

City of Eatonton Council Meeting Monday, August 17 2009 at 7:00 p.m.  
Eatonton City Hall, 201 North Jefferson Avenue, Eatonton, Georgia 31024

Present: Mayor John Reid  
Mayor Pro-tem Chip Walker, Jr.  
Councilman Alvin Butts  
Councilwoman Teresa Doster  
Councilman James Gorley  
Councilman Jim Hall, Jr.  
(Absent) Councilman Derek Hudson  
Councilwoman Alma Stokes  
Attorney Chris Huskins  
City Administrator, Dan Elmore

Mayor John Reid called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

Pastor Chris Webb of Grace Independent Baptist Church gave the invocation.

Motion was made by Stokes and seconded by Butts to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

Motion was made by Doster and seconded by Stokes to approve the consent agenda to include: Pastor Chris Webb - Zoning and James Strother Jr. – Zoning. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

City Administrator Elmore read the rules for public comments at a Council meeting. Attorney Huskins advised that in a zoning hearing each side had 10 minutes to present their side.

Pastor Chris Webb stated he was not opposed to the Hospice Center, but he would like some questions to be answered before Council approve the request made by James Strother to rezone the property to C-2. (1) What if the hospice center closed, could the property be rezoned back to R-2. (2) When can he see a copy of the site plans, and how will the building be placed on the lot. (3) Where will family members park at the cemetery, currently they are using the church's parking lot when there is a large funeral.

Mr. James Strother addressed Council concerning the facing of the building, parking and the removal of the cemetery sign, and he advised he did not have site plans available.

Motion was made by Doster and seconded by Butts to accept the Zoning Board recommendation to **approve the request made by James C. Strother Jr. to re zone 4.91 acres at 157 Lake Oconee Parkway from R-2 to C-2 [Map 064, Parcels 037 and 038] with the condition that the property be used as a medical facility.** Motion carried by a vote of 5 to 1 for and Councilman Hall voted against.

Ms. Shelagh Fagan presented the Better Hometown Report:

- BHT awarded a Façade Grant to El Giro of Eatonton, a new Mexican Restaurant out of Monticello, to help purchase new sign and window lettering.
- Had a downtown workday to trim back the plants in cauldrons.
- Working with 4-H to create a project to allow them to take over the care and upkeep of the cauldrons.
- Spoke at the Kiwanis Club July 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Spoke at the Arts Development Council of GA August 5<sup>th</sup> in Auburn, GA; their next meeting will be held at the Plaza Arts Center in September.
- Volunteers did pruning at Critter Park and we had the irrigation system fixed. We are applying for an Ace Hardware Grant to put finishing touches on Critter Park. Economic Development is working on a plan for a Christmas Shopping Village in downtown. It is to run from Thanksgiving weekend to the first week in January, also we are mailing out 'solicitation' letters with space availability listing to bring in new tenants.
- Shelagh Fagan applied for a Save Our History Grant for the Central GA Judicial Museum but it was not approved. She is applying for another grant (NEH).
- The Regional Commission has produced a draft of a redevelopment plan for Eatonton. This will lead to an Opportunity Zone designation which allows for tax credits for new jobs in the zone
- Briar Patch Arts Festival Updates: Working to have Hwy 16 and Madison Avenue closed for the festival. Worked with the Chamber to create a Rack Card that will be distributed across GA. Current sponsors are Blackwell Furniture, The Peoples Bank, IGA, Farmers & Merchants Bank, Cuscowilla, the Plaza, Chamber of Commerce, Georgia Power, Longshots Sports Bar and the Lake Country Navigator. The Elementary School and local churches are also participating. The Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a children's costume contest to kick off the festival, also we will have a special Children's area. Special entertainment includes Erica Sunshine Lee, Shane Bridges and the Dorsey Brother Trio. Family Connection will be having a food drive to collect food to be used for the community Thanksgiving and Christmas Dinners. The Plaza Arts Center is working to host an Antiques Road Show as well as an Antique Car Show.
- Better Hometown requested the support of Mayor and Council.
- Christmas Parade/Festival will be held Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup>; the Downtown theme will be "The Briar Patch Express." Stores will decorate front windows with train theme décor.
- The Parade will begin at 1pm. Participants are asked to register, all entrants must have their vehicles decorated to get in line. The Parade sponsor will award prize money, to the top participants.
- 2 pm to 5 pm. vendors around the square will be selling handmade items and food, the main stage will feature Christmas Music by local church choirs and musical groups, and there will be opportunity to take pictures with Santa. Downtown Merchants will have special sales and give-away. At 5:30 pm the Annual Christmas tree lighting will take place.

Motion was made by Walker and seconded by Gorley to accept the 2008-2009 Proposed Budget Amendments. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

Motion was made by Walker and seconded by Doster to accept the 2010 Budget. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

Motion was made by Doster and seconded by Walker to **accept the DOT Contract to Mow Right-of-Way on 441 Bypass and authorize the Mayor to sign.** Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

Motion was made by Stokes and seconded by Butts to enter into a **2009-2010 Contract with the Eatonton- Putnam Chamber of Commerce.** Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

Motion was made by Walker and seconded by Doster to pay bills if and when funds become available. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

Councilman Gorley advised that the contractor has started working on Willie Bailey Street CDBG Project.

Councilwoman Stokes advised she received the following invitations:

- Putnam County Board of Commissioners is hosting ACCG's Policy Committee Meeting and Luncheon on Wednesday, August 26, 2009 starting at 10 am at the Plaza Arts Center.
- The Pilot Club of Eatonton, Inc. Annual Civic Night Dinner on Tuesday, September 1, at 6:00 pm at the Eatonton Presbyterian Church Dining Hall located at 307 North Madison Avenue.
- The Old School History Museum reception and opening tour of the exhibition Farm Life: A Century of Change for Farm Families and their Neighbors, Wednesday, September 2, 2009 at 2:00 pm at the Plaza Arts Center.

Councilman Hall advised that the City did get one police officer approved through a DOJ Grant. The fire department has also applied for a grant to fund five fulltime fireman positions.

City Administrator Dan Elmore reported that Gregory Bridge Company has posted the signs at the Imperial Lake View mill pond culvert site, work will start this week on replacing the culvert. The City crews have nearly completed the work at the Winchester culvert site. Elmore advised Council that a copy of the July Budget Comparison Report is at Council member's seat. Elmore advised that Gary Meece a previous employee of the City passed on Monday.

Attorney Huskins requested the City pay for him to attend a two-day Attorney's Seminar in Athens on September 10 and 11. Council gave approval.

Huskins discussed Emergency Management and communications he received from Wesley Willis the director. Huskins advised that GEMA recognize 159 counties emergency program directors and cities are not recognized, therefore the County must take action and appoint a person to serve as the Emergency Management Director for the City and the County. Emergency Management has received some weather radios and they will be available at the police department and free to the public.

Clerk Abrams advised that the City's Municipal General Election is November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Qualifying would open Monday, August 31<sup>st</sup> at City Hall and end on Friday, September 4<sup>th</sup>.

Council Member Chip Walker made the following motion:

That this Mayor and Council now enter into closed session as allowed by O.C.G.A. #50-14-4 and pursuant to advice by the City Attorney, for the purpose of discussing the following: **Personnel**. And that this body, in open session, adopts a resolution authorizing and directing the mayor or presiding officer to execute an affidavit in compliance with O.C.G.A. #50-14-4 and that this body ratify the actions of the Council taken in closed session and confirm the subject matter of the closed session were within exceptions permitted by the open meeting law, said resolution to be in an approval form signed by the Mayor and City Clerk. Seconded by Councilwoman Teresa Doster. Motion passed.

Those voting in favor of the motion for the closure: Council members Chip Walker, Alvin Butts, Teresa Doster, James Gorley, James Hall, and Alma Stokes. Motion carried.

***Executive Session***

Motion was made by Councilman Walker and seconded by Councilman Gorley to return to open session. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

In open session Motion was made by Walker and seconded by Doster to take action, which was discussed, in closed session. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

Motion was made by Walker and seconded by Hall to adjourn. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

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John Reid, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Sarah E. Abrams, City Clerk

