

MINUTES

City Council Meeting

Monday, November 20, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.

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

Opening: Mayor Bruce Campbell, Pastor of the Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church gave the invocation and invited everyone to join in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Roll Call: The roll call was conducted by James P. Gerard, substituting for the absent Clerk of Council, reflected the following:

Councilmembers Present: Mayor Bruce Campbell; Mayor Pro Tem Marcia Daniel; Councilmember Richard Lassiter, Jr.; Councilmember Natalyn Morris; Councilmember Debbie Ruiz; and, Councilmember Kim Tice.

Councilmembers Absent: Councilperson Gwyn Hall

Staff Present: Scott Robider, City Manager; James P. Gerard, City Attorney; Joseph Papp, Police Captain.

Staff Absent: Rhonda Ferrell-Bowles, Clerk of Council, and all department heads.

Formal Public Comments: Mayor Campbell announced that no formal requests for public comment had been made prior to the meeting.

Informal Public Comments: Mayor Campbell then gave an opportunity for informal comments by anyone who wanted to speak informally about a subject concerning the City. No one came forth to speak.

Public Hearings:

- (a) PC2334 – Rezoning Request (1300 Dean Forest Road): Receipt of public comment on a request by Giancarlo Porto to rezone Dean Forest Road property from residential (R-2) to commercial (C-2) for the proposed purpose of operating an autobody shop.

Jay Maupin, PE, of Maupin Engineering stated that his client, GLIT Industries LLC, wanted to move its autobody repair business in Bloomingdale, Georgia, to the location of 1300 Dean Forest Road which is currently a residentially zoned wooded parcel measuring approximately 8.17 acres. He further stated that the properties to the South of the site had industrial zoning classifications and were currently being used for the operation of a storage business, warehouse, and construction company; and that the property to the immediate North had a C-2 zoning classification. The closest residential property is located to the North at 1304-1306 Dean Forest Road (zoned "P-I-1") where a mobile home park is situated. Mr. Maupin stated the property's narrowness limits the scale of the proposed development, and that the property would need only one access from Dean Forest Road. He reported that if and when the re-zoning process is successful, he would submit topographic, architectural, and site plans to the Planning Commission for approval.

The only party other than re-zoning petitioner to speak on the re-zoning petition was **Andrew Rosen** of 109 Hart Circle in Savannah, Georgia, who did not oppose same (stating that the petition satisfied all of the City's zoning criteria), but wanted the City to consider the recommendations made by the Planning Commission relating to parking and buffer requirements out of concern for the health, safety, and welfare of the nearby mobile home park residents.

There being no questions or comments about the re-zoning petition, the public hearing thereon was closed by Mayor Campbell.

Agenda:

A motion was made by Councilmember Marcia Daniel which was seconded by Councilmember Natalyn Morris, requesting that the meeting agenda be amended to add for consideration by Mayor and Council a resolution requesting the Georgia State Legislature to annex, by local act, a tract of land lying South and contiguous to the City's southern city limits. As part of the motion, Councilmember Daniel stated that the matter was time sensitive in that it could not be considered at a subsequent meeting of City Council in that the session of the Georgia State Legislature whereat the proposed annexation could be addressed commences on November 29, 2023. A roll call vote on the motion resulted in the unanimous adoption of same.

City Council Minutes:

Upon a motion by Councilmember Richard Lassiter, Jr., and seconded by Councilmember Debbie Ruiz, City Council voted unanimously to approve (1) the November 6, 2023, Pre-Agenda Session Minutes, (2) the November 6, 2023, City Council Meeting Minutes, and, (3) the November 13, 2023, Workshop Synopsis.

City Manager Updates:

The City Manager reported that there have been issues with the City's CONNECT APP which Tyler Technologies has been working on to resolve. The APP was mistakenly taken off line by Tyler Technologies during an upgrade to the City's internet system. The City's Information Technology Department is currently working with Tyler Technology to restore the APP.

The City Manager also reported that revisions to the City's website are close to being completed. Such revisions shall include Spanish features.

Items for Consideration:

1. Resolution – Alcoholic Beverage License Renewals for 2024. A resolution to authorize the renewal of Garden City alcohol licenses for the 2024 calendar year; to provide for review and limited investigation of said license holders and for other purposes.

Upon Councilmember Lassiter making a motion for the adoption of the resolution and Councilmember Tice seconding the motion, the resolution was offered for discussion. The City Manager stated that the City must renew for 2024 the list of all current Garden City alcoholic beverage license holders who have passed the Police Department's review and investigation, said list being attached as an exhibit to the resolution.

A roll-call vote on the motion resulted in unanimous approval of the resolution.

2. Resolution - FY24 Job Classification & Pay Scale: A resolution to approve the updated Job Classification & Pay Scale for fiscal year 2024.

Upon Councilmember Ruiz making a motion for the adoption of the FY 2024 Job Classification and Pay Scale and Councilmember Daniel seconding the motion, the City Manager stated that the proposed pay plan was the product of Evergreen Solutions which had reviewed and updated the City's current plan to implement new pay grades and salary ranges where necessary; to adjust any employee's salary not meeting the minimum salary for his/her position; and to adjust any employee's salary which did not correlate to market conditions for the employee's position with the City. The City Manager commented that the City's proposed pay scale was very competitive not only with the pay scales of other local governments but also with the pay scales of the private sector. He expressed his hope that City employees would produce a good return on the City's substantial investment in them.

A roll-call vote on the motion resulted in the unanimous approval of the resolution,

3. Resolution – FY2024 Budget Adoption: A resolution to adopt the Fiscal Year 2024 Operating and Capital Budget to provide appropriation of funds for operating and capital expenditures, and to provide appropriate funding for specific operating and capital funds of the Garden City Government.

Upon Councilmember Lassiter making a motion for the adoption of the FY 2024 Budget and Councilmember Ruiz seconding the motion, the City Manager stated that the proposed budget was a product of an abundance of information and discussion gathered at a budget retreat and several workshops held by Mayor and Council. He stated that the public had been invited to attend the retreat and workshops; that the proposed budget had been posted on the City's website; and that there had been an advertised presentation of the budget on November 6, 2023, at 6 p.m. o'clock. He stated that no one had come forward with any opposition to the adoption of the proposed budget.

A roll-call vote on the motion resulted in unanimous approval of the resolution.

4. Resolution – City Council Meeting Schedule Amendment (December 4, 2023, - January 16, 2024). A resolution to amend the regular meeting schedule of the Garden City City Council; to eliminate the December 4, 2023, and December 18, 2023, regular City Council meetings in observance of Christmas; to eliminate the January 1, 2024, regular City Council meeting in observance of New Year's Day; to establish a special City Council meeting on January 3, 2024, for the swearing in of the newly elected Mayor and City Council members; to eliminate the January 15, 2024, regular City Council meeting in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr., Day; and to establish a City Council meeting on January 16, 2024.

Upon Councilmember Marcia Daniel making a motion for the adoption of the resolution and Councilmember Ruiz seconding the motion, the City Manager stated that even though the two Council meetings in December will be cancelled, special meetings could be scheduled if necessary to address any city business which needed immediate attention and handling.

A roll-call vote on the motion resulted in unanimous approval of the resolution.

5. Resolution – City of Ethics Re-Certification: A resolution to re-certify the City of Garden City as a Certified City of Ethics under the Georgia Municipal Association Program:

Upon Councilmember Daniel making a motion for the adoption of the resolution and Councilmember Ruiz seconding the motion, the City Manager stated that the Georgia Municipal Association conditioned a City's status as a "City of Ethics" upon a majority on City Council signing the resolution certifying that they support and are committed to serving others and not themselves; using resources with efficiency and economy; treating all people fairly; using the power of their positions for the well-being of their constituents; and creating an environment of honesty, openness, and integrity. The City Manager added that the City Attorney had revised the form resolution proposed by GMA for the purpose of clarifying that City Council's commitment to the above-stated principles was prospective and did not constitute a verification that all prior conduct of Mayor and Council conformed with same.

A roll-call vote on the motion resulted in the unanimous approval of the resolution.

6. Resolution – A Resolution of Mayor and Council Relative to the Approval of a Recommendation to the Local Legislative Delegation To Propose Local Legislation Dealing With Annexation.

Upon Councilmember Lassiter making a motion for the adoption of the resolution and Councilmember Daniel seconding the motion, the City Manager remarked that the City's annexation of the unincorporated areas of Chatham County, Georgia, identified in the resolution is a very exciting opportunity for the City to add residential property to the City and shift the City away from being viewed as industrially based.

A roll-call vote on the motion resulted in the unanimous approval of the resolution.

Adjournment: There being no further business before Council, Mayor Campbell asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Upon motion being made by Councilmember Lassiter and seconded by Councilmember Daniel, City Council adjourned the meeting at 6:20 p.m. o'clock.