

CITY OF WHIGHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 12, 2022

The Whigham City Council met in regular session on Tuesday July 12, 2022 at the Whigham City Council Chambers with Mayor Pro Tem Jim Sellers presiding. Sellers called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. and opened the meeting with a prayer and led the Pledge to the Flag.

Those present were: Mayor Pro Tem Jim Sellers, Jimmie Laing, Robert Porter, Trey Gainous, Joel Singletary, Utilities Director Josh Ausburn, Police Chief Tony Black, and City Clerk Rachel Rogers.

Agenda Adoption

A motion was made by Jimmie Laing to adopt the agenda. Trey Gainous 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 June meeting. Trey Gainous seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Public Hearing

Mayor Pro Tem Sellers presented the budget copies to the Council. He stated some cuts in the budget would need to be made but he had gotten the numbers to balance. Councilman Porter inquired about the electric rate cost. Sellers stated that we have to purchase at a set rate and then the PCA fluctuates for the revenue the City will make off of electric sales. Porter also inquired about the department the grass contractor was paid out of and if he anticipated on raising his price due to the rising costs of everything. Utilities Director Ausburn stated that the contractor, Ray Callaway, had approached him about potentially not renewing his contract. Ausburn stated he was looking at alternative scenarios and was thinking about bringing the mowing back in house instead of contracting out.

Sellers asked the Chief of Police to explain to the Council about the line item in his budget for a LiveScan machine. Black stated they were trying to cut out so many trips to the Grady County Jail and how difficult it has been throughout the years with getting the paperwork back from the Sheriff's office. The cost of \$8,747.44 that has been requested for the Police Dept budget includes the machine along with the training included for the startup.

Sellers asked Ausburn and Councilman Joel Singletary to tell them about the Fire Department's truck they are wanting to sell, since they are both members of the Volunteer FD, since there was a line item for the purchase of a newer truck in the budget requests. They stated the old truck is a 1982 model and is the oldest truck they have. The VFD received an offer of \$10,000 for the old truck. The newer truck would be coming from City of Thomasville and would cost \$30,000. Sellers suggested to the Council that maybe the City could contribute to the purchase since we just got back the Meag year end settlement. All other Councilmen agreed.

Sellers asked the City Clerk if the City Clerk had any requests. City Clerk Rogers stated City Hall had no major purchases in their budget request. Sellers stated the Council would make any changes and adopt the budget at the August Council meeting.

than the current billing software had quoted to us, but we were just not getting results from the company HyperWeb. Joel Singletary said he would like to see other quotes from other billing software companies, which all members agreed. Jensen stated she and Lambert would get information together to present at the September meeting. Jensen also informed the Council that Lambert would be taking her place at the next Council meeting due to her attending City Clerk training.

Police Dept: Chief Black informed the Mayor and Council a complaint had been made against one of his officers and he was looking further into the complaint.

Utilities Dept: Utilities Director Josh Ausburn informed the Council he had been cutting the right of way in several areas, had installed new meters for CSX, new transformers had been installed and he and Israel Kirkland had been working on a water leak on 179 that they discovered.

New Business

Meag Signatory Appointments: Mayor Gainous told the Council that a signatory would have to be designated to replace the late Mayor Trulock with Meag. The City Clerk told the Council a new resolution and formal vote would have to be done to make the change. **Robert Porter made a motion to add Trey Gainous to the signatory affidavit along with Jim Sellers, who was presently listed on the document. Joel Singletary seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.**

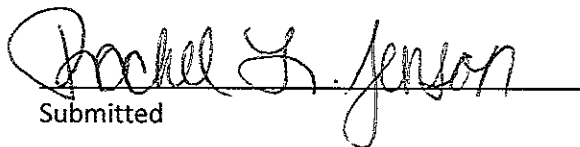
Council Matters of Interest

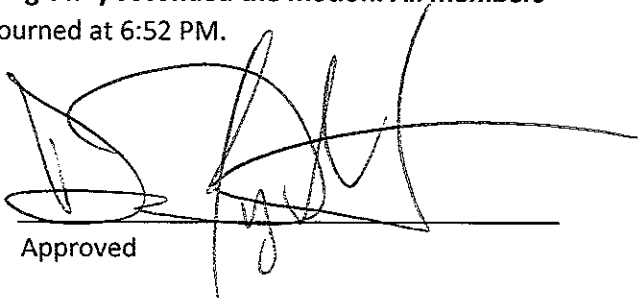
Gainous opened the floor for discussion for Andrew Walden, who was present, to potentially fill the vacant Council seat. Walden stated he had previously served on the Planning Committee when it was active. Sellers stated he hated the committee hadn't lasted longer and more people didn't want to serve on it. With no other questions for Mr. Walden, **Jim Sellers made a motion to appoint Andrew Walden to the vacant Council seat. Joel Singletary seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.**

Mayor Gainous expressed concern about the rates for cemetery lots in the Woodlawn Cemetery. He had been informed by the City Clerk and Utilities Director that people were coming to Whigham to purchase lots solely because they were so cheap, at only \$100 per lot, where in surrounding areas the lots were \$500 or more. Ausburn also informed the Mayor and Council that several cemeteries charged opening fees for burials and the new section of the Woodlawn Cemetery was probably at 70% capacity. The Council asked the City Clerk to talk to City Attorney Charlie Ferenchick to see what would be involved in potentially raising the prices of the cemetery lots.

City Clerk Rachel Rogers administered the Council Oath of Office to Andrew Walden.

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 6:52 PM.


Submitted


Approved

Reports

Utilities: Ausburn stated there had been some small outages throughout the City. He also stated they will be making minor repairs to the paving edges around town, has been doing voltage conversions, serviced the City equipment and also informed the Council about the leak in the trailer park he and Israel Kirkland had worked on at the beginning of the month.

PD: Chief Black told the Council Officer Seth Maxwell was leaving as he was offered a full time position at Archbold in Thomasville that would take up most of his time. He has hired a new patrolman, Jordan Lattimore, that will begin this week.

City Hall: City Clerk Rachel Rogers informed the Council City Hall would be closed for lunch Thursday, Friday and Monday because she would be taking off to get married.

Unfinished Business

Local Option Sales Tax (LOST): Sellers stated the rate for the LOST proposed to the City by the County needed to be voted on. City Clerk Rogers stated that she could not find any agreement on a "set rate" as discussed at the June meeting. **Trey Gainous made a motion to accept the LOST rate of 1.63%. Robert Porter seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Motion carried.**

Council Matters of Interest

Sellers opened the floor for discussion of appointment of the new Mayor. Trey Gainous expressed interest in the position. **Joel Singletary made a motion to appoint Trey Gainous as the Mayor of Whigham to finish out George Trulock's term. Robert Porter seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Motion carried.**

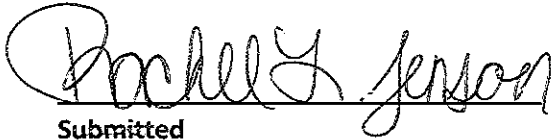
City Clerk Rachel Rogers administered the Oath of Office to Trey Gainous and swore him in as Mayor of Whigham.

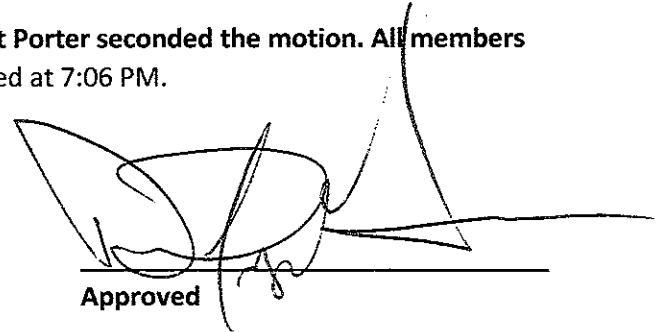
City Clerk Rogers told the Council that a letter of support had been given to City Hall from the Whigham Volunteer group for Nick Farrell to fill the open Councilmember seat. The letter signed by the members of the Volunteer group was passed to each Councilmember. Sellers asked if any of the Council had suggestions or thoughts on the matter. Singletary stated that Andrew "Mickey" Walden had spoken to him and shown interest in being on the Council. Walden and his wife own the Ebenezer Church property and Walden has been in Whigham all of his life. The Council asked the City Clerk to send a letter to Mr. Walden asking for him to attend the next Council meeting to discuss filling the position.

Sellers informed the Council of an illegal water tap/usage on Bunn Ln. that was found. Ausburn stated a water hose was running to the Lot 29 property from Lot 28. Sellers stated it was an ordinance violation and asked the Council how they thought we should handle it. It was decided that the City Clerk would need to draft a letter to the Lot 28 property owner stating to immediately stop the illegal tap from happening. Sellers mentioned the City had also discovered a group of seasonal workers living in the James Knight building on McGriff/Depot. He stated it had been used for a resident to live in before. The Council decided since it was just temporary, they would allow the group to stay there as long as the outside of the building was cleaned up. Trey Gainous stated he would talk to Knight. Sellers also mentioned the old hardware store on 84, owned by the Brinsons, was seriously deteriorating and was curious if the City was liable if someone were to get hurt. Sellers and Gainous thought it would be best if the property condition was discussed with the City Attorney and would set up a meeting with him.

The City Clerk informed the Council that she had received an email during the meeting informing the Archway members that the Archway Professional, Whitney Brannen, would be leaving Archway. Gainous stated we had only renewed to allow time for Brannen to "prove herself" and give her a chance and he did not feel like we would need to renew. All other Council members agreed. The City Clerk stated she would reach out to Archway and let them know the City did not want to continue with the Archway program again.

A motion to adjourn was made by Joel Singletary. Robert Porter seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:06 PM.


Submitted


Approved

