

MONTICELLO CITY COUNCIL

Called Meeting

Thursday, October 15, 2020

MINUTES

5:00 P.M.

Members Present – Mayor Bryan Standifer, Mayor Pro Tem Gail Harrell, Councilmembers David Wease, Cynthia Miller.

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

Media Present – Kathy Mudd, Editor Monticello News

Called Session - Mayor Bryan Standifer called the meeting to order. The Invocation was given by the Get Ahead Advisor Melissa Stroger, 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 6 - Executive Session. Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Councilmember Cynthia Miller. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

Agenda Items

- 5. Panel Discussion with Get Ahead House Students. The 4th – 8th graders from the Get Ahead House.** Mayor Bryan Standifer introduced himself and thanked Ms. Stroger and the students from the Get Ahead House for attending. Councilmembers Cynthia Miller, David Wease, and Mayor Pro Tem Harrell introduced themselves to the participants. Mayor Standifer explained that the City Council vote on resolutions and policy for the City of Monticello, but the people who conduct the everyday duties for the City are the City Manager and City Clerk. City Manager Angela Redding stated she is responsible for the day to day operations of the City and implementing the policies that are set by the Mayor and Council. If there is something that you see that needs to be taken care of, such as a pothole or road fixed, do not hesitate to call or have your parents contact me. We are here to make sure we take care of the citizens of Monticello. City Clerk Karen Pennamon stated she is responsible for preparing the agendas, taking minutes of the meetings, and assisting the City Manager. Mayor Standifer introduced Kathy Mudd, Editor of the Monticello News. He noted that the news media attend every Council session. Ms. Mudd stated she attends the City

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

Phone 706-468-6062

Fax 706-468-1041

Council meetings to keep abreast of what is going on in the City, and then she reports it in the newspaper.

Panel Discussion:

The Get Ahead Students asked the Mayor and City Council questions concerning improvements that they would like to see in their communities and suggestions on things they would like to see implemented.

Elijah Whitby – Some children my age say there is nothing for us to do but go to the park. There is nothing there but a basketball court and outdated playground equipment, and no seating for parents. How can you mitigate that concern or fix that situation?

Councilmember Miller asked what they would like to see so that we can help get what you want.

Elijah Whitby - A swimming pool where the Soccer field is, football field, new trashcans so that people will not knock them down, benches for parents to sit and watch their children, and more security in the park.

Elijah Whitby - What do you think I could do as a young man to prepare our future generation concerning summer programs for low-income families?

Mayor Pro Harrell asked what type of programs they would like to see. There are several programs available, and the Steam Program is one of them. You will need to talk to the principal about implementing this program at the middle school. We also have the musical theatre camp at Thomas Persons Hall. It is a great program, and you get to act, sing, and dance. Vacation bible school is another excellent program.

Ivey Campbell – What neighborhoods do you live in, and what are your favorite places to spend time in our town?

Mayor Standifer - 427 Hilton Street – Loves working in the yard and playing with his granddaughter and visiting his children.

Mayor Pro Tem Harrell - 559 Hillsboro Street – Loves to read, draw, refurbish yard art and music theatre camp.

Councilmember Miller – 314 Hillsboro Street. Favorite thing to do is to read and watching black and white television shows.

Councilmember David Wease – 1791 N. East Street – Loves to teach his Sunday School class and help people do yard work.

What do you think our generation can look forward to that your Council can ensure we will say you made a difference?

Mayor Standifer - The Council takes care of the City and plans for what will happen in the future, especially for piping and infrastructure. It cost a lot of money to maintain the infrastructure, and the City is making sure the infrastructure will be here for years to come. We must plan and strategize for repairs to the streets, but it may take two to three years to save money to fix the roads. We also invest in properties. In the future, you will be able to look back and see what this Council has done.

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

Phone 706-468-6062

Fax 706-468-1041

Mayor Pro Tem Harrell – The City Council is working on code enforcement and litter. Code Enforcement will address the houses that are in disrepair and that need to be torn down. We are doing a Beautify Monticello project, which will clean up all the litter in the town. So far, there are seven groups helping, and I hope you all will help too.

Councilmember Wease - We try to bring in manufacturing or businesses so that you all can have jobs. Several years ago, a former City Council helped facilitate getting the Get Ahead House. We have purchased a property that Councilmember Miller is spearheading to have walking trails and fish.

Councilmember Miller – The City purchased a beautiful property named Mine Lake. We want to develop it with a nature learning center and have a place for fishing, walking trails, and biking trails. If we can get it started, maybe you all can do other things with it in the future. This property is over 700 acres, so we are talking about having a retirement home for anyone over 55. It would be a nice place, and I think you all would love it.

Tarija Bostic – Why does Funderburg Park not have as many materials and play areas as Westview Park?

Mayor Standifer - What does Westview have that Funderburg does not have. Several students responded benches.

Mayor Pro Tem Harrell - Westview has a slide and jungle gym, but not Funderburg Park. Several students added that the merry-go-round and a swing are broke.

Mayor Standifer - asked the students to tell an adult if someone is doing something wrong because there is a lot of damage to the parks. The City replaces the basketball goals, put mulch around the equipment, and cut the grass. The taxpayers, who are also your parents, pay to fix what was broken. The students responded they also help keep the park clean.

Malyha Thurman - I am thinking about becoming a Councilwoman one day. Can you tell me how to prepare myself?

Mayor Standifer - Many wonderful people had been Councilwomen, one of which is Ms. Mollie Pompae, who is present. Mrs. Strozer's husband has also served on the City Council. The biggest thing you can do is learn about your City Council, County Commissioners, and the Board of Education. There are so many entities that we need young people. Talk to your parents, and they can help you get involved.

Mayor Pro Tem Harrell - All the people that serve on the City Council, have a love for the City of Monticello and want to see it be one of the best cities in the State of Georgia. Meeting with groups like you helps us do a better job, so thank you so much.

Councilmember Miller - The first thing you need to do is get your education and then be thinking of things you would like to see in Monticello. Once you do that, you will need to develop a plan for doing it and for what you would need.

Always remember that if you can believe it, you can achieve it. Do not let anyone

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

Phone 706-468-6062

Fax 706-468-1041

tell you that you cannot do anything. You can do anything you want to do. Just believe in yourself and move forward.

Arrington Bostic - Why is our local government not active in the black lives matter movement?

Mayor Standifer - There are many things that you can do to be involved in the black lives matter movement, such as being involved in the protest, donating money, or having a flag in your yard saying you support it. One of the biggest things you can do is communicate with other people what the black lives movement is all about. That is the most important thing because people look at that and stereotype what it means. It is not about black people taking over or anything like that or just doing protest. It is for the fair treatment of black people in our society. You can educate people by talking to them.

Jaquavia Reid -What is a fact about you, Mayor Standifer, that I can tell my grandparents to vote for him?

Mayor Standifer – If I were running again, you could tell them that Mayor Standifer is a humble and honest person who loves the City of Monticello. I want to see the City of Monticello succeed and go further and make sure we provide a better quality of life for your parents and every person in the City of Monticello.

6. Executive Session – N/A

7. Comments by Governing Body

Mayor Pro Tem Harrell - How many of you are interested in City or County government or becoming involved when you get older? Many students raised their hands. As you get older, consider running for office because we need young people and new ideas. Thank you for all the great questions that you asked this evening. You have kept us on our toes with some things that we had not considered.

Councilmember Miller – If you should run for City or County Commissioner and do not get chosen, do not let that stop you. Volunteer your time just like President Barack Obama. He was not involved in the local government but volunteered. He went on to the next level. Knowing your community and what they want, and need is a huge endeavor. We need to work together to achieve goals.

Councilmember Wease – I have been elected or seven years and have been a part of the local government for eleven and a half years because I came to the meetings as a citizen. It is imperative to understand how things work and very important to be an active citizen.

City Manager Redding – If you are interested in government and say that being an elected official is not for me, there are other ways to become involved in the City. We have public works, an electric department, and a gas department. Some cities have a recreation department and human resources, so there are areas where you can assist your City without being an elected official. The elected officials are

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

Phone 706-468-6062

Fax 706-468-1041

very important because they decide and implement the rules and regulations, we follow every day. You can be a City Manager. It is a rewarding job and a tough job. At times you will receive calls from an irate citizen, but you have to have compassion and know that I need to stay level because you stay level and not raise your voice, then that person will eventually lower their voice. Government is very rewarding to me because, in addition to implementing the rules and laws passed by the Mayor and Council, we get the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the citizens. I made notes of some things you said you would like to see in your park and the community. I will look for funding and other ways to make it happen to have a great community. We appreciate you all coming out tonight. Stay involved and get your parents involved to make a difference in your community. The City Council meetings are on the second Tuesday of every month at 6:00 pm in the City Council Chambers.

8. Meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

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

Phone 706-468-6062

Fax 706-468-1041