

MONTICELLO CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
November 10, 2020
MINUTES
6:00 P.M.

Members Present – Mayor Bryan Standifer, Mayor Pro Tem Gail Harrell, Councilmembers David Wease, Cynthia Miller, Jennifer Murphy, and Larry Thurman were present.

Staff Present – City Manager Angela Redding and City Clerk Karen Pennamon

Media Present – Susan Jacobs - The Monticello News

Called Session – Mayor Bryan Standifer called the meeting to order. The Invocation was given by Reverend William Gibson, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. City Clerk Karen Pennamon called the roll.

Agenda Approval – Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Gail Harrell to remove Item 10 – Public Hearing to conduct the second reading to consider adopting a city code amendment identical to the building and property code provisions of the Jasper County Code of Ordinances. Motion by Councilmember Cynthia Miller to add 8a – Get Ahead House and add 8b Mine Lake. Motion by Councilmember Wease to add 8c – Reserve Drawdown. Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell to add 8d – Christmas Party. Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Councilmember Thurman. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

Citizen Comments

Reverend William Gibson – Thanked everyone for their prayers during his recent illness. He presented a handout to the City Council that contained information on Thanksgiving.

Downtown Development Authority – Michele Celani, Executive Director – Vice Chair Amanda Edge, has stepped down due to time restraints. Wendell Yoder has accepted the position and will retain the Treasurer's position until phase one of the Shoppes of Monticello is complete. The Board of Directors will vote on the Treasurer position at the next meeting. The Shoppes of Monticello is at ninety-seven percent occupancy with twenty-seven merchants. The grand opening was on November 7, 2020, and they posted over \$2,600 in sales. They gave away five hundred dollars' worth of Downtown Dollars in ten dollar increments to be used during Shop Small Saturday. Citizens can use Downtown Dollars at businesses and restaurants around Monticello and on Venture Court but not at Shoppes of Monticello. The Mayor and City Council are invited to attend a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on November 12, 2020, at 2:00 p.m. Representatives from the Department of Community Affairs will attend this event. JCCP Vinyl Graphics is renting space in the basement of 139 West Washington. The Georgia Council of Arts awarded an Arts' Vibrant Community Grant of \$3,114.66 to the Downtown Development Authority. They have also received an anonymous donation of \$1,000 for the

City of Monticello
123 West Washington Street
Post Office Box 269
Monticello, GA 31064

Phone 706-468-6062

FAX 706-468-1041

Mural Project, \$1,000 from State Representative Susan Holmes, \$1,000 from Mayor Pro Tem Gail Harrell, and the Bank of Monticello pledged \$1000. on November 13, 2020, at 2:00 p.m. Funderburg Steering Committee will be meeting November 13, 2020, at 2:00 p.m. to discuss notable citizens in our African American communities that will be part of the Funderburg Mural. The DDA is waiting on art proposals from Jasper County High School and expecting some from Piedmont Academy on November 15, 2020. The Shoppes of Monticello conducted a raffle on November 7, 2020, which raised nearly \$300 for the Art Alley Project. Submissions received for the Art Alley Project will be sent to City Council for review and approval at their next meeting. Artist Sunday is November 29, 2020, in the City Square. There will be family-oriented activities and food available. DDA has requested the use of the Square for the artist demonstrations. The Georgia Trust and Preservation has selected the old United Methodist Church at 24 Short Street as the “2021 Places in Peril Structure”. The announcement will be made at Rose Hall tomorrow at 10:00 am and followed up with a widescreen video sent to the media. There will also be an article in the Atlanta Journal and Constitution tomorrow. The Georgia Trust will provide technical assistance and guidance with the stabilization and rehabilitation of that property and assist with information on grants and fund-raising opportunities. DDA will enter an M.O.U. (Memorandum of Understanding) with the Georgia Trust, which will provide a liaison for one year. Thank you for your support.

Chamber of Commerce – Mandi Tanner, Executive Director – Tourism is picking up. We are averaging 11 visitors per day and 6,000 visitors so far this year. The highest number of visitors in a month is 246 visitors. Applications for Business of the Year are available online and at the Chamber of Commerce. You must be a Chamber member to qualify. The Shoppes of Monticello will have a Ribbon Cutting on November 12, 2020, at 2:00 p.m. The Heartland Chiropractic Care has recently expanded its building. There will be a Coffee Call at the Shoppes of Monticello on November 19, 2020, from 7:30 a.m. to – 8:30 a.m. First Friday Breakfast is on December 4, 2020, and space will be limited. AT&T will sponsor this event, and a Georgia Grown representative will be speaking. Shop Small Saturday and Christmas on Venture Court is November 28, 2020. There will be giveaways, but you must register at both locations. The Chamber of Commerce is waiting for feedback from the businesses about being open for Artist Sunday.

Historic Preservation Commission – David Thompson, Chairman – The Historic Preservation Commission is working with the Downtown Development Authority on the Methodist Church Project. We received and approved an application for 678 Forsyth Street for a garage. The H.P.C. received an application for a shed at 107 S. Warren Street after the builder had started construction, so we approved it as an exception. We received a new application today for 448 College Street for a remodel of windows, and this application is in the final stages of approval. One of the Historic Preservation Commission guidelines is that no permanent building, electrical, sewage hookup, etc., should be approved until the Historic Preservation Commission approves it. The guidelines have not been followed due to turnovers, confusion, and other things. The Commission meets virtually every month, and the timeline for review is usually a couple of days. We ask that everyone follows protocol and works together. Mayor Standifer responded that City Manager Redding is working on code enforcement, building permits, and zoning to develop the City's protocols.

City of Monticello
123 West Washington Street
Post Office Box 269
Monticello, GA 31064

Phone 706-468-6062

FAX 706-468-1041

Get Ahead House – Councilmember Miller stated Mrs. Roberta Anderson requested \$5,000 for the Get Ahead House during the October 18, 2020, City Council Regular Meeting. They need funds for salaries, food, and computers. They are spending more time with students due to COVID-19 and now have more students to feed. They also need more computers. Mayor Pro Tem Harrell stated that the Get Ahead is a 501c3, and we fund them as a courtesy. Councilmember Murphy said the Food Bank asked for funds, and they are a nonprofit, and we told them we could not do anything for them. Councilmember Miller stated it is for the kids because they meals and help with schoolwork. City Manager Redding said the Get Ahead House is required to provide the City with a yearly report on how they spend the funds. Also, she confirmed Get Ahead House is a non-profit per the agreement. She informed Council that the funds would come out of Contingency, or they can appropriate additional funds. Motion by Councilmember Miller to approve \$5,000 for the Get Ahead House budget, seconded by Councilmember Thurman. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

Mine Lake – Councilmember Miller requested that funds be allocated to develop the Mine Lake Property. She added the citizens have paid for it, and we invested in it. It will draw people outside of Monticello to that location. Councilmember Murphy asked if there is an outline for parking and walking trails. Councilmember Miller responded there is more information available and State help available. DNR said we need to fish the lake, and we are poor stewards of this. I can obtain the information to present to the Council. Mayor Pro Tem Harrell stated she would like to see a plan before approval. Councilmember Miller responded that the \$150,000 would be allocated before the plans. Mayor Standifer said we would allocate money as we get plans. City Manager Redding informed the Council that GIRMA is coming to access the property on November 17, 2020. She stated Mine Lake is a revenue stream, not a line item in the budget. We can charge invoices against the account or set up a line item in the budget. Motion by Councilmember Miller to transfer funds from Blockstream funds and create an account for Mine Lake in the sum of \$150,000, seconded by Councilmember Thurman. Voting for the motion passed 4-1 with Mayor Pro Tem Harrell voting against.

Reserve Drawdown – Councilmember Wease requested approval to give a \$100 credit to City residents. The \$128,000 from reserves will help the citizens before Christmas. City Manager Redding state she was updated by the City Clerk about the request, but we need to look at budget figures. We are not collecting as much revenue and working with customers on payment arrangements. Motion by Councilmember Wease to repeat the citizen giveback that we gave the last time for one half that amount to the same addresses we gave before, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

Christmas Party – Mayor Pro Tem Harrell reminded the City Council that they had budgeted the Employee Thanksgiving Luncheon, Christmas Party, and bonuses for this year.

Approval of Minutes - Motion by Councilmember Wease to approve the following minutes: Regular Meeting of Mayor and Council – October 13, 2020, Called Meeting of Mayor and Council – Panel Discussion – October 15, 2020, Called Meeting of Mayor and Council – Qtrly Financial Review –

City of Monticello
123 West Washington Street
Post Office Box 269
Monticello, GA 31064

Phone 706-468-6062

FAX 706-468-1041

October 15, 2020, Called Meeting of Mayor and Council - October 29, 2020, seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

Agenda Items

1. Service Award – Kelly Bell – City Council and the City Manager presented Kelly Bell with a 10-year service award for her dedicated service to the City of Monticello.
2. Consider a Resolution by Mayor and City Council of Monticello, Georgia, to recertify the City of Monticello as a Certified City of Ethics under the GMA Program. Motion by Councilmember Murphy to approve the Resolution, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell. Voting for the motion was unanimous.
3. Bank of Monticello Authorized Officers of Depositor. Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell to authorize Mayor Bryan Standifer and City Clerk Karen Pennamon to be the Bank of Monticello Authorized Officers of Depositor, seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Voting for the motion was unanimous.
4. Consider a Request to authorize the positions of Finance Director and HR/Benefits Director. City Manager Redding handed out additional information to the City Council concerning positions needed for the City to run efficiently. Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell to approve the position of Finance Director with a range of \$55,000 – \$60,000. Motion denied. (Code of Ordinances-Sec. 18- Mayor and Council - The city council shall not enact any ordinance or other measure unless it receives the vote of three councilmen). Motion by Councilmember Wease to move forward on vetting for a Finance Director with a salary of \$45,000 - \$52,000, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell. Voting for the motion was 3-2, with Councilmember Miller and Councilmember Thurman voting against. Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell to approve the HR/Benefits position with a range of \$45,000 – \$52,000. Motion denied (Code of Ordinances - Sec. 18 – Mayor and Council - The city council shall not enact any ordinances or other measures unless it receives the vote of three councilmen).
5. City Manager Report –

M.O.U. (Memorandum of Understanding) Chamber of Commerce – The City of Monticello owns the City Square. She needs to discuss the M.O.U. with Council for clarification on the City Square.

Renaming of Blue Ruin Street – Letters will be mailed only to Blue Ruin residents for feedback on renaming Blue Ruin.

Potholes – Funderburg and MLK – Potholes have been repaired on these streets.

City of Monticello
123 West Washington Street
Post Office Box 269
Monticello, GA 31064

Phone 706-468-6062

FAX 706-468-1041

Get Ahead House – Grass is cut at the Get Ahead House a minimum of every two weeks.

Census Update – On October 2, 2020, a federal judge ordered the 2020 Census count continues until October 31. As of October 27, 2020, the City of Monticello Self-Response Rate was 60.4%. The Final 2020 Census Self-Response Rate was 63%.

Bridge on Bonner Street – Project has been completed.

Events & Announcements:

- 73% of registered voters in Jasper County voted in the November 3, 2020, General Election.
- Key Dates for 2020 Runoff Elections in Georgia
December 1, 2020 – Public Service Commission District 4
January 5, 2020 – U.S. Senate & U.S. Senate Special Election Runoff.
- Delinquent Property Tax Sale held November 3, 2020
- Joint Paving Project with County on College Street is underway.
- Veterans Day - November 11, 2020 is a holiday and City offices will be closed.

11. Comments by the Governing Body

Mayor Standifer – Thank you to the Downtown Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce for the excellent job they are doing for the City.

Mayor Pro Tem Harrell – I would like to applaud the Downtown Development Authority and Michele Celani for the Shoppes of Monticello.

Councilmember Wease – Thank you to our Veterans, City Manager, City Clerk, and Staff.

Councilmember Miller – Thank you to City Council for support with the Get Ahead House and Mine Lake.

Councilmember Murphy – no comments

Councilmember Thurman -no comments

City Manager Redding thanked the City Council for approving the Finance Director position.

12. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

City of Monticello
123 West Washington Street
Post Office Box 269
Monticello, GA 31064

Phone 706-468-6062

FAX 706-468-1041