City of Eatonton Council Meeting
Monday, February 15, 2016 at 7:00 pm
Putnam County Commissioners’ Meeting Room, #203
117 Putnam Drive, Eatonton, Georgia 31024

Elected Officials Present:
  Mayor Walter C. Rocker, Jr.
  Mayor Pro-Tem Harvey (Chip) Walker, Jr.
  Councilman Alvin Butts
  Councilwoman Teresa Doster
  Councilman William Mangum, Jr.
  Councilwoman Alma Stokes

Elected Officials Absent:
  Councilman James A. Gorley
  Councilman Charles R. Haley

Staff Members Present:
  City Administrator, Gary Sanders
  City Attorney, Christopher Huskins
  City Clerk, Sarah Abrams
  Chief of Police, William K. Lawrence

Mayor Walter C. Rocker, Jr. called the meeting of the Eatonton City Council to order at 7:00 PM.

Mayor Walter C. Rocker, Jr. gave the invocation.

Councilman Alvin Butts welcomed and introduced the Putnam County Middle School Girls Basketball Team to Council. Butts advised the girls won the Conference Championship this year with a record of 17-0. Butts asked that a photograph of the basketball team be taken with Council. Members of Council congratulated and expressed words of encouragement to the team.

Motion was made by Butts and seconded by Doster to approve the minutes of the last meeting held on February 2, 2016 with any necessary corrections. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

Public Comments: Joseph Lon Taylor - Rezoning
Reading of the Rules for Public Comments: City Administrator Sanders read the rules for making Public Comments.

Mr. Joseph Lon Taylor talked to Council in reference to rezoning his property at 896 Oak Street, Eatonton, GA from Residential -2 to Commercial-1, Tract A, 4.316 acres, [Map 062, Part of Parcel 014].
Mr. Joseph Lon Taylor finished making his comments regarding rezoning his property at 896 Oak Street according to the time given.

Motion was made by Doster and seconded by Walker to accept the recommendations from the City of Eatonton Planning and Zoning Commission, which approved Joseph Lon Taylor request to rezoning his property at 896 Oak Street, from R-2 to C-1, Tract A, 4.316 acres [Map 062, Part of Parcel 014] Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

Andrew Simpson, Director of Main Street submitted the following report.

Main Street Report for City Council February 2016

Main Street is pleased to report the new Main Street Board, Promotions Committee and Design Committee members for 2016. They are as follows:

Organization

The Eatonton Main Street Board is:
Lisa Jackson
John Montgomery
Cooper Rainey
Sara Tomson Hooper
Chequita Adams
Lynn Hendren
Joshua Bell
Janie Reid
Simone Jones
Dan Lowery
Sara Nolan

The Promotions Committee is:
Lindsey Rickman
Adam Swymer
Karen Pennamon
Cristi Sheppard
Amy Hood
Cooper Rainey
Eatonton Main Street designation for 2016 will be issued in February. Eatonton is currently a Classic Main Street.

**Promotion**
Main Street will be meeting with those clubs, organizations involved with the Easter Egg Hunt on Friday February 26 to coordinate volunteers, vendors and events.

Main Street is also awaiting a response from the Putnam County Middle School Principal regarding their involvement with the "Mayor for a Day" Essay contest for Georgia Cities Week.

The response for "Better Know A Downtown Business" has been great. Main Street is averaging around 5 new followers a week on Twitter; however, the Main Street newsletter has only 135 subscribers.

The Downtown Eatonton App is now available both on Google Play and at the Apple Store. Feedback has been positive.

Eatonton Main Street is requesting City Council approval for a BBQ Festival/Acoustic Music Competition as part of Georgia Cities Week on Saturday, April 23 between 10 am and 3pm. Eatonton Main Street is requesting that alcohol be served at this event by Smith's and Cucos.

The BBQ Festival would be a Backyard Barbecue event. Main Street did contact the Georgia Barbecue Association for a sanctioned event. However, sanctioned events have a 150 mile radius, the prize money for the winner is at least $1500 and the 5 judges are to be put up in a hotel for a Friday and Saturday night. The contest event area must also be inspected before being sanctioned. A future sanctioned event is something that Main Street is looking into, but Main Street would require sponsors and partners due to the cost.

Eatonton Main Street met with Rainey Gallagher from the Plaza Arts Center about having movies in the Plaza Arts Center rather than on the Square. Each movie would have a different theme. Merchants have benefited little from the Movies on the Square
and the average attendance has been anywhere between 20 and 50 people. The movies in the Plaza would be free for entry; but, concessions would have to be paid for.

**Design**

Main Street currently has 3 facade grant applications under consideration.

- **Scrub Up at 118 W Marion Street** - Opening Spring 2016.
- **Vizitech USA 103 East Sumter Street.**
- **TBA 118 N Jefferson Ave.**

Main Street has 3 bids in for directional signage and will now be approaching each merchant to see if they are willing to pay $60 per sign and a $20 renewal fee per year. Once this information has been collected, Main Street will seek funding for the project. All signs would be on City right of way and Main Street will be meeting with the City to discuss locations. Currently the locations under consideration would be as follows:

- East Sumter Street/South Jefferson Ave
- South Jefferson Ave/East Marion St
- North Jefferson Ave/West Marion St
- North Madison Ave/West Marion St
- North Jefferson Ave/City Parking Lot Entrance

Main Street will also be approaching property owners for permission to put directional signage for downtown Eatonton on Highway 441.

**Economic Vitality**

The former owners of the China Chef business at 104 N Jefferson Ave confirmed that they have left Eatonton due to the lack of response of their landlord to fixing their premises for over 2 years. They reported water leaking from the roof in the back of the kitchen and in the storage room. Water is collecting in the ceiling and parts of the ceiling have fallen in. The landlord has not contacted me regarding my inquiries to the status of the business.

The old Moore Gas Store, at 107 N. Jefferson Avenue, has ceiling tiles on the floor and also looks like black mold inside.

The old Communicom building at 104 East Marion Street has ceiling tiles fallen in, and part of the lighting fallen in, and probably black mold judging from looking inside the door and window.

These buildings are not economically viable to rent in the conditions that they are in. I am requesting that a letter is sent to the landlords of these premises seeking entry from the building inspector as it would appear the condition of these buildings are breaching both City of Eatonton and Georgia Code.
Met with Denise Fraser from the Eatonton General Store. They have been given notice to leave the premises by Feb 15 and will be relocating to Monroe.

Main Street has had 2 people get in touch with them about having a restaurant in downtown Eatonton. Unfortunately the stumbling block is the lack of kitchen in available premises. A kitchen to be built is between $80,000 to $100,000 and that is a problem. The restaurants that are trying to open are a country cooking, meat and 3 type of establishment.

The Main Street Board is requesting that the City Manager attend their next meeting to discuss signage on the roads leading to downtown Eatonton.

Main Street hosted an owner of an art gallery that wished to relocate to downtown Eatonton. Once here, and seeing what was available due to the condition of the premises available for rent and the price being asked to rent the properties, the owner of the Art Gallery decided against relocation.

Going Artistic has purchased 110 W. Marion Street for an Art Gallery space. Opening in Spring 2016.

Scrub Up has rented 118 W. Marion Street to open a Nurses Uniform store in Spring 2016.

**Other**

Attended the Economic Development Sales Training in Macon on January 20.

Attended the Main Street 201 Training in Greensboro on January 26.

Attended Legislative Luncheon at State Capitol on January 28.

Eatonton Main Street continues to work with Milledgeville and Greensboro Main Street to make sure that no events are on the same day.

Please continue to follow our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Website postings.

Main Street Director, Simpson asked Council to approve a BBQ Festival/Acoustic Music Competition as part of Georgia Cities Week on Saturday, April 23, 2016 from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

Motion was made by Doster and seconded by Walker to add request by Andrew Simpson to hold a BBQ Festival/Acoustic Music Competition as part of Georgia Cities Week on the Marion Street parking lot to the agenda. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.
Motion was made by Doster and seconded by Walker to approve permit for Main Street to sponsor the BBQ Festival on the parking lot. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

In reference to the condition of the buildings in Main Street report Councilman Mangum advised Main Street Director, Simpson that anyplace closed up will have mildew this time of year because of the rain.

Council then discussed what it would take to entice or get restaurants to stay in the downtown and if a meeting could be scheduled to discuss installation of kitchen equipment with the owners.

**Presentation of Planned Community Program by Greater High Hope Christian Center**

Mr. Trenton Brown advised Greater High Hope Christian Center located on Hogan Blvd. would be adding classrooms, Family Life Center and a Community Safe Room. Also, they will be adding a new front to their existing building. To his knowledge the church has not made application with Putnam County Planning and Developing for permits.

**Proclamation Recognizing February as Eatonton Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month Attachment #6C**

Motion was made by Doster and seconded by Butts to approve the Proclamation proclaiming February 2016 as Eatonton Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

**Proposed Resolution to Authorize the Mayor to submit a Proposal to the Area Agency on Aging for Home Delivered and Congregate Meals Program for FY 2017-2020 Attachment # 6D**

Motion was made by Doster and seconded by Walker to approve the proposed Resolution which authorizes Mayor of the City of Eatonton to submit a proposal to the Area Agency on Aging for Home Delivered and Congregate Meals Programs for FY 2017-2020. Also authorize the Mayor to sign letters; applications, contracts, changes, assurances and other such supporting material as shall be necessary for proper application for an execution of the grant for such program. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

**Proposed Resolution to Designate a Meeting Place for the March 1, 2016 City Council Meeting Attachment 6E**

Motion was made by Walker and seconded by Doster to approve the proposed Resolution designating the City Council Chambers, located in the City Hall at 201 North Jefferson Avenue, Eatonton, GA as the venue for the March 1, 2016 meeting place of the City Council pursuant to Section 31 of Chapter 2 of the Code of Ordinances and authorize Mayor Rocker to sign the Resolution. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.
Committee Reports

Motion was made by Walker and seconded by Doster to pay the bills if and when the funds become available. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

Councilwoman Stokes expressed words of apology to Ms. Lisa Jackson for speaking informally to her as a former student.

City Administrator Gary Sanders reported:

1. Georgia DOT held an information meeting this morning regarding the availability of funding for Off-System-Safety enhancement, such as rumble strips, flashing signs, vegetation removal and pedestrian improvement. A list of eligible projects for this program will be complied to submit for consideration.

2. A Public Hearing will be held Tuesday, February 16, 12:00 PM at City Hall seeking input on the 2016 CDBG Application.

3. In the next few weeks, the drive-by meter reading system will undergo a necessary software upgrade. We are working with the vendor to ensure a smooth process

4. A HIPAA workshop is scheduled at the Regional Commission on Wednesday, February 24. Sanders advised he would be attending the workshop.

5. The flags are at half–staff in honor of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia.

Mayor Rocker asked if there was any other business to discuss. Being none, motion was made by Doster and seconded by Walker to adjourn. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

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Walter C. Rocker, Jr., Mayor

ATTEST:

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Sarah E. Abrams, City Clerk