$9m - which is primarily related to the water & sewer refunding & improvement revenue bonds. The alarming issue with this amount of debt is the repayment schedule, while modest now, starts in earnest in 2020 and quickly reaches \$1m+ in annual payments within the next 10 years. How will we meet this financial obligation? As a citizen of Guyton and as a business owner, this is by far the biggest issue that the City is facing. Our city needs strong leadership on this issue because serious long-lasting decisions need to be made. With my accounting background and ability to understand financial matters, I feel that I can bring a much needed skill set to the City in this crucial period of its history.

I believe the City should be seeking ways to increase more sources of revenues such as recruiting more businesses & possibly annexing other areas of our community to become part of our City benefiting from services that we can offer. If our city is not growing, we will not be able to meet the financial obligations that it now faces. We need more businesses and we need more rooftops in order to create more revenues and thereby provide more services. We must grow in order to meet the demands of the future.

My other areas of concern that I mentioned during my interview include supporting our public safety departments, our public works department & developing more recreation resources. I believe that we should seek partnerships with the County and Springfield to identify ways that we can work together and leverage the resources that are available. We want to provide superior services for our citizens but also competitive opportunities for our city employees. We shouldn't feel that we need to re-create the wheel. Let's seek partnerships and work with and learn from others.

I believe that we have a good Mayor who has a strong work ethic and can make sure that our City is making the right decisions now and for the future. And I believe that we have a good Council that can work together representing the wonderful diversity of our community. I believe that I can complement the skills and talents that are represented on our Council in a way that is professional and productive.

I understand that 'a vote for someone else was not a vote against me' but I believe that a vote for anyone other than your most qualified candidate is indeed a vote against the City of Guyton and the future of its citizens.

I ask for your consideration and appointment for the available Council seat and look forward to helping the City move forward.