City of Eatonton Council Meeting
Monday, July 20, 2015 at 7:00 pm
Eatonton City Hall, 201 North Jefferson Avenue, Eatonton, Georgia 31024

Elected Officials Present:
   Mayor John Reid
   Mayor Pro-Tem Harvey (Chip) Walker, Jr.
   Councilwoman Teresa Doster
   Councilman James A. Gorley
   Councilman Charles R. Haley
   Councilman William Mangum, Jr.
   Councilwoman Alma Stokes

Elected Official Absent:
   Councilman Alvin Butts

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

Staff Member Absent:
   City Attorney, Christopher Huskins

Call to Order
Mayor John Reid called the Council meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Invocation
Minister Theodora Sneed of Greater Bell’s Chapel Baptist Church gave the invocation.

Approval of the Minutes Attachment #1
Motion was made by Haley and seconded by Mangum to adopt the minutes from last meeting with any necessary corrections. Motion carried by a vote of 5-0. Councilwoman Teresa Doster abstained.
Public Comments: Shelagh Fagan – Historic Preservation
Larry Paschel – Senior Citizens Program

Motion was made by Gorley and seconded by Haley to hear from those who signed in to speak. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

Reading of Rules for Public Comments was omitted.

Mayor Reid stated that the Council would hear from Mrs. Shelagh Fagan on Historic Preservation first, then from Mr. Larry Paschel on Senior Citizens Program.

Mrs. Shelagh Fagan advised Council that the City could lose some of its historical buildings in the downtown area and she asked Council to protect the buildings by making them a part of the Historic District. Councilman Haley asked for pro and cons for clarification. Mrs. Fagan advised by making the building a part of the Historic District it would provide the buildings with the same protection as the houses that are located in Historic District. Fagan also asked Council to take action and seize the property at 201 North Madison Avenue which is located in the Historic District. The property is in a dilapidated state and requires the owner to repair or demolish.

Mr. Larry Paschel apologized to Council for his outburst at the last Council meeting; then proceeded to read the following statement in reference to the Senior Citizens Program.

Public Comments Letter as read by Larry Paschel Attached Below:
I stand before you this evening as spokesperson for the group concerned with the ongoing saga of the senior citizens program. While we continue to do research and address our issues with the various agencies that we feel should hear our concerns, we are here this evening to address the most recent issue that was written about in last week’s Eatonton Messenger. That is the parking lot and surrounding grounds. As the newspaper stated the proposed lease calls for the Arts group to take control of 9 of the 12 parking spaces available, leaving only 3 spaces for senior services. What is it that the arts alliance proposes that our seniors do? Do we park downtown (if that is allowable for senior citizens) and walk to the center? Will there be a park and ride location where we will be able to catch a bus to the center? Or is this a part of the big plan of pushing the seniors out of the building altogether? By the way when I say “we”, I am including myself because I am a senior citizen. I visit the program on a regular basis and I can tell you that we do not need fewer parking spaces but instead more. On most days that I am there we have in the neighborhood of 20 cars on site.

We concur with Councilman Gorley’s expressions in The Messenger: if the arts foundation is serious about developing the park then they can do so with the city still in possession of it making it a true city service. The cost of maintaining the park in either situation will still be the burden of the city but under the arts foundation plan, the city turns over control to EPAF
and it will be of little benefit to the majority of our citizens especially seniors, since we
won’t even have the right to park at the center.

I mentioned earlier that we are doing research to see if the city is treating the seniors as
fairly as should be. The seniors, by the way are still getting a boxed meal that is worse than
the field rations I received in Viet Nam. *Implementation of the grant for meals was July 1st
and 20 days later the seniors are getting BOXED MEALS.*

During our research we discovered an opinion piece written in the Eatonton Messenger in
2010 by County Manager Paul Van Haute concerning gratuities. The county at the time was
attempting and was successful in stopping what it perceived were gratuities in the recreation
department. According to this piece it appears that the city and county are operating under two
different sets of laws or at least are applying the laws differently depending on who the
benefactor is. *By the way the gratuity law is a state law.*

Our group has pledged to each other that we are going to get to the very bottom of this
disparaging treatment. In the meantime we hope that the Eatonton city council will
discontinue the practice of being the grim reaper for the Senior Citizens Program while at
the same time being the gift that keeps on giving for the arts programs. We believe in equal
and fair treatment and that co-existence is essential to survival and we hope that you believe
the same.

Mr. Paschel asked City Administrator Sanders about gratuity. Mr. Sanders advised a
response was prepared and e-mailed to Mr. Paschel and to Mayor and Council members.

Paschel was allowed to complete his statement after the time given had expired.
Old Business:

Proposed Lease Agreement between the Eatonton-Putnam Arts Foundation and the City of Eatonton for Certain Property (Parcel B-1) Attachment #2

Councilman Mangum advised meeting with Councilman Gorley to discuss the Proposed Lease Agreement received from EPAF for (Parcel B-1) Attachment #2 in package. Mangum advised they agreed that this project may be better appropriate as a City project, but must get the parking settled first before moving forward. Councilman Gorley advised he concurred with Councilman Mangum due to the limited parking at the Senior Center, especially at lunchtime. If the City will have to maintain the park which has been proposed by EPAF; pay utilities, and the insurance it would be best to maintain the property as a City’s park.

Motion was made by Gorley and seconded by Doster to table the Proposed Lease Agreement between the Eatonton –Putnam Arts Foundation and the City of Eatonton for certain property (Parcel B-1) Attachment #2 until a later date. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

New Business:

Main Street Report: Attachment #3

Updated newsletter format from quarterly print distribution to monthly email distribution. Anyone can sign up for it on our website, www.eatontonmainstreet.com, or on our Facebook page.

Maintaining weekly blog posts on website and sharing through social media. Please follow and like us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The more likes and share we get the more further reach Eatonton will have.

Updated website to a cleaner format.

Movies in the Briar Patch on July 11 was not as successful as previous movie events, but still had decent turn out - about 35. Next movie is Monsters, Inc on Friday, October 30 - will be 5th Friday entertainment.
Second 5th Friday in the Briar Patch is coming up on July 31. Live music, kids activities (ex: bounce house and face painting), multiple prize scavenger hunt, extended shopping hours, shopping specials, etc.

Round table discussion on Pop-up Retail to be held August 6. Terry Schwindler, Putnam Development Authority, has invited a speaker from the Macon Arts Alliance. May have other parties to present as well.

Vacant window beautification project with Briar Patch Arts Council is moving forward. Have received confirmation from 4 storefronts that windows can be used to display art.

Art Blitz in the Briar Patch promotion underway. Main Street is working with Briar Patch Arts Council to help get the manhole cover project complete. Encouraging artists to come out and paint (after application and acceptance from BPAC) remaining designated manhole covers in town during the week of September 28 - October 2. People's Choice Awards will be held and announced at Briar Patch Arts Festival (Oct 31). Ladies Night will be held in conjunction with event at Adelle Theater (Blackwell Furniture) on Thursday, October 1.

Met with Community Egg Hunt planning committee and selected Saturday, March 26 as date for 2016 Community Egg Hunt.

Rocking Horse opened this past Saturday (7/18).

Blac Bella Salon opened in June.

Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the SPLOST # 8 Project List
Attachment #4
Council discussed attachment #4, the Project list presented by the SPLOST Advisory Committee and the City of Eatonton SPLOST #8 project list. Mayor Reid advised the total amount of anticipated SPLOST #8 Revenues is $23,895,446.60 and the City’s share is about 3.1 million. The City’s Department Heads submitted their project list for 4 ½ million, which the City needs to trim down to meet the anticipated amount of Revenue. The next City/County committee meeting on SPLOST is scheduled for July 28th at 9AM.

Mayor Reid asked Council if they would like to have a SPLOST Work Session before next Tuesday meeting with the County. Council agreed to schedule a SPLOST Work Session for Wednesday, July 22, 2015 at 12:00 noon in City Hall.

Motion was made by Walker and seconded by Gorley to schedule a SPLOST Work Session for Wednesday, July 22, 2015 at 12:00 Noon. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

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

City Administrator Gary Sanders reported to Council:
• Work on the striping grant continues. Crews have replaced many of the regulatory street signs and posts over the past number of weeks. After this is finished, TMI Services will be painting lines on side streets.

• Norfolk Southern has indicated its intent to install crossing gates at the railroad tracks on Sumter Street. Be on the lookout for this.

• The Budget Status Report for May is at your seat.

• The 2016 proposed budget and the 2015 budget amendment#1 will be advertised this week. Public hearings will be held immediately prior to Council’s next meeting.

Councilman Gorley asked if the railroad had scheduled a date to install the crossing gates because school will be re-opening the first part of August. Administrator Sanders advised he would check to see if a date has been scheduled for the installation of the crossing gates.

Councilman Haley asked if the City had heard anything from the Sumter Street Apartments Development. Mayor Reid advised a meeting is scheduled on Tuesday with DOT and the Developers.

Mayor Reid asked if there was anything else to be discussed for the good of the City. There being no further business; motion was made by Walker and seconded by Haley to adjourn. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

John Reid, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sarah E. Abrams