

MINUTES

City Council

Monday, March 19, 2018 – 6:00 p.m.

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

Opening: Pastor Susan Thisell, Good Shepard Lutheran Church gave the invocation and Mayor Bethune led City Council in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Roll Call:

Members: Mayor Bethune presided. Council Members: Mayor Pro-tem Kicklighter, Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Cody, Councilmember Daniel, Councilmember Ruiz and Councilmember Tice.

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

Presentation: Representatives presented an overview of the Innovation Readiness Training (IRT) Medical Event. The event provides no-cost medical, dental and vision services for under and uninsured people. The event will be held at the Garden City Gym May 9-19.

Informal Public Comment: Mayor Bethune opened the floor to received comment from the audience. There being no questions or comments, Mayor Bethune closed the informal comment portion of the meeting.

Public Hearings:

PC1804, Ordinance Text Amendment: Mayor Bethune opened the public hearing to receive public comment on an ordinance to amend the Code of Ordinances of Garden City, Georgia as amended by amending zoning Chapter 90 to establish group homes for disabled persons, halfway homes, personal care homes, and rehabilitation centers as permitted uses within the City and to designate the zoning districts within the City where such uses may be exercised to repeal all other ordinances in conflict therewith; to provide an effective date; and for other purposes.

Planning Director said the City has a need to establish a use code in the current City Code for the types of uses such as group homes, halfway homes, personal care homes and rehabilitation centers. He said as future cases come before the City for these uses it establishes a process.

City Manager said this does not give permission for any of these particular types of uses. He said it only establishes a process or pathway for this type of application. He said the City has put in stipulations for these types of uses.

City Attorney said the only use we had on the books was for family personal care homes and it was not well defined in the ordinance. He said under the Federal Disability Act we are required by law to provide for these types of homes/centers. He said the law requires use to try personal care homes the same way as we do group homes for people with disabilities. He said rehab centers that treat drug addicts and

alcoholics will be in commercial zones. He said there are a whole set of requirements and criteria that they have to go by. He said we have protected the City by finding places that these type of places can go within the City. He said rehab centers are not allowed in residential zones. He said the ordinance actually protects the residents.

Mayor Bethune said the ordinance puts more requirements in place and they have to be approved by the Board of Appeals.

Mr. Rob Brannen, Attorney for the applicant, said we express support for the ordinance.

Ms. Kristy Ward, Smith Avenue, spoke against the ordinance. She said my concern is the traffic and negative influence in the neighborhoods.

City Attorney said the Federal Disability Act requires us to provide for these types of homes. He said the ordinance protects the residential areas.

Ms. Kathy VanWelsh, 33 Lynn Drive, said I'm opposed to the ordinance overall. She said I just don't want certain types of businesses such as halfway or personal care next to me.

City Attorney said halfway houses are only allowed in commercial and industrial zones. He said personal care homes you can't tell by the home, because the people actually live there and there is a limit on how many people can be in these homes.

There being no further questions or comments, Mayor Bethune closed the public hearing.

City Manager said we have additional ordinances going before planning commission in April so it will be the May 1st meeting before council takes action on this ordinance.

City Council Minutes: Upon motion by Councilmember Kicklighter, seconded by Councilmember Cody, City Council voted unanimously to approve the city council minutes dated 3/5/18 and workshop synopsis dated 3/12/18.

Staff Reports:

Planning Director presented the Planning Department's report for the month of February.

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

Chief of Police presented the Police Department's report for the month of February.

Fire Chief presented the Fire Department's report for the month of February.

City Manager said I have no updates.

Items for Consideration:

Resolution, Savannah Police Department Mutual Aid Agreement: Clerk of Council read the heading of a resolution authorizing the City of Garden City, Georgia, to enter into a mutual aid agreement with the City of Savannah, Georgia, for the provision of extra territorial police services and assistance in the event of a local emergency; to authorize the City Manager to execute the agreement; and for other purposes.

Chief Ballard said we already had an MOU with Savannah. He said the only difference is it excludes special service teams which we will be billed for.

Upon motion by Councilmember Kicklighter, seconded by Councilmember Cody, City Council voted unanimously to adopt the resolution.

Conflict of Interest on CDBG Grant for Rossignol Hill Water System Rehabilitation: Councilmember Cody said I want to formally notify you that my residing in the Rossignol Hill Area which stands to benefit from the Community Development Block Grant for which the City is considering applying for tonight, to improve that area's water system creates a conflict of interest issue preventing me from discussing, deliberating upon, or voting on the matter. To do otherwise would create the appearance of impropriety which I wish to avoid at all costs. I did want to say, however, that if the CDBG application were to be approved and the water rehabilitation program was performed, my property in Rossignol Hill would receive exactly the same benefits as my Rossignol Hill neighbors. Councilmember Cody said excused herself from the vote and stepped down from the dais.

Resolution, CDBG (Rossignol Hill Water System Improvements): Clerk of Council read the heading of a resolution by the City Council of Garden City, Georgia, to authorize the Mayor to apply for a fiscal year 2018 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to improve the water system serving the City's water customers in the Rossignol Hill CDBG target area.

Special Projects Coordinator said the City is submitting an application again this year to seek funding assistance for issues with the water pressure on Rossignol Hill. She said the City has improved its infrastructure and now we are trying to assist the homeowners to get more water pressure at their homes. She said we were on the cusp of getting the grant last year so hopefully we will be successful this year.

Councilmember Kicklighter made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Daniel to adopt the resolution. Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Daniel, Councilmember Kicklighter, Councilmember Ruiz, Councilmember Tice and Mayor Bethune voted to adopt the resolution. Councilmember Cody Councilmember Cody abstained from the vote.

Recreation Director reminded everyone of the Easter Eggstravaganza at Sharon Park on March 24 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. He said the Garden City Police Department will be providing food and drinks.

Adjournment: Upon motion by Councilmember Campbell, seconded by Councilmember Tice, City Council voted to adjourn at 6:58 p.m.

Transcribed and submitted by: Clerk of Council
Accepted and approved by: City Council 3/19/18