

CITY OF WHIGHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 14, 2023

The Whigham City Council met in regular session on Tuesday, February 14, 2023, at the Whigham City Council Chambers with Mayor Trey Gainous presiding. Gainous called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. and asked Robert Porter to open the meeting with a prayer and led the Pledge to the Flag.

Those present were: Mayor Trey Gainous, Jim Sellers, Robert Porter, Andrew Walden, Joel Singletary, Jimmie Laing, Utilities Director Josh Ausburn, and Assistant City Clerk Taylor Lambert.

Agenda Adoption

A motion was made by Jim Sellers to adopt the agenda. Robert Porter seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Minutes Adoption

A motion was made by Jim Sellers to adopt the minutes from the January meeting. Jimmie Laing seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Motion carried.

Public Participation

Gloria Walden (Ebenezer Church Proclamation):

Mrs. Walden visited the Whigham City Council Meeting to invite the Mayor and Council to a Wreath dedication ceremony for Ebenezer Church. She then expressed to the council that she wants to begin working on the building so she can start to unite more people together in Whigham. She asked Mayor Trey Gainous if he would present a proclamation to make the last Wednesday in February be Ebenezer Day to which he agreed to do.

Unfinished Business

Mayor Gainous brought up that the Citizens of Whigham expressed some good input at both Town Hall Meetings. Some of the main concerns were the conditions of the downtown buildings, lack of any type of business in Whigham, the concern with lack of sewage. One idea that is being worked on currently is to bring a business into one of the city's vacant buildings. Utility Director Josh Ausburn has been diligently working to bring the building up to code so that it could be rented out to a business. **Mr. Jim Sellers made a motion to put an offer in the paper to rent out the old museum building to someone for a retail establishment. Mr. Joel Singletary seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.** Mayor Gainous stated that the offer would be ran in the paper for at least two weeks and there will be a deadline of 12:00 P.M. on March 10th to submit a bid. All business will be handled in front of the Mayor and Council.

New Business

Condemnation Letter: A meeting was held prior to the council meeting with Mayor Gainous, City Clerk Rachel Jenson, Utilities Director Josh Ausburn and the City Attorney Mr. Charlie Ferenchick to discuss condemning buildings in Whigham. After they spoke with Mr. Charlie about the situation, he drew up a condemnation letter about condemning the buildings and it was sent to all council members. Mr. Jim Sellers suggested that we talk to our neighbors before they just get sent a letter. There are many downtown buildings that will become a major issue for the city in the future. Utilities Director Josh Ausburn expressed that if we wanted to beautify downtown and increase our customers there really is no other option than to send the letter unless the owner of the building volunteers to fix it up or condemn it. Mr. Robert Porter brought up the fact of the owner seeing the letter and just giving the building to the city which then would leave the city to be faced with two options. Number one of the two options would be to repair it causing a major expense or number two tear it down which leads to another set of problems. Mr. Jim sellers mentioned that if we go through the process and it comes down to sending the letter, we would then be paying for the condemning of the building anyways. He would rather be able to negotiate with the property owners to come to an agreement to get help from the city to take it down if the property owner was unable to do it on their own. Mr. Joel Singletary asked Mayor Gainous what kind of timeline would these people have to do this? Mayor Gainous then stated that the letter says they have sixty days to have a plan. Then dates can further be discussed as to when the plan needs to be put into action. After discussing it the Mayor and Council decided to push this concern over to next month's meeting.

Sewage: Mayor Gainous spoke with Devin Carpenter from the Department of Health who suggested some pretty good ideas. One of those ideas was the city having multiple smaller sewage tanks. A meeting was also scheduled with the company YORK out Bainbridge to discuss some more options. This company has already done some leg work with the City of Whigham years ago which is a plus for the city.

Reports

Utilities Dept: Utilities Director Josh Ausburn informed the council about the purchase of his skid steer that will be used for cutting right away's as well as many other things. All electric meters have been put in apart from the nursing home and Mr. Jeff Brinson's building. He is expecting the new water meters to be delivered on February 15th, 2023, and as soon as they are here the process of changing them out will begin. Josh had to replace the starter and hydraulic hoses on the grapple truck. The bucket truck and line truck were both dilated to be tested and they both passed. Earlier in the day on February 14th Assistant City Clerk Taylor Lambert called Josh about some electrician guys down at the nursing home. They wanted to add a transfer switch to be able to hook up a generator and josh informed them that they couldn't do that. Josh basically stated that the nursing home must update some things down there before anything can be added. He spoke with the maintenance director down there and he seemed to have been misled on the things that need to be done down there. Josh is going to get in contact with the nursing home director to let him know the things that must be updated before any work can be done. The dilapidated ramp on the sidewalk near Bond's has been removed. The big tree that had limbs hanging over the sidewalk and the building have also been trimmed back. Lastly, Josh has also obtained a quote for all the upgrades they want to happen at the snake grounds.

Executive Session

Time into session: 6:44 P.M.

Motion to enter Executive Session made by: Jimmie Laing

Seconded by: Robert Porter

Reason to enter: Real Estate

Motion to leave Executive Session: Jim Sellers

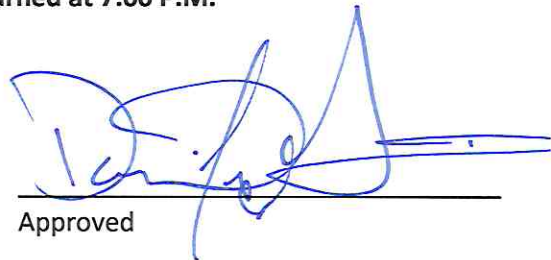
Seconded by: Andrew Walden

Time to end Executive Session: 6:53 P.M.

A motion to adjourn was made by Jim Sellers. Joel Singletary seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 P.M.



Submitted



Approved

City Of Whigham
Council Meetings
February 14th, 2023