



CITY COUNCIL Regular Meeting – Minutes

July 19, 2021 at 6:00 PM | Pooler City Hall | 100 US Hwy 80 SW, Pooler, GA 31322

I. ROLL CALL/DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Present: Rebecca C. Benton, Mayor
Tom Hutcherson, Mayor Pro Tem
Shannon Black, Councilmember
Aaron Higgins, Councilmember
Stevie Wall, Councilmember (*via teleconference*)
John Wilcher, Councilmember
Karen Williams, Councilmember
Robert Byrd, City Manager
Steve Scheer, City Attorney
Craig Call, City Attorney
Chris Lightle, Finance Officer
Kiley Fusco, Clerk of Council

Absent:

II. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rebecca C. Benton called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

III. INVOCATION

Mayor Rebecca C. Benton gave the invocation.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember John Wilcher led the pledge.

V. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

A. City Council Meeting Minutes of July 6, 2021

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the minutes for consideration.
Councilmember Aaron Higgins moved to approve the City Council Meeting Minutes of July 6, 2021.

Motion to Approve; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Higgins

SECONDER: Hutcherson

AYES: Black, Higgins, Hutcherson, Wall, Wilcher, Williams

NAYS:

VI. DEPARTMENT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. **Public Works**

John Winn gave the Public Works report in Matt Saxon's absence. The Water Department repaired six water mains and completed the Morgan Street water main replacement and upgrade. The Storm Water Department performed maintenance on 6.6 miles of roadside ditches and outfalls. The Street Department performed routine maintenance. Under Engineering, two plans were approved and eleven other projects are in progress.

B. **Finance**

Chris Lightle gave the Finance report. The interim financial report was submitted to Mayor and Council. Notable items include a \$1.5M contribution from Amazon toward an additional fire truck to protect their warehouse. There is also the addition of a new fund: a significant contribution to the tree fund this June was cause to being tracking expenditures separately for transparency.

C. **Fire Department**

Chief Wade Simmons gave the Fire Department report. There were 472 calls in the month of June, an increase of 30% over 2020. Year to date, calls are approximately 34% ahead.

D. **Police Department**

Major Jim Ward gave the Police Department report in Chief Ashley Brown's absence. For the month of June, there were sixty-five Part 1 crimes, totaling 365 for the year - an 11% increase over 2020. There were 2,292 calls for service, 1,341 citations written, and fifteen DUI arrests made.

E. **Recreation**

The Recreation Department report was submitted to Mayor and Council.

F. **Planning & Zoning, Building**

Phillip Claxton gave the Planning & Zoning Department report. For the month of June, seventy residential permits, ten multifamily permits, twelve commercial permits, and twenty-one certificates of occupancy were issued. The draft comprehensive plan transmittal resolution has been submitted to Mayor and Council for review.

VII. ORDINANCES, PROCLAMATIONS, RESOLUTIONS

A. **Resolution Authorizing the Transmittal of the Pooler Comprehensive Plan Draft for Review by the Coastal Regional Commission and Department of Community Affairs (*Public Hearing, Action*)**

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the plan for consideration. Mayor Rebecca C. Benton opened the public hearing. Jackie Jackson, Director of Advanced Planning & Special Projects for the Municipal Planning Commission, gave a presentation on the draft to be transmitted. Rebecca C. Benton closed the public hearing, and Councilmember John Wilcher moved to approve the Resolution Authorizing the Transmittal of the Pooler Comprehensive Plan Draft for Review by the Coastal Regional Commission and Department of Community Affairs.

Motion to Approve; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Wilcher

SECONDER: Higgins

AYES: Black, Higgins, Hutcherson, Wall, Wilcher, Williams

NAYS:

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. **Zoning Map Amendment for 1403, 1405, 1407, and 1411 Pine Barren Road from MH-1 to C-2 (*Public Hearing, No Action*)**

City Manager Robert Byrd reported that the petitioner requested the item be deferred until August 2, 2021. Mayor Rebecca C. Benton opened and closed the public hearing without comment. No action was taken.

B. **Conditional Use Request for 1403, 1405, 1407, and 1411 Pine Barren Road to Allow Construction of a Mini-Storage Facility (*Public Hearing, No Action*)**

City Manager Robert Byrd reported that the petitioner requested the item be deferred until August 2, 2021. Mayor Rebecca C. Benton opened and closed the public hearing without comment. No action was taken.

C. **JABOT PUD Amendment #16 (*Public Hearing, No Action*)**

City Manager Robert Byrd reported that the item had been withdrawn. Mayor Rebecca C. Benton opened the public hearing. Lamar Mercer confirmed the withdrawal, and Mayor Rebecca C. Benton closed the public hearing. No action was taken.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. **Special Event Permit Application for the Back to School Backpack Giveaway**

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the application for consideration. Petitioner Kelly Jeffers was present to answer questions. Councilmember Aaron Higgins moved to approve the Special Event Permit Application for the Back to School Backpack Giveaway contingent upon the petitioner meeting with the Chief of Police to review the potential impact to traffic.

Motion to Approve; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Higgins

SECONDER: Hutcherson

AYES: Black, Higgins, Hutcherson, Wall, Wilcher, Williams

NAYS:

B. Special Event Permit Application for the Greater Pooler Area Chamber of Commerce's Patriot Weekend Celebration

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the application for consideration. Councilmember John Wilcher moved to approve the Special Event Permit Application for the Greater Pooler Area Chamber of Commerce's Patriot Weekend Celebration.

Motion to Approve; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Wilcher

SECONDER: Williams

AYES: Black, Higgins, Hutcherson, Wall, Wilcher Williams

NAYS:

C. Proposed 2021 Millage Rate Public Hearing #3

Mayor Rebecca C. Benton opened the third public hearing for the proposed 2021 millage rate. Finance Officer Chris Lightle presented projects to be funded, definitions, and instructions on how property taxes are calculated. Residents Jack King, Kendall Depasquale, Pearl Reddick, and Mary Louise Lanier expressed their concerns and asked questions. Mayor Rebecca C. Benton closed the public hearing. No action was taken.

D. Zoning Map Amendment for 1485 Pine Barren Road from MH-1 to I-1 (Public Hearing, Action)

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the amendment for consideration. Mayor Rebecca C. Benton opened the public hearing. Lamar Mercer was present on behalf of the petitioner to answer questions. Mayor Rebecca C. Benton closed the public hearing, and Councilmember John Wilcher moved to approve the Zoning Map Amendment for 1485 Pine Barren Road from MH-1 to I-1.

Motion to Approve; PASSED (5-1)

MOVER: Wilcher

SECONDER: Black

AYES: Black, Hutcherson, Wall, Wilcher, Williams

NAYS: Higgins

E. Forest Lakes PUD Amendment (*Public Hearing, Action*)

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the amendment for consideration. Mayor Rebecca C. Benton opened the public hearing. Neil McKenzie and Bryan Wardlaw were present on behalf of the petitioner to answer questions. Resident Larry Bearden expressed concerns about potential increases in traffic and annual assessments. Resident Michael Schwartz called attention to a drainage issue at his residence related to developer grading at the property. City Attorney Steve Scheer explained that his issue was a developer matter and not relevant to the amendment under consideration. Councilmember Karen Williams read aloud an emailed statement from resident Laura Hugon in favor of the amendment. Mayor Rebecca C. Benton closed the public hearing, and Councilmember Karen Williams moved to approve the Forest Lakes PUD Amendment.

Motion to Approve; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Williams

SECONDER: Wilcher

AYES: Black, Higgins, Hutcherson, Wall, Wilcher, Williams

NAYS:

F. Division 1 Pooler Parkway / Park Avenue Intersection Improvement Bids

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the bids for consideration. Councilmember John Wilcher moved to accept the Division 1 Pooler Parkway / Park Avenue Intersection Improvement bid from E&D Contracting Service, Inc. in the amount of \$692,228.57.

Motion to Accept; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Wilcher

SECONDER: Hutcherson

AYES: Black, Higgins, Hutcherson, Wall, Wilcher, Williams

NAYS:

G. Division 2 Pooler Parkway / S. H. Morgan Intersection Improvement Bids

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the bids for consideration. Councilmember Aaron Higgins moved to accept the Division 2 Pooler Parkway / S. H. Morgan Intersection Improvement bid from APAC Atlantic, Inc. in the amount of \$538,463.45.

Motion to Accept; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Higgins

SECONDER: Williams

AYES: Black, Higgins, Hutcherson, Wall, Wilcher, Williams

NAYS:

X. ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember John Wilcher moved to adjourn the meeting.

Motion to Adjourn; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Wilcher

SECONDER: Higgins

AYES: Black, Higgins, Hutcherson, Wall, Wilcher, Williams

NAYS:

The meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

The foregoing minutes are true and correct and approved by me on this _____ day of _____, 2021.

Rebecca C. Benton, Mayor

Attest:

Kiley Fusco, Clerk of Council