



CITY COUNCIL Regular Meeting – Minutes

October 18, 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
John Wilcher, Councilmember *via teleconference*
Karen Williams, Councilmember
Robert Byrd, City Manager
Steve Scheer, City Attorney
Craig Call, City Attorney
Chris Lightle, Finance Officer
Phillip Claxton, City Planner

Absent:

II. CALL TO ORDER

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

III. INVOCATION

Pastor Devin Bell of Rothwell Baptist Church gave the invocation.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Boy Scout Troop 4102 led the pledge.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the consent agenda for consideration.

A. City Council Meeting Minutes of October 4, 2021

- B. **Special Event Permit Application for Hispanic Heritage Celebration on November 6, 2021**
- C. **Special Event Permit Application for Wild Game Dinner Fundraiser on December 11, 2021**

Councilmember Aaron Higgins moved to approve the consent agenda.

Motion to Approve; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Higgins

SECONDER: Wall

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

NAYS:

VI. REMINDERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements to be made.

VII. DEPARTMENT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. **Public Works**

Assistant City Manager Matt Saxon gave the Public Works report. Public Works held one pre-construction meeting and reviewed eight sets of plans. EOM reviewed three sets from the current cycle. The Street Department continued routine maintenance, sweeping 92 miles of streets. The Stormwater Department is approaching their busy season: Matt reminded residents to dispose of fallen leaves properly. 24,000 feet of ditches were cleared in the month of September. The Canal Maintenance Department continues work on Harden Canal. The Water Department installed 17 new construction meters, repaired the Well #3 chlorine system, completed 844 line locates, and performed 50 backflow prevention inspections. The Wastewater Treatment Plant is meeting all permits.

B. **Finance**

Finance Officer Chris Lightle presented the Finance report. September was an average month. Staff are currently focused on 2022 budget preparation; a draft will be presented to Council once meetings have concluded.

C. **Fire Department**

Chief Wade Simmons gave the Fire Department report. September saw 491 calls, a 22% increase over 2020. 71 of the 124 total COVID-19 calls for the year were received in the past two months. Ten recruits have graduated, and the new rescue truck will be in service shortly.

D. **Police Department**

Chief Ashley Brown presented the Police Department report. There were 65 Part 1 Crimes for the month of September, totaling 594 year to date. This is an increase over 2020, with shoplifting comprising the largest share. DUI arrests and citations are fewer compared to 2020; the department is not fully staffed at this time. PD will be present at the YMCA's 5k event this coming weekend.

E. Recreation

Director Hugh Elton gave the Parks & Recreation report. Youth fall sports began in September. Classes resumed with one camp postponed. U6 basketball registration continued. High school football games were held at the stadium, and the front gym floor was resurfaced. The Healthy Kids Running Series has begun with a plan to integrate programming with the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon event in Savannah. The Senior Center started a bowling league as well as a Coffee & Conversation group to encourage socialization. As part of the September 11 anniversary, ex-New Yorkers shared their experiences at the Senior Center. The Parks Department performed routine maintenance.

F. Planning & Zoning

City Planner Phillip Claxton gave the Planning & Zoning Report. The department issued 21 residential permits, 6 commercial permits, and 32 commercial certificates of occupancy. 568 inspections were completed. Representatives from the MPC are present to answer questions related to the "Plan 2040" Comprehensive Plan.

VIII. ORDINANCES, PROCLAMATIONS, RESOLUTIONS

A. Ordinance O2021-10.A - To Amend Chapter 78 - Taxation, Article IV. - Insurers, Sections 78-166 Life Insurer's License Fees, 78-167 – License Fees for Additional Business Locations, and 78-178 – Annual License Fees (*Second Reading*)

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the second reading for consideration. Councilmember Aaron Higgins moved to approve the second reading of Ordinance O2021-10.A - To Amend Chapter 78 - Taxation, Article IV. - Insurers, Sections 78-166 Life Insurer's License Fees, 78-167 – License Fees for Additional Business Locations, and 78-178 – Annual License Fees.

Motion to Approve; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Wall

SECONDER: Higgins

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

NAYS:

B. Proclamation for Georgia Retired Educator Day

Mayor Rebecca C. Benton read aloud the proclamation for Georgia Retired Educator Day.

C. **Resolution R2021-10.A to Adopt the Pooler "Plan 2040" Comprehensive Plan**

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the resolution for consideration. A representative from the Metropolitan Planning Commission presented an overview of the plan. Councilmember Stevie Wall moved to approve Resolution R2021-10.A to Adopt the Pooler "Plan 2040" Comprehensive Plan.

Motion to Approve; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Wall

SECONDER: Higgins

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

NAYS:

IX. OLD BUSINESS

A. **Zoning Map Amendment for 28.16 Acres on Jimmy DeLoach Parkway from R-A and C-2 to I-1**

City Manager Robert Byrd reported that the proposed amendment had been withdrawn by the petitioner. There were no citizens present for the public hearing.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. **Release of Maintenance Bond for Easthaven Boulevard Extension and Lift Station**

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the release for consideration. Councilmember Aaron Higgins moved to approve release of the maintenance bond for the Easthaven Boulevard extension and lift station in the amount of \$478,529.85.

Motion to Approve; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Higgins

SECONDER: Williams

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

NAYS:

B. **Release of Maintenance Bond for Whitaker Park, Phase 1**

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the release for consideration. Councilmember Karen Williams moved to approve release of the maintenance bond for Whitaker Park, Phase 1 in the amount of \$203,278.60.

Motion to Approve; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Williams

SECONDER: Wall

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

NAYS:

C. **Acceptance of Maintenance, Warranty, and Sidewalk Bonds; Release of Subdivision Performance Bond for Westbrook Greens, Phase 2**

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the bonds for consideration.

Councilmember Aaron Higgins moved to approve acceptance of the maintenance bond in the amount of \$88,680.50 and the sidewalk performance bond in the amount of \$75,667.50 as well as release of the subdivision performance bond in the amount of \$844,509.38 for Westbrook Greens, Phase 2, all subject to attorney review.

Motion to Approve; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Higgins

SECONDER: Wall

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

NAYS:

D. **Site Plan for Coastal Commerce Center, Phase II at 5212 Old Louisville Road**

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the plan for consideration. Doug Faircloth of Coleman & Company was present on behalf of the petitioner. Councilmember Karen Williams moved to approve the site plan for Coastal Commerce Center, Phase II at 5212 Old Louisville Road subject to the following conditions:

1. Payment of \$489,825.00 into the Tree Fund prior to issuance of a land disturbance activity permit
2. Payment of \$6,006.00 to the City as reimbursement for the tree survey conducted by contracted staff
3. Completion of the scheduled Old Louisville Road improvements prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy

Motion to Approve with Stipulations; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Williams

SECONDER: Higgins

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

NAYS:

E. **City of Pooler Employee COVID-19 Vaccination Incentive**

City Manager Robert Byrd presented the proposal for consideration.

Councilmember Aaron Higgins moved to approve, in addition to existing incentives, a new incentive granting City of Pooler employees an additional

\$500.00 for being fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Motion to Approve; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Higgins

SECONDER: Williams

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

NAYS:

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

With no further public business to conduct, Councilmember Aaron Higgins moved to adjourn to Executive Session. Council entered Executive Session at 6:32 p.m.

Motion to Adjourn to Executive Session; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Higgins

SECONDER: Williams

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

NAYS:

Mayor Rebecca C. Benton called the meeting back to order at 6:48 p.m. Councilmember Karen Williams moved to amend the agenda with the addition of an item under New Business: E. A City of Pooler Employee Incentive for COVID-19 Vaccinations.

Motion to Amend; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Williams

SECONDER: Higgins

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

NAYS:

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Aaron Higgins moved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Motion to Adjourn; PASSED (UNANIMOUS)

MOVER: Higgins

SECONDER: Williams

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

NAYS:

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