

CITY OF WHIGHAM  
COUNCIL MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

The Whigham City Council met in regular session Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at the Whigham City Hall with Mayor Trey Gainous presiding. Gainous called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. and Robert Porter opened the meeting with a prayer and led the Pledge to the Flag.

Those present were: Mayor Trey Gainous, Mayor Pro Tem Jim Sellers, Jimmie Laing, Andrew Walden, Robert Porter, Police Chief Tony Black, Utilities Director Josh Ausburn and Assistant City Clerk Taylor Lambert. Members of the public present were: Jeff and Janice Brinson as well as Blaine Drew.

***Agenda Adoption***

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

***Minutes Adoption***

**A motion was made by Robert Porter to adopt the minutes from the August meeting. Jimmie Laing seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.**

***Public Hearing***

2023 Millage Rate: Mayor Gainous asked the Council if there were any questions concerning the new rate. All members of the council as well as Mayor Gainous agreed to approve the new Millage Rate. With no questions, **Jim Sellers made a motion to approve the 2023 Millage Rate as presented. Robert Porter seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.**

***Public Participation***

Phillip Drew: sign for storage buildings: Blain Drew was present to represent Phillip Drew to request a variance for signage on highway 84 pointing to their recently purchased storage buildings. Blaine explained to the council that they would like the location of the sign to be on the corner of Hudson Street and Highway 84. He also said that they got in touch with the property owner of where the sign would be, and the property owner has agreed to let them put the sign up. Mr. Jim Sellers stated that he understood their variance request, but a variance can't be granted for something that's not allowed per the sign ordinance. Mr. Sellers went on to inform Blaine that although a variance can't be granted there are still ways a sign could be placed on the corner of Hudson Street and Highway 84. He told Blaine that if the sign followed the guidelines in the sign ordinance, he would not have a problem with them putting up a sign. A provision in the ordinance for a sign ten square feet or smaller can be used without a permit. The sign can be used for informational purposes only with an arrow pointing in the correct direction. It may not contain any type of advertising. With there being no other comments, Blaine thanked the Mayor and Council for their time and left the meeting.

Jeff Brinson: Hardware building updates: Mr. Brinson told the Mayor and Council that they have gotten everything they want out of the building that was partially damaged during the falling of the building in between there and the Police Department. He stated that it would soon be in the process of being torn down as well since it is continuing to collapse in certain weather conditions. A question about the condition of the Police Department was brought up by Mr. & Mrs. Brinson and Josh Ausburn let them know that an engineer came to assess the damage. Josh stated that while he was here, they cut access

holes to the roof where they found several trusses that will need to be replaced. Mr. Brinson then asked if the Police Department was repairable which led to Chief Tony Black telling him that everything is repairable but as of now, we are waiting on the insurance company. The Brinson's then told the Mayor and Council that they were willing to do anything they could to help. They expressed that they wish the building would not have collapsed and if they could go back, they would do things a lot differently. Soon after they thanked the Mayor and Council for their time and left the meeting.

Josiah Austinson: Zoning Inquiry: Although Mr. Austinson wasn't present at the meeting his inquiry was still brought up by Mr. Jim Sellers. The inquiry was going to be about rezoning the property that Mr. Austinson owns at 119 N McGriff St. from commercial to residential. Mr. Jim Sellers stated that he and Assistant City Clerk Taylor Lambert looked at the zoning map and since there are other locations that are being used for residential purposes in an area zoned for commercial, he did not see any reason as to why Mr. Austinson couldn't use his location for residential purposes also.

### ***Reports***

#### ***City Hall***

Mayor Gainous stated that City Hall had a great report from Perry Henry about the Audit. He also mentioned that Mr. Perry would be at the next meeting.

#### ***Police Department***

Chief Tony Black voiced his opinion to the Mayor and Council about the City's current Insurance company. He stated that if we were with GMA, they would have brought in a trailer for the Police Department to move into instead of a closet in City Hall. He also stated that he has no place to interview people, no place to store evidence, etc. He brought up the fact that they must get trained on a new computer system, but they can't right now because they have nowhere to do it. He told the Mayor and Council that his main concern right now was for the city to get on with GMA.

#### ***Utility Department***

Josh Ausburn gave many updates on things he has been getting done such as, setting seventy-foot poles at the school, replacing the alternator in his truck, servicing all the city's utility trucks, fixing water leaks with the hydrovac, removing old poles throughout the town, putting in more new water meters, and replacing a started on a lawn mower. Lastly, He stated that Mr. Chad Gainous and himself have been helping other cities with storm work. They went to Quitman GA and stayed for four to five days and then worked in Cairo for twenty-four to thirty hours straight after working a full day in Whigham.

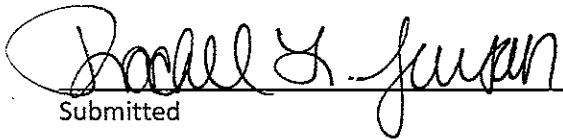
### ***Council Matters of Interest***

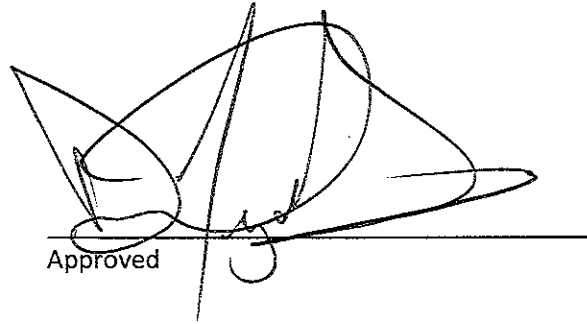
Mr. Robert Porter asked Josh Ausburn if he had ordered any street signs yet? Josh told him that he was getting a list together of multiple street signs that needed to be replaced and he would do a bulk order for them then.

Mr. Jim Sellers has found interest in getting the old bell in the park back into use. He stated that there is money in the budget for parks and recreation that can be used to work on this. Mr. Jim met with a man by the name of Charles White that put together a purchase agreement for the work. In the agreement he included the scope of work, the client's responsibility, warranty, investment, terms of payment, validity, and acceptance. After the Mayor and Council looked over the purchase agreement Mr. Jim went on to tell them about his ideas for the bell as well as ask for opinions and ideas from them. He explained that he wanted the bell to be put on a structure of some type. Mayor Gainous then spoke up and said it could be placed on top of a gazebo in the middle of the park. Charles White suggested to Mr. Sellers that the bell would need to be sandblasted and repainted, to which Mr. Sellers replied we can handle that. Mayor Gainous is also going to contact some members of the Whigham Community Club to

get some design ideas. After the Mayor and Council were finished discussing the interest, they all decided that it was a great idea and wanted to proceed with the plan from Charles White.

**With no other matters to tend to, a motion to adjourn was made by Robert Porter. Andrew Walden seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM.**

  
Submitted

  
Approved