

MONTICELLO CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
October 13, 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, City Clerk Karen Pennamon, and City Attorney Joe Reitman were present.

Media Present – Kathy Mudd - The Monticello News

Called Session – Mayor Bryan Standifer called the meeting to order. The Invocation was given by Councilmember Wease, 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 9 – Executive Session and add Item 9 - Update on Beautify Monticello to the agenda. Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

Citizen Comments

Lillie Gotel – 546 Blue Ruin Street – speaking on behalf of seven people who live on Blue Ruin Street, had not been notified of a meeting to rename the street. Most of the people there are elderly, have medical issues, and receive social security. They do not want the name of the street to be changed. I do not know if you all voted on it or not, but we did not receive anything. Some residents feel like they were left out and want to say something about this.

Dessa Roberts – The street crews are patching streets and passing by limbs that have been on Martin Luther King and Funderburg Drive for over a month. Are they short of help? We are still paying the same amount on utility bills. The patching done is like going over a speed breaker, and this is not professional. If you do not know how to do it and only cover up the holes, it only worsens. The holes and bumps are so bad they affect my vehicle alignment. I have been in Monticello for about forty years and have never seen it look as bad as it does now. These houses need to be torn down because one house on Fred Smith Street has no windows, but people live there. We can do better than that. These houses are in the black community and need to be torn down.

Roberta Anderson – She would like to thank the City for all they do for the Get Ahead House. Monticello's citizens appreciate it because it is a place for our children to go. I have a problem with the grass cutting at the Get Ahead House. The city workers do not cut it, and so I paid \$100 twice to have it cut. When they cut it, they do not use the weed eater or blower. I also paid \$50 to have the

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FAX 706-468-1041

hedges trimmed. We do not have that kind of money to upkeep the Get Ahead House. Maybe the Mayor could get Tillman Landscaping Company because the City workers seem to have a problem doing the Get Ahead House. We request that the City give us more money for salaries because we get \$2800 a month, divided among five teachers. We pay the light bill and phone bill, but now we have to pay for wages and food. I went to Waymon repeatedly, asking him to cut the grass, but they have a problem with cutting the grass. Next, we did not get a prior notice from the City that they would not pick up limbs or bushes. What are they going to do, ride around in those trucks? What are they going to pick up? They say fifty pounds limit only, but who knows what fifty pounds of limbs are? After the storm came, I had three truckloads of limbs taken off. We cut them up for pick up, but they only picked up one load. They later brought me a notice stating we are not going to pick up anything else. The neighbor next door has bushes that have been there for a month. We need to do something about this.

Downtown Development Authority – Michele Celani, Executive Director – stated the Shops of Monticello at 139 West Washington Street is currently under construction. We will divide the building into three sections, and the first section will be nine 10'x10' individual storefronts for merchandise and retail. They will model nine historic properties from the City of Monticello. DDA will place photos and a brief history of these properties on the website. During the Smithsonian, middle school students participated in a walking tour of historic homes, and this will also be available for visitors. We hope the renovations are complete and merchants moving in by October 30, 2020. The grand opening is on November 7, 2020. We have a soft opening on November 5, 2020, and tentatively have a ribbon cutting on November 6, 2020. The Georgia Council of Arts will announce grant recipients on October 15, 2020. It will provide funds to paint our Welcome to Monticello Mural in April 2021. I have founded a Funderburg Steering Committee, which will be meeting in November 2020 to discuss notable citizens in our African American communities that will be part of the Funderburg Mural. Art Alley submissions are due on October 23, 2020, and City Council will have an opportunity to review them before any are selected. The DDA has invited many community leaders to participate in the Community Heart and Soul Workshop. This committee will help work toward project collaboration and interagency cooperation. They are also in the process of developing its branding and logo and tagline campaign. The DDA invites the City and Chamber of Commerce to collaborate with them. We hope to apply jointly with the City of Monticello and the Chamber of Commerce for a \$1,500.00 America Walks Micro-Grant to fund a walkability assessment for our sidewalks and the central business district. We are proud to announce we have launched two youth initiatives. The first is the Young Entrepreneurs Programs for students in grades 7-12 in homeschooling programs, public and private schools in Jasper County, to start their own business. They will be a student space in The Shops of Monticello. The second initiative is the Student Advisement Council. We seek thirteen youth from the Jasper County home school programs, public and private schools to advise DDA on any issues and involve them in community and event programs. I have asked the City Council and County Commissioners if they would allow these students to shadow them in some capacity. Small Business Saturday is on November 28, 2020. We will be handing out Downtown Dollars on November 7, 2020, to be redeemed at any Central Business District retailers, except for Monticello's Shops. The DDA will pull two raffles, one on November 7, 2020, and the other on November 28, 2020. We will raffle a motorized scooter and a

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Galaxy tablet. We are active in getting community feedback and have surveyed 52 golfers at the Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament. Mrs. Celani handed the City Council a survey of the feedback from the golfers. Councilmember Miller asked if the Get Ahead House had the information on the two youth initiatives. Mrs. Celani stated she had not reached out to them but would get the information to them. Councilmember Miller commented that some City Councilmembers work during the day and could not job shadow the students. Mrs. Celani stated whatever they are willing to do would be ok with her. She wants to get the youth involved in the decision making and economic opportunity for themselves in Monticello. Mayor Standifer stated the Downtown Development Authority is doing an excellent job for the City of Monticello.

Approval of Minutes - Motion by Councilmember Murphy to approve the following minutes: Special Called Meeting of Mayor and Council September 3, 2020, and Regular Meeting of Mayor and Council on September 8, 2020, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

9. Public Hearing – Public Hearing to conduct the first 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 Mayor Standifer to open the public hearing at 6:00 p.m. No action was taken in the public hearing. No one spoke in opposition to this request. Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell to close the public hearing at 6:39 p.m. seconded by Councilmember Wease. Meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

Agenda Items

1. Consideration of a Resolution as presented and Ordinance adopting a City Code Amendment identical to the Building and Property Code Provisions of the Jasper County Code of Ordinances as follows: SEC. 1-11; SEC. 20-19; SEC. 26-78 through SEC. 26-83; and SEC. 103-1. Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell for the first reading to consider adopting a city code amendment identical to the building and property code provisions of the Jasper County Code of Ordinances, seconded by Councilmember Wease. Voting for the motion was unanimous.
2. Ratification of Bids for Surplus Equipment – City Manager Redding stated that she provided a list of the bid totals and highest bidders in the agenda packet. The total proceeds from surplus equipment are \$18,982.00. After contacting one bidder, he decided he did not have the funds to move forward with the items selected, so we went with the next highest bidder. Everything went well with the equipment that we needed to sell. We sold everything that the City Council approved for surplus items was sold. Motion by Councilmember Murphy to approve the ratification of bids for surplus equipment, seconded by Councilmember Wease. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

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3. City Manager Report - City Manager Redding stated when citizens provide comments regarding services or have questions, she will respond at the following meeting. City Manager Redding addressed the September 8, 2020 Citizens Comments with the following:

Request for Camera to Address Water Problem at Driveway on Hillsboro Road - The City Engineer provided a possible solution to the problem that would require a joint effort between the City of Monticello and the homeowner. There are two issues, one is the homeowner filled the ditch with leaves and mulch, and now the camera is unable to navigate through everything to see if there is a problem related to a pipe. We will be moving forward with requesting the homeowner to remove the leaves and mulch, and we should be able to identify the problem and correct it.

Tree Limbs and Yard Debris – The City is exploring options for limb and debris removal. Currently, there are twelve piles that we need to be collected. We discussed equipment that we need; however, the non-CDL version of that equipment will not be ready until the first of the year. We have reached out to several of our local vendors for quotes to take care of this service for the City of Monticello. The quotes will be available and sent to the Council tomorrow.

Number of Employees in the Electric Department

When the budget was prepared, there were five employees in the Electric Department.

Census Update – The US Census Bureau moved the Self-Response phase of the 2020 Census deadline from October 31, 2020, to September 30, 2020. On October 2, 2020, a federal judge ordered that the 2020 Census count continues until October 31, 2020. We have additional time for Jasper and Monticello's citizens to respond to increase the amount of funding available. The response rates for Georgia, Jasper County, and the City of Monticello as of October 12, 2020, are shown in the presentation. To complete the census, go online to my2020Census.gov, call 1-844-330-2020, or by mailing back the paper form received in the mail.

Upcoming Projects:

- LMIG – Funderburg Drive (paving of Funderburg Drive) from 2018 Splost Projects.
- Bridge on Bonner Street – Consideration of request for \$24,950.00 for repairs and guard rails for the Bonner Street Bridge. Motion by Councilmember Thurman to approve the Bonner Street Bridge Project with revenue from the Contingency Fund, seconded by Councilmember Miller. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

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- City of Monticello and Jasper County currently working on Joint Paving Project on College Street.
- Consultant for the City of Monticello is in the office to begin work on the annual audit.

Events & Announcements:

- SGJK10, LLC filmed scenes at the Courthouse and a few outside of the Courthouse on Monday, October 5, 2020
- Deer Festival has been canceled, and Deer Dash will be a virtual event this year
- Haunticello has been canceled
- Scarecrow Contest – Check out the Scarecrows around town and go to the Chamber of Commerce on the Square to vote for your favorite one.
- Ameris Bank Helping Fight Hunger Initiative – Throughout the month of October, nonperishable food items can be dropped off at designated collection boxes at Ameris Bank locations, Chamber of Commerce, The Thrift Store, and Bulldog Gym. All collected goods will be donated to the local food bank.
- Jasper County High School Homecoming Parade – November 5, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.
- Early Voting for the November 3rd General Election begins October 13, 2020, from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm at the Courthouse. Saturday voting will take place on October 24, 2020, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.
- Delinquent Property Tax Sale – November 3, 2020, and continuing November 4, 2020, if necessary, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

11. Comments by the Governing Body

Mayor Standifer – Thank you to the citizens for voicing their concerns, which will be addressed in the next meeting. We have things in motion for some of the issues discussed tonight.

Everyone get out and vote on November 3, 2020.

Mayor Pro Tem Harrell – Beautify Monticello has eight groups participating, and two groups will start on October 25, 2020. I am waiting on start dates from the other groups. I am thrilled with the community response in helping to pick up litter.

Councilmember Wease – Stay hydrated; it is still hot outside.

Councilmember Miller – Thank you to the citizens that came out. Please continue to bring your concerns to us so we can take appropriate action.

Councilmember Murphy – no comments

Councilmember Thurman -no comments

12. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

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