

MINUTES
City Council Meeting
Monday, May 1, 2017 – 6:00 p.m.

Call to Order: Mayor Bethune welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Opening: Pastor Ethan Scott, Woodlawn Baptist Church offered the opening prayer and Mayor Bethune invited everyone to join in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Roll Call:

Members: Mayor Bethune presided. **Council Members:** Bruce Campbell, Rosetta Cody, Marcia Daniel, Bessie Kicklighter, Debbie Ruiz and Kim Tice.

Staff: Ron Feldner, City Manager; Rhonda Ferrell-Bowles, Clerk of Council; James P. Gerard, City Attorney; Major Gilbert Ballard, Patrol Commander; Pam Franklin, HR Director; Cliff Ducey, Recreation Director; Jackie Jackson, Special Projects Coordinator, Benny Googe, Public Works Director; Charles Draeger, Water Operations Director and Ron Alexander, Planning Director. *Absent:* Ben Brengman, IT Director; David Lyons, Chief of Police and Corbin Medeiros, Interim Fire Chief.

Presentations: Mayor Bethune presented certificates to the Georgia Cities Coloring Contest winners and Essay Contest winners.

Informal Public Comment: Mayor Bethune opened the floor to receive public comment from the audience.

Mr. Leonard Hodges, 3801 Old Louisville Road, said I read an article in the Savannah Morning Newspaper where CAT plans to raise the tax county wide. He said I would like to know when Garden City is going to get another grocery store. He said my neighbor has two trucks parked next to him that I would like the City to look into.

Mayor Bethune said CAT is going to increase the millage rate for the current areas. He said they are still working on a plan for 2018. He said we will have Code Enforcement look at the trucks. He said we have done everything we can to get a grocery store. He said I have been in contact with the realtor for the Highway 21 property and they informed me that they have an interested buyer, but they will not reveal what type of store.

Ms. Sharon Bethune and Ms. Jennifer West of the Garden City Housing Team presented an orchid to Councilmember Cody. Ms. Bethune said Ms. Cody has served on the Housing Team since the beginning. She said Ms. Cody has to resign, because she is related to contractor who was award the bid under the CDBG grant to do work in her neighborhood. She said Ms. Cody helped to make the Housing Team a success, because of her volunteering and help in her district.

Councilmember Cody said I will cherish the flower. She said I still may drop by every now and then, but I will not be a voting member of the team.

Mayor Bethune said we have come a long way since the beginning and I would like to thank Councilmember Cody for her work on the team.

City Council Minutes: Upon motion by Councilmember Campbell, seconded by Councilmember Cody, City Council voted unanimously to approve the city council minutes dated 4/17/17 and workshop synopsis dated 4/24/17.

Staff Reports:

HR Director presented the Human Resources Department's report for the month of April.

Councilmember Kicklighter asked the HR Director how many employees are budgeted for 2017. HR Director said 119 is budgeted for this year.

Public Works Director presented the Public Works Department's report for the month of April.

Councilmember Tice said is there something we need to do to remind residents that we don't pick up storm debris. She said this may help for Bennie's sake. She said some of the debris has been sitting for three months or so from the Hurricane. She said they see the truck drive by when the crews are cutting the grass and they don't pick up the debris. Public Works Director said we have a lot of people that rent and their landlord may not informed that we don't pick up storm debris. He said it is a concern and Code Enforcement generally handles it.

City Manager said they know that Public Works doesn't pick up it up. He said Code Enforcement has the primary responsibility not to let it sit for three months. He said when we have a storm we go from not picking up debris to debris amnesty and picking it up. He said we do put information in the water bills. He said Code Enforcement needs to step it up. He said storm season is here again so we will get info out to residents.

Parks & Recreation Direction presented the Parks & Recreation Department's report for the month of April.

City Manager Updates: City Manager said we did two different extensive out reaches to inform the businesses on Chatham Parkway and Telfair, etc. of the road construction activity. He said we also put out a press release to all the news media advising people to take alternate routes, because you are going to get hung up from all the construction activity.

Items for Consideration:

First Reading - Ordinance, Town Center Enterprise Zones: Clerk of Council read the first reading of the heading of an ordinance to provide for the creation and regulation of enterprise zones pursuant to the Official Code of Georgia Annotated 36-88-1; to provide certain exemptions or advantages for qualifying businesses and service enterprises and residential developments within the enterprise zone; to create an enterprise zone; to provide an effective date; to repeal all ordinance in conflict herewith and for other purposes.

Special Projects Coordinator said provided a general breakdown of the ordinance. She said the State enacted an employment act to provide economic assistance. She said there is certain criteria that has to be met in order to be designated as an enterprise zone. She said this is part of the Urban Redevelopment Plan to focus on economically socially-depressed areas within the City. She said for a business to qualify it must create five or more new full-time jobs in a designated enterprise zone before it may be considered

for exemption for up to ten years on Garden City ad valorem. She said each business will be considered on a case by case basis.

Upon motion by Councilmember Tice, seconded by Councilmember Campbell, City Council voted unanimously to approve the ordinance on the first reading.

Mayor Bethune said the second reading of the ordinance will be held at the next City Council meeting.

Resolution, Floodplain Program for Public Information: Clerk of Council read the heading of a resolution by the Mayor and City Council to adopt the Garden City Floodplain Program Public Information Plan.

Planning Director said as you recall the City is in the process of improving its CRS rating. He said one part of it is improving the outreach program to the residents. He said a committee was formed made up of stakeholders and staff to work on the outreach program. He said it has to be formally adopted by Council and we will get a considerable amount of points for the program that will help to improve our rating.

Mayor Bethune and City Council acknowledged the Planning Director's amount of time and efforts to play a key role in improving the rating. Planning Director said it is not a one person effort. It involves a lot of staff's time and efforts.

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

Resolution, Life Insurance Plan Upgrade: Clerk of Council read the heading of a resolution of the Mayor and Council for Garden City, Georgia, to upgrade the City's employer-paid life insurance coverage for city employees; to repeal all resolutions to the extent they are in conflict herewith; to provide an effective date; and for other purposes.

Councilmember Kicklighter asked if there was money to cover the cost of the plan upgrade. Finance Director said there is enough funding budgeted to cover the cost.

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

Mayor Bethune said I would like to announce that my granddaughter was voted to serve as May Day Queen at her school.

Adjournment: Upon motion by Councilmember Campbell, seconded by Councilmember Cody, City Council adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Transcribed & submitted by: Clerk of Council

Accepted & approved by: City Council 5-15-17