City of Eatonton Council Meeting  
Tuesday, February 7, 2017 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
  Councilman James A. Gorley
  Councilman Charles R. Haley
  Councilman William Mangum, Jr.
  Councilwoman Alma Stokes

Elected Officials Absent:
  Councilwoman Teresa Doster

Staff Members Present:
  City Administrator, Gary Sanders
  City Attorney, Christopher Huskins
  City Clerk, Sarah Abrams

Mayor Walter Rocker called the February 7, 2017 Council meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Invocation was given by Councilman Alvin Butts.

Motion was made by Walker and seconded by Gorley to un-table the minutes from the January 3, 2017 meeting. Motion carried by unanimous vote of 6-0.

Motion was made by Haley and seconded by Mangum to approve the minutes from January 3, 2017 Council meeting. Motion carried by a vote of 5-0. Councilman James A. Gorley abstained.

Motion was made by Haley and seconded by Walker to approve the minutes from January 17, 2017 meeting. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.
Public Comments: Stewart Aaron - Eatonton Cotton Warehouse and Janet Kelhoffer-Plaza Arts Center

Reading of the Rules for Public Comments: Omitted

Mr. Stewart Aaron asked the Council to approve his beer and wine license for the Eatonton Cotton Warehouse facility and he asked the community to come out and support the Fire and Ice Festival sponsored by Main Street on Saturday, February 11, 2017. Also, Mr. Aaron expressed words of encouragement for others to open businesses in the downtown area.

Mrs. Janet Kelhoffer updated Council on the various events taking place at the Plaza Arts Center. Mrs. Kelhoffer talked about having a workable lease agreement, working with the Senior Citizens, Tai Chi classes, dance classes and after school art classes; she also advised there will be a new video class in March. Mrs. Kelhoffer invited the community to participate in the various activities offered.

Old Business:

New Business:

Main Street Report for City Council Meeting February 7, 2017

Organization

Main Street is seeking members for the Design and Promotions Committee and is also seeking volunteers. A Christmas Decoration subcommittee has been setup and had its first meeting in January,

The Department of Community Affairs requested that all Main Street reports including the Annual Assessment of Accreditation be submitted to them by January 15. This has been accomplished.

January 31st the Opportunity Zone report for 2016 was submitted to the Department of Community Affairs.

Promotion

The reaction to the Fire and Ice Festival Television commercial has been positive. A Banner was placed behind the Courthouse and posters have been put up in various locations in the Lake Country.

Eatonton Main Street Director has arranged a meeting with Fairway Outdoor Advertising in February to discuss a North Facing billboard to encourage traffic into downtown Eatonton,

Design

The Design Committee has set up a Christmas Decorations Sub Committee to see how to enhance the downtown. Lake Country Physical Therapy used the Facade Grant to help pay 50% of their sign.

The American Cleaners, opposite City Hall, used a Facade Grant to help paint their outside.
The Athens Design Studio proposal document for E. Sumter Street has been put back to February.

**Economic Vitality**

Lake Country Physical Therapy had their grand opening on Tuesday, January 17.

Eatonton Main Street Director met with Terry Schwindler, Director of the Putnam Development Authority, to discuss economic vitality in downtown Eatonton on Wednesday January 18.

Eatonton Main Street Director is working with Krystal Epps of Southern Spice for a restaurant to open downtown.

Foot traffic is down in January and has been noticed financially in both downtown restaurants and retailers.

W. Marion Street continues to see empty store fronts. The old bank building on the corner is the temporary home for the Sumter Street Station Apartments Office.

**Summary**

January is a month where key reports are being sent to the Department of Community Affairs. The results of these reports will be shared later in the year and will determine both Main Street and Opportunity Zone status.

The Fire and Ice Festival continues to gather interest especially from outside the Lake Country area. This can only benefit Eatonton in the long term as a tourism destination location.

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**Proposed Ratification of Proclamation Recognizing the Service of Mr. Timothy Thompkins Attachment #6B**

Motion was made by Gorley and seconded by Haley to ratify the action taken by Mayor Rocker in signing a Proclamation recognizing the service of Mr. Timothy Thompkins in the City of Eatonton. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

**Discussion and Possible Action on Old Big Chick Property**

Mayor and Council discussed demolishing the old Big Chick property which was deeded to the City of Eatonton by Mr. and Mrs. James Marshall. Mayor Rocker advised that his equipment would be used to knock down the building and Andy Holder of Holder’s Wrecker Service will haul the blocks and debris. There may be a tipping fee of up to $600.00 associated with the wood and shingles from the structure. A DOT permit may required before the building can be demolished.

Motion was made by Haley and seconded by Walker to pay a tipping fee of up to $600.00 for the demolishing of the old Big Chick property located at 202 East Sumter Street. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

**Request by Gatewood Schools to Close City Streets for Annual Swamp Stomp/5k for Kaye Attachment #6D**
Motion was made by Gorley and seconded Haley to approve the request made by Gatewood Schools to close certain City streets for the Annual Swamp Stomp/5K for Kaye on Sunday, March 12, 2017 at 2:30 PM. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6–0.

**Discussion and Possible Action on the 2016-2017 Indigent Defense Service Agreement Attachment #6E**

Motion was made by Gorley and seconded by Mangum to approve the Indigent Defense Service Agreement and authorize Mayor Rocker to sign. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

**Proposed Resolution to Request Technical Assistance from Middle Georgia Regional Commission in Amending the Urban Redevelopment Plan and Revitalization Area Strategy Map Attachment #6F**

Motion was made by Haley and seconded by Gorley to approve the proposed Resolution requesting Technical Assistance from Middle Georgia Regional Commission in amending the Urban Redevelopment Plan and Revitalization Area Strategy Map and authorize Mayor Rocker to sign. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

**Proposed Resolution to Renew the United Healthcare Choice Open Access Insurance Plan Attachment #6G**

Motion was made by Walker and seconded by Gorley to approve the proposed Resolution to renew the United Healthcare Choice Open Access Insurance Plan and authorize the Mayor to sign. Motion carried by vote of 5-1. Councilman Haley opposed.

Councilman Haley advised he would like to see the employees pay for a portion of their healthcare insurance.

**Alcohol Package Sales License Babu Singh d/b/a as Shell Express and Eastside Package Store at 204-A Sumter Street, Eatonton, GA Attachment #6H**

Motion was made by Haley and seconded by Walker to approve Alcohol Package Sales License requested by Babu Singh d/b/a as Schell Express and Eastside Package Store at 204-A Sumter Street, Eatonton, GA. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

*Business license for 204-A Sumter Street was re-advertised at the request of the Georgia Department of Revenue to show Mr. Singh’s home address.*

**Alcohol License for consumption of beer and wine on the premises – Stewart Aaron d/b/a Eatonton Cotton Warehouse, LLC, 118 North Jefferson Avenue, Eatonton, GA Attachment #6I**

Motion was made by Haley and seconded by Mangum to approve Alcohol License for Consumption of Beer and Wine on the Premises requested by Stewart Aaron d/b/a
Eatonton Cotton Warehouse, LLC located at 118 North Jefferson Avenue, Eatonton. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

Zoning
Request by Hobart Ralston to rezone 6.497 acres at 799 Monticello Road from R-2 to C-1. [Map 049A, Part of Parcel 078] Attachment #7A
Motion was made by Haley and seconded by Walker to accept the recommendation from the Eatonton Planning and Zoning Commission approving the request by Hobart Ralston to rezone 6.497 acres at 799 Monticello Road from R-2 to C-1 [Map 049A, Part of Parcel 078]. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

Committee Reports
Councilman Walker advised scheduling a Finance and Personnel Committee meeting on Wednesday, February 8, at 5:30 PM in City Hall.

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

Councilman Butts requested the status on streetlight for 107 Pinecrest Drive. Administrator Sanders advised that the request has been made and Street Supervisor Hawkins will do a follow up on the matter.

Councilman Haley advised the garbage service agreement is up for renewal this year. There are up to 5 one year options to continue the service agreement as is. Haley advised a committee meeting will be scheduled soon to review the contract.

Councilwoman Stokes advised Council that she agreed with the Proclamation ratified tonight recognizing the services of Mr. Timothy Thompkins to the community. Whenever the City had a project which required acquiring a right-of-way, Mr. Thompkins was always willing to donate the property without cost to the City.

Councilwoman Stokes also discussed Hurts’ name appearing twice on the City Marshal report for code violations; acknowledged Howard McMichael demolished the house at 300 South Madison Avenue and the closing of The Got Junked Market located at 817 South Oak Street. Councilwoman Stokes also wants the City Marshal to look into the continuation of a yard sale on the Greensboro Highway.

Councilman Haley advised City Marshal Veal’s report was informative and up to date.

Councilman Gorley reported the Eatonton Police Department has been busy working a shooting incident over the weekend and a break-in at the CVS Store at 801 Oak Street. Gorley thanked the Department for their outstanding performance.
City Administrator Gary Sanders reported Middle Georgia Regional Commission’s rescheduled the leadership program retreat to Friday, February 17, and Saturday, February 18, 2017 at Lake Lanier. Sanders will attend the retreat.

City Administrator Sanders advised bids for the TE /Streetscape Project will be opened at 11:00 AM on Monday, February 27, 2017 at City Hall.

City Administrator Sanders encouraged all to attend the Fire and Ice Festival this Saturday, from 4:00 PM- 8:00 PM at the Cotton Warehouse and City Event Stage.

City Administrator Sanders advised he would soon be scheduling interviews for the recent vacancies in the Fire Department. In the interim, Chief Hubert is scheduling volunteer firefighters to staff the fire station until permanent replacements are hired.

City Attorney Christopher Huskins reported finalizing the deeds on the Big Chick property and sending the paper work to the clerk’s office for recording.

Councilwoman Stokes thanked Scout Master Willie Frank Thompkins and Boy Scouts Troop members for attending the Council meeting. The Scouts were asked to come to the podium and state their names.

Scouts members attending City Council meeting for Citizenship Badge from Boy Scouts Troop 132 were:

Kaylon Farley
Courtney Clemons
Tymerus Bly

Scout Master
Willie Frank Thompkins

Assistant Scout Master
Robert Parham III - Eagle Scout

Mayor Rocker asked if there was any other business to be discussed; being none, motion was made by Walker and seconded by Haley to adjourn. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6-0.

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Walter C. Rocker, Jr., Mayor

ATTEST:

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Sarah E. Abrams, City Clerk