

MINUTES
City Council Meeting
Tuesday, January 20, 2015 – 7:00 p.m.

Call to Order: Mayor Holder welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Opening: Mayor Pro-tem George offered the opening prayer and Mayor Holder invited everyone to join in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Roll Call: Mayor Holder presided. **Council Members:** Don Bethune, Bruce Campbell, Rosetta Cody, Marcia Daniel, Scott George and Kim Tice.

Staff: Ron Feldner, City Manager; Rhonda Ferrell-Bowles, Clerk of Council; James P. Gerard, City Attorney; David Lyons, Chief of Police; Pam Franklin, HR Director; Ben Brengman, IT Director; Ron Alexander, Building Safety Director; Cliff Ducey, Parks & Recreation Director; Benny Gooze, Public Works Director; Blake Hodge, Fire Chief and Sara Berry, Public Works Administrative Assistant.

Mayor Holder said City Council held a pre-agenda session prior to tonight's meet. He said no decisions were made during the pre-agenda session.

Formal Public Comment:

GICH Housing Team Update: Ms. Sharon Bethune gave City Council an update on the Housing Team's completed projects and their upcoming projects and planned activities in 2015.

City Council Minutes: Upon motion by Councilmember Bethune, seconded by Councilmember Campbell, City Council voted unanimously to approve the city council minutes dated 12/1/14 and the workshop synopsis dated 1/12/14.

Staff Reports:

Human Resources Director presented the Human Resources Department's 2014 Year-end Report.

Mayor Pro-tem George asked the HR Director what is the year-end total number of employees. HR Director replied, 94. He said how many did we budget for in 2014? HR Director replied, 100. He said do we currently have any positions open. HR Director said we have one open in the water operations department. He said are we fully staffed in the police department. HR Director said the Chief of Police would need to address that.

IT Director presented the Information Technology Department's 2014 Year-end Report.

Mayor Pro-tem George asked the IT Director if he could start including in his report what areas people are visiting on the city's website. He said I believe it would be beneficial for us to know. IT Director said I will start including in my report the top five areas that people are visiting on the website.

Councilmember Cody asked the IT Director when the Cooper Center would get new computers. IT Director said we have money in the budget this year for computer replacements, but we have police cars that need new computers. He said I am in the process of compiling a list of the computers that

need to be replaced. Councilmember Cody said how far down on the list are the new computers for the Cooper Center. IT Director said that is up to City Council where they fall on the list.

Mayor Pro-tem George said I echo what Councilmember Cody is saying about the Cooper Center needing new computers.

Councilmember Tice said do we need to add another computer at the Senior Center. She said also it would be good if we could teach the seniors how to use the computers.

IT Director said we need to talk to the Parks & Recreation Director about whether another computer is needed at the senior center. He said our schedule to replace computers should be every three years. He said I am surprised that the computers in the police vehicles have lasted three years.

Councilmember Tice said I would like to see us have more educational information for the seniors at the center on how to use computers.

Councilmember Cody said I would like to see the kids at the Cooper Center also taught how to use computers. She said they also could use more educational information, because so much of their work is on computers and they are the ones that need to know how to use a computer. She said I go along with getting another computer at the senior center and the police getting them in their vehicles, but we also need them at the Cooper Center for the kids.

Councilmember Tice said how many computers do we need at the Cooper Center?

IT Director said there are two computers, but they have four small work stations.

Councilmember Tice said at our next workshop we need to have the computers for the Cooper Center on our agenda.

Mayor Pro-tem George said now that we have the influx of property tax money we need to make getting new computers at the Cooper Center a priority.

Public Works Director presented the Public Works Department's 2014 Year-end Report.

Councilmember Tice asked the Public Works Director to look into cutting the crepe myrtles located along Highway 21 and Highway 25.

Recreation Director presented the Parks & Recreation Department's 2014 Year-end Report.

Recreation Director said when the Cooper Center computer room was redone it was made large enough for six computers to go in there. He said the seniors have not requested another computer for the center. He said the Cooper Center definitely needs them.

Recreation Director said regarding the crepe myrtles, we did not trim them up last year. He said we met with an arborist who told us a study had been done the affect of trimming and the results of the study didn't show any difference in the tree's performance.

Councilmember Bethune said half recommend trimming and the other half don't. He said it depends on preference to keep them looking good.

Councilmember Cody thanked the Recreation Director for letting everyone know that the Cooper Center could use new computers. She said also we need to look at having more tables and chairs at the Cooper Center. She said there is never enough and I end up having to help roundup tables and chairs when someone uses the center.

Recreation Director said we borrow back and forth between recreation facilities for events.

Councilmember Cody said there are times when people using the center have been stuck without enough tables and chairs. She said I have had to borrow a truck to go get tables and chairs for people to use.

Mayor Holder said these are items that we can talk about in a workshop.

Councilmember Cody said I am just asking questions.

Mayor Pro-tem George asked the Recreation Director if new Christmas decorations for the poles are in the budget for 2015. He said we need to talk about this in workshop.

Planning, Zoning & Building Director presented the Planning, Zoning & Building Department's 2014 Year-end Report.

Councilmember Bethune said as things change we have to change our code. He said I have had several complaints about storage pods sitting in people's driveways for long periods of time. He said there is nothing in our code saying how long a storage pod can set there. He said this is something we need to take a look at this year.

In the absence of the Water Operations Director, the City Manager presented the Water Operations Department's 2014 Year-end Report.

City Manager said the water meter upgrade project is about 75% complete.

Public Safety Director presented the Public Safety Department's 2014 Year-end Report.

Councilmember Bethune said I have seen the state's commercial vehicles working doing inspections the last couple of weeks. He said I am also very pleased to see the number of police officers patrolling the neighborhoods and highways.

Mayor Pro-tem George said I am very pleased that our crime rate is lower than Savannah's. He said how do we stand on getting our new police vehicles and fire vehicles? He said I hope we are moving forward on getting new vests.

Chief Lyons said as far as the new police vehicles we are waiting to see what you all want us to do. He said Chief Hodge is moving forward with the specifications on the new fire trucks. He said we are constantly replacing our vests as they expire.

Mayor Pro-tem George said what is the lead time on new police vehicles fully equipped?

Chief Lyons said the Chargers are turnkey and the other type vehicles are two months.

Mayor Pro-tem said I see that Chief Lumpkin is increasing the pay of the Savannah Police Officers.

Chief Lyons said Savannah out pays us by two dollars. He said they are also talking better benefits than ours. He said I have three openings. He said I had one officer resign today. He said I thought I had the other two openings filled with officers from Metro, but they changed their mind.

Councilmember Campbell thanked Chief Lyons and his officers for their response on the funeral.

Councilmember Cody said Representative Bryant said the police did a good job with the funeral.

Mayor Holder asked the City Manager if he had any updates. City Manager said I have no updates at this time.

Items for Consideration:

Appointment of City Officials – Mayor Holder said we have for consideration the following city official appointments:

- James P. Gerard to serve as City Attorney
- Tom Edenfield to serve as Municipal Records Court Judge
- Doug Andrews to serve as Municipal Records Court Judge Pro-tem
- James P. Gerard to serve as Municipal Records Court Judge Pro-tem

Upon motion by Councilmember Tice, seconded by Councilmember Cody, City Council voted unanimously to approve the city official appointments.

Planning Commission/Board of Zoning Appeals Member Appointments – Mayor Holder said we have for consideration appointing the following individuals to serve on Planning Commission/Board of Zoning Appeals:

- Bessie Kicklighter to replace Gwyn Hall to serve the remainder of his term.
- Bowen Jones to replace Steve Backman to serve the remainder of his term.

Upon motion by Councilmember Tice, seconded by Councilmember Cody, City Council voted unanimously to approve the Planning Commission/Board of Appeals appointments.

Intergovernmental Agreement & Contract between Garden City & Chatham County Regarding the Collection of City Taxes: City Manager said we have for consideration by Mayor and City Council an intergovernmental agreement with Chatham County to contract with the Tax Commissioner of Chatham County to oversee and provide the collection of tax monies on behalf of the City of Garden City, Georgia.

Upon motion by Councilmember Campbell, seconded by Councilmember Bethune, City Council voted unanimously to approve the intergovernmental agreement and contract between Garden City and Chatham County for the collection of city taxes.

Resolution, Setting of Municipal Election Qualifying Fee for 2015: City Manager read a resolution by the Mayor and Council of Garden City, Georgia, that notice be given to the citizens of Garden City, Georgia, that the qualifying fee for the Office of Mayor shall be \$180.00, and the qualifying fee for the Office of City Council Member shall be \$108.00 for the upcoming general election in November 2015.

Upon motion by Councilmember Campbell, seconded by Councilmember Tice, City Council voted unanimously to adopt the resolution.

Resolution, Appointment of Election Duties & Notification of Qualifying Period for 2015: City Manager read a resolution by the Mayor and Council of Garden City, Georgia, that the Board of Elections of Chatham County, Georgia, perform all duties as municipal superintendent of elections in Garden City, Georgia, with the exception of the qualification of candidates which shall be the responsibility of the Clerk of Council, and that the Chatham County Board of Registration further perform the duties of absentee ballot clerk; Qualifying for the offices of Mayor and City Council Member will take place at Garden City City Hall commencing August 31, 2015, at 8:30 a.m. and ending September 3, 2015, at 4:00 p.m.

Upon motion by Councilmember Bethune, seconded by Councilmember Tice, City Council voted unanimously to adopt the resolution.

Adjournment: Upon motion by Mayor Holder, seconded by Councilmember Campbell, City Council adjourned the meeting at 8:11 p.m.

*Transcribed by Clerk of Council
Approved by Council: 2/2/15*

