

REGULAR MEETING, MAYOR AND COUNCIL, CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, COUNCIL ROOM, JULY 18, 2022, 6:30 PM.

Mayor Steve Horton presided with Mayor Pro-tem Fleeta Baggett, Council members: Susie Keck, Anthony Henderson, Charika Davis, Kenneth Morgan, and Don T. Floyd, City Manager Tres Thomas, Assistant City Manager John King, City Clerk Audra M. Gutierrez, Deputy Clerk Amanda Huggins, and City Attorney Frank Turner, Jr. present.

Mayor Horton gave the invocation and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Mayor Horton asked Chief Holmes and Chief Tudor from Covington Fire Department to give an update on CFD employee Brian Thompson. Chief Holmes informed that Mr. Thompson is currently in critical condition at Piedmont Athens ICU with a diagnosis of Guillian-Barre' syndrome and thanked everyone for the outpouring of love and support from the Police Who Care fund, community, church groups, and businesses. Chief Holmes asked for prayers and stated firefighters are with Mr. Thompson around the clock.

Mayor Horton asked Mr. Robert Foxworth to speak on the July 4th celebration and the Friends of Covington Fireworks non-profit. Mr. Foxworth thanked everyone for donations, support, and volunteering and stated planning for next year's celebration is in process. Mayor Horton thanked Mr. Foxworth and asked him to keep up the good work.

1. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve the minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on July 5, 2022.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Henderson to move Item 9 "Public comments" to next item.

Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Hawnethia Williams and Mr. Roderick Sawyer wanted to continue discussion regarding the public safety issue on Lee Street. Ms. Williams stated there is continued parking on both sides of the street and a house is under construction, but on July 11th, 2022 the fire department was called in regards to a possible fire.

Ms. Williams stated there was no fire, but the fire truck was having difficulty maneuvering the street coming off Conyers Street onto Lee Street due to vehicles being parking on both sides of the road. Ms. Williams wants the neighborhood to be safe and feels the issue is being pushed back. Ms. Williams requested "No Parking" signs to be on the east side of Lee Street, across from the Jefferson Inn. Mr. Sawyer stated driveways are blocked and people are parking directly in front of "Stop" signs, which forces the street to function as a one-way street. Ms. Williams stated there is a tremendous amount of garbage along Lee Street and Ivy Street.

Mr. Archie Shepherd thanked Council member Floyd for all the work he does for his neighborhood. Mr. Shepherd wanted to know if anything can be done in regards to a neighbor that insists on cutting another neighbor's lawn every Sunday evening. Mr. Shepherd stated he had spoken to the neighbor whose lawn is being cut, but will also talk with the neighbor cutting the grass about mowing the lawn on a different day. Mr. Shepherd thanked Chief Cotton and his staff for the job they do.

3. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Keck to amend agenda in order to address erection of "No Parking" signs on Lee Street.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Davis to authorize the erection of "No Parking" signs on the east side of Lee Street between Conyers Street and Ivy Street as well as painting yellow curb at or near the stop sign locations.

Motion carried unanimously.

A public hearing was held at 7:29 PM concerning the **first** reading of an annexation request regarding county parcel located at 233 Williams Road. Planning and Zoning Director Mark Beechuk gave a detailed report including recommended approval of Newton County Board of Commissioners as well as approval with conditions by staff and Planning Commission.

5. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Floyd to approve the **first** reading for annexation request regarding county parcel located at 233 Williams Road from the City of Covington:

"AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, TO ANNEX TRACTS OF LAND CONTAINING 38.20 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, LOCATED ON WILLIAMS ROAD, IN LAND LOTS 292 AND 293, NINTH LAND

DISTRICT, NEWTON COUNTY, INTO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 2, CHAPTER 36, TITLE 36, OFFICIAL CODE OF GEORGIA ANNOTATED, TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

Motion carried unanimously.

A public hearing was held at 7:37 PM concerning the **first** reading for an annexation request regarding county parcel located at Hazelbrand Road from RDL Holdings, LLC/ Ryan Loew. Planning and Zoning Director Mark Beechuk gave a detailed report including recommended approval of Newton County Board of Commissioners and staff as well as approval with conditions by Planning Commission. Property owner Ryan Loew was in attendance to speak in favor of the annexation request.

6. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Floyd to approve the **first** reading for annexation request regarding county parcel located at Hazelbrand Road from RDL Holdings, LLC/ Ryan Loew:

"AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, TO ANNEX TRACTS OF LAND CONTAINING 35.45 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, LOCATED ON HAZELBRAND ROAD, IN LAND LOTS 291 AND 298, NINTH LAND DISTRICT, NEWTON COUNTY, INTO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 2, CHAPTER 36, TITLE 36, OFFICIAL CODE OF GEORGIA ANNOTATED, TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

Motion carried unanimously.

Council member Baggett requested Planning and Zoning Director Marc Beechuk to address neon signs located on the Masonic building at the nail salon.

A discussion ensued regarding a request for speed bumps by a concerned citizen in Walker's Bend subdivision due to safety concerns as vehicles speed and fail to stop at stop signs.

City Manager Tres Thomas reviewed the process for having speed bumps installed in existing neighborhoods.

Mayor Horton asked for a consensus from Council to table item until the August 15, 2022 Council meeting in order for City Manager Tres Thomas along with City engineers to gather more information.

7. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Davis to table discussion of speed bumps request in Walker's Bend subdivision until August 15, 2022 Council meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Keck to approve a SPLOST Intergovernmental Agreement with a 78% county/22% municipality distribution with the condition that if the county does not include at least as much 911 center funding as the city then the city list will be road projects only.

Motion carried unanimously.

Comments from the City Manager:

-ECG bus tour is August 10, 2022 from 8:15 AM- 10:00 AM

Mayor Comments:

-City Clerk to identify all elected officials from 2007 on who served at least one term with the City and that no longer serving at this time for the purpose of having sidewalk tiles installed on the Square as prior minutes have documented and to consult with past officials on the location preference of their tile

-Local NAACP chapter celebrating 75 years in Newton County and Masquerade Ball fundraiser is being held in September to which a letter is being drafted for and available at next Council meeting

Council member Davis asked when the re-paving of Flat Shoals Road will happen and stated she noticed lots of trash on the walking trail. Council member Davis asked who was responsible for picking up litter as West Street and surrounding areas look bad and she would be willing to volunteer for trash pick-up.

Council member Baggett addressed Mr. Archie Shepherd stating her neighbor blew off their parking lot at 7:00 AM Sunday and rudeness is a universal problem. Council member Baggett addressed Ms. Thelma Nolley regarding concerns from last Council meeting of the bollards on the trail and stated there

were no bollards on the Conyers Street and Floyd Street sides so patrol cars have accessibility. Council member Baggett stated there were bollards by the old Eastside High School but no bollards by I-20.

Council member Morgan asked if the Newton County inmate detail program had started back since COVID-19 and suggested they pick up trash.

Council member Keck stated she saw something on high school students receiving credits for performing community services such as cutting senior citizens' grass and picking up trash. Council member Keck though it was a good idea and sent the information to several Board of Education members.

City Manager Tres Thomas stated he will look at re-paving list to see if Flat Shoals Road is on it and that there is an agreement with the City and Newton Trails to take care of the trail maintenance. City Manager Tres Thomas stated the Public Works Director coordinated a meeting with JAG who has a contract with Court Services and he will provide an update from them.

9. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Davis to enter into Executive Session at 8:07 PM to discuss land opportunities and potential litigation.

Motion carried unanimously.

10. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Morgan to enter back into Regular Session at 9:20 PM.

Motion carried unanimously.

11. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Morgan to amend the agenda to add a discussion of not supporting tender option by SPV-M, SPV-J, and SPV-P after consultation with internal staff on the potential benefits and costs associated with the tender option, based upon information provided by MEAG Power Staff concerning the tender option decision that pertains to the Vogtle Units 3 and 4 Project.

Motion carried unanimously.

12. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Keck to approve not supporting exercising the tender option by SPV-M based upon

information provided by MEAG Power Staff concerning the tender option decision that pertains to the Vogtle Units 3 and 4 Project.

Motion carried unanimously.

13. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Morgan to approve not supporting exercising the tender option by SPV-J based upon information provided by MEAG Power Staff concerning the tender option decision that pertains to the Vogtle Units 3 and 4 Project.

Motion carried unanimously.

14. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Baggett to approve not supporting exercising the tender option by SPV-P based upon information provided by MEAG Power Staff concerning the tender option decision that pertains to the Vogtle Units 3 and 4 Project.

Motion carried unanimously.

Being no further business meeting adjourned at 9:23 PM.

Steve Horton, Mayor

Audra M. Gutierrez, City Clerk