

MONTICELLO CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
November 9, 2021
MINUTES
6:00 P.M.

MEMBER PRESENT – Mayor Bryan Standifer, Councilmembers David Wease, Cynthia Miller, Jennifer Murphy, and Larry Thurman were present.

STAFF PRESENT – City Manager Angela Redding, City Clerk Karen Pennamon were present.

MEDIA PRESENT – Kathy Mudd - The Monticello News

CALLED SESSION – Mayor Bryan Standifer called the meeting to order. The Invocation was given by Reverend Ricky Hammonds, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. City Clerk Karen Pennamon called the roll.

AGENDA APPROVAL – Mayor Standifer requested to remove Executive Session for Personnel, Litigation, Real Estate, and Legal Matters from the agenda. Motion by Councilmember Miller to add Mine Lake Affidavit as agenda item 5a. Motion by Councilmember Wease to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Wanda Cummings requested the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds received by the City of Monticello be used to improve water and sewage. She asked the City Council to consider speed control measures on Tanyard and sidewalk repairs on West Greene Street and Forsyth Street.

David Thompson requested that the City move forward with obtaining the costs for speed warning and radar signs for 2022. He stated he was not in agreement with Premium Pay for City employees.

Craig Lashley asked about the status of repairs to the sidewalks at his business. City Manager Redding stated the area at this location is a State of Georgia highway and the City must comply with Georgia Department of Transportation requirements. City Manager Redding stated she would arrange a meeting with herself, Mr. Lashley, and the City Engineer to discuss his issues.

Adam McGinnis voiced his concerns about the maintenance of City properties. He asked the City Council when they would begin enforcing parking on the Square. Mr. McGinnis noted he was not in agreement with Premium Pay for City employees.

Reverend William Gibson thanked the City Council for a job well done.

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PROCLAMATION – Saint John Christian Methodist Episcopal Church Day – Mayor Standifer presented a proclamation to Reverend Ricky Hammons for Saint John Christian Methodist Episcopal Church Day on November 21, 2021.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE – Mandi Tanner, Executive Director updated the City Council on the Chamber events. Haunticello was held in conjunction with the Fall Market and downtown businesses and vendors handed out candy. The Deer Festival was a big success with 14 food vendors and 128 crafts, arts, and informational vendors. Many of the vendors reported record sales and a survey will be sent to businesses and vendors for feedback. Deer Dash was well attended with 180 people registered. The next Deer Festival is November 5, 2022. Filming of “Boo” will begin on November 10, 2021, and a truck route has been provided to local trucking companies and posted on the Jasper County Sheriff Office and Chamber of Commerce websites. The Christmas Parade/Shop Small Saturday is November 27, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. The First Friday Breakfast with AT&T is on December 3, 2021.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY – Wendall Yoder, Chairman stated the Downtown Development Authority sold 300 tickets for the 1st Annual Downtown Bounce and raised \$5,500.00. The Downtown Development Authority and other community leaders met to discuss a traffic plan for the Square. The Downtown Development Authority has a contract for \$5,700.00 with a food production team to rent the lot at 310 Forsyth Street. He noted the Congress Mural will be completed by the end of the year. Chairman Yoder requested the lights on top of the buildings in the Square remain turned on year-round. Mayor Standifer stated the Council will discuss it in a work session.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION – David Thompson, Chairman stated that Tyson Hardy, Jasper County Charter System has been assigned as the lead teacher for the Methodist Church Cemetery Survey and the next stage is to engage the students to participate in the program. Historic Preservation Commission has been approved for an employee identification number to open a checking account, but this is not tax-exempt status. The Historic Commission has approved and recommends Brandon Taylor to the Historic Preservation Commission. A stop-work order was issued for 512 Hillsboro Street for building without a permit. There was a Certificate of Appropriateness submitted for Sands Drive, Lot 6, and Lot 11 for manufactured homes. Chairman Thompson noted the Historic Preservation Commission Guidelines do not cover manufactured homes so they will consult with the City Attorney about removing Manufactured Home Park from the Historic Preservation District.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Councilmember Murphy made a motion to approve the following minutes: Regular Meeting of Mayor and Council – October 12, 2021, and Work Session of Mayor and Council – October 28, 2021, seconded by Councilmember Wease. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

AGENDA ITEMS

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1. Consider Appointment to the Downtown Development Authority

Background and Summary:

The Council Representative on the DDA Board resigned. This agenda item is to appoint a replacement from the City Council to the DDA Board. (This item was tabled from the last meeting). **Motion by Councilmember Murphy to nominate Councilmember Wease to the Downtown Development Authority, seconded by Councilmember Miller. Voting for the motion was unanimous.**

2. Consider Request for Planning Services – City Manager Redding stated this request is for approval to move forward with seeking part-time assistance with Planning and Zoning services. **No motion was made on the request.**
3. Consider a Resolution to Authorize the City’s acceptance of Phase I funds distributed pursuant to the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

Background and Summary:

This resolution is to authorize the City’s acceptance of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Phase I funds in the amount of \$507,686.50. **Motion for approval of the Resolution made by Councilmember Wease, seconded by Councilmember Miller. Voting for the motion was unanimous.**

4. Authorization to approve a one-time Premium Pay in the amount of \$1,000 net (after-tax) for all full-time and part-time Monticello employees. ARPA and General Funds are the funding source for this initiative.

Background and Summary:

The ARPA Interim Final Rule adopted by the U.S. Department of Treasury specifies that local governments may provide premium pay to eligible workers who perform essential work during the COVID-19 pandemic. Mayor and Council have determined that each City employee performed essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic placing them at heightened risk because of their in-person work and regular physical handling of items that were handled by others. Additionally, each employee was needed to maintain the continuity of city operations and therefore is deemed to be an eligible worker as defined by ARPA. **Motion by Councilmember Thurman to approve a one-time Premium Pay in the amount of \$1,000 net (after-tax) for all full-time and part-time Monticello employees effective November 9, 2021. ARPA Funds are the funding source for this initiative, seconded by Councilmember Miller. Voting for the motion was unanimous.**

5. Discussion – Amendment to the Developers Agreement for Oak Ridge Subdivision (This item was tabled from the last meeting). **Motion by Councilmember Murphy to approve**

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the Amendment to the Developers Agreement for Oak Ridge Subdivision, seconded by Councilmember Thurman. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

- 5a. Mine Lake Affidavit – **The City Council consensus is to table this agenda item until January 2022.**
6. Discussion and Approval of Health Insurance Benefit. **Motion by Councilmember Murphy to accept the four tiers and employees be responsible for 10% for Employee, 15% for Employee and Spouse, 20% for Employee and Child(ren), and 25% for Family the tiers, seconded by Councilmember Miller. Voting for the motion was unanimous.**
7. Approve Stump Grinding, Purchase of Trees, Planting of Trees, and Repair of Sidewalks on the Square. City Manager Redding stated the quote to remove the trees in the Square and grind the stumps is \$2,400.00 and the quote for planting the trees is \$2,000.00. The amount left to purchase new trees is \$3,600.00. Councilmember Wease stated the cost to purchase the trees is \$1,300.00 leaving a balance of \$2,300.00. City Manager Redding stated that the Council previously approved \$8,000.00 for the project and anything over that amount would have to come back to Council for approval. **Motion by Councilmember Murphy to approve Stump Grinding, Purchase of Trees, Planting of Trees, and Repair of Sidewalks on the Square, seconded by Councilmember Miller. Voting for the motion was unanimous.**
8. Discussion – Sale of property on Forsyth Street and Update on New Electric/Gas Facility. City Council discussed selling the property at 558 Forsyth Street. City Manager Redding stated she and City Engineer Robert Jordan are working on the specification plans for the new electric/gas facility and once the plans are completed bids will go out to get cost estimates for the new building. **Motion by Councilmember Thurman to sell the City Building at 558 Forsyth Street, seconded by Councilmember Wease. Voting for the motion was unanimous.**
9. Consider ECG Fiscal Year (2021) Year-End Settlement and Contract Payment

Background and Summary:

Electric Cities of Georgia (ECG) participants have the opportunity annually to designate the distribution of their Year-End Settlement (YES) and Contract Payment. Participants can elect to allocate the funds into a Member-specific Education, Training, and Development Fund, receive a refund check, or receive a credit to their ECG invoice. Participants may use any combination of the options as long as the total equals 100% of the YES and Contract Payment. **Motion by Councilmember Murphy to receive a credit to the Electric Cities of Georgia Bill, seconded by Councilmember Miller. Voting for the motion was unanimous.**

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10. Discussion of Hotel/Motel Tax – **Motion by Councilmember Miller that the Hotel/Motel Tax Revenue be split 50% with the Chamber of Commerce, seconded by Councilmember Thurman. Voting for the motion was unanimous.**
11. City Manager’s Report

City Manager Redding stated in addition to the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program with the Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Family and Children Services, the City of Monticello is now a vendor with the State of Georgia for low-income households to receive assistance with their water bill.

City Manager Redding noted the City has received comments from citizens and the Downtown Development Authority Chairman Wendell Yoder regarding enforcement of parking on the City Square. She stated parking inside the Square is limited to two hours and parking outside the Square is limited to four hours. City Manager stated the City would have to coordinate enforcement with the Jasper Sheriff Department on the matter. She noted the Downtown Development Authority in Athens, Georgia provides personnel to enforce parking. Mayor and City Council recommended the City Council review information on the procedures they use in Athens.

Netflix Filming request the use of the City alleyway on November 11, 2021, from 4:30 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. The City’s utility drop box is in the alleyway and Netflix will ask a Sheriff’s Deputy to collect the envelopes from citizens and place them in the utility drop box. Netflix also requested to use the alleyway on November 15, 2021, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. with the same arrangements.

Monticello Baptist Church Road Abandonment – City Manager Redding stated City Attorney Joe Reitman informed her that Monticello Baptist Church located documents from 1956 stating the road on Church Street was deeded to the City of Monticello and in the event, the City decided to close the road or abandoned the road it would revert to Monticello Baptist Church or the legal heir. She noted City Attorney Reitman reviewed the documents, and they are valid.

Sidewalks – City Manager Redding stated she would set up a meeting with Craig Lashley and the City Engineer to discuss the sidewalks at his business. She noted because the sidewalks are on a Georgia State Highway, they must follow the State requirements.

Tanyard – City manager Redding stated that Public Safety is ok with placing a speed bump on Tanyard Street. The Georgia Department of Transportation informed her that the City is responsible for purchasing traffic calming signs. The estimated cost per sign is \$5,433.20. City Manager Redding stated she would reach out to other vendors for pricing. Mayor Standifer requests to place this item on the next agenda for discussion.

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Plans for Downtown Square – City Manager Redding stated the Georgia Department of Transportation will hold a meeting with all community members in Monticello regarding a traffic plan. NEGRC’s reached out to the City and stated there will be additional costs to proceed with their traffic plan. She noted that the Georgia Department of Transport is the entity we need to work with, and they would like to plan another community meeting with the County, City, DDA, and other entities.

12. Consider the Adoption of an Amendment of an Ordinance to the City Code, Chapter 30 and 38, to Remove Sections Regarding Code Enforcement of Nuisances, Unfit Housing, Junk and Similar

Second reading to consider the adoption of an Amendment of an Ordinance to the City Code, Chapter 30 and 38, to Remove Sections Regarding Code Enforcement of Nuisances, Unfit Housing, Junk and Similar. **Motion by Councilmember Wease to approve the second reading, seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Voting for the motion was unanimous and added to the agenda and approved.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR PERSONNEL, LITIGATION, REAL ESTATE, AND LEGAL MATTERS – N/A

COMMENTS BY THE GOVERNING BODY

Mayor Standifer thanked everyone for their attendance.

Councilmember Wease thanked Mandi Tanner and Brandi McMichael for a wonderful Deer Festival.

Councilmember Miller had no comment.

Councilmember Murphy had no comment.

Councilmember Thurman had no comment

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

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