

**REGULAR MEETING, MAYOR AND COUNCIL, CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, COUNCIL ROOM, JUNE 20, 2023, 6:30 PM.**

Mayor Steve Horton presided with Council members: Susie Keck, Charika Davis, Kenneth Morgan, and Don T. Floyd, City Manager Tres Thomas, Deputy City Manager John King, City Clerk Audra M. Gutierrez, Deputy Clerk Amanda Huggins, and City Attorney Frank Turner, Jr. present. Council member Susie Keck joined the meeting via teleconference with two-way video and audio. Mayor Pro-tem Anthony Henderson was absent.

Mayor Horton called the meeting to order and reviewed procedure for public comments and public hearings.

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1. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Baggett to approve the minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on June 5, 2023, with corrections to Item 22.

Motion carried unanimously.

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City Manager Tres Thomas updated Council on traffic studies and GDOT reports gathered regarding a SUP request by 78 Development Partners, LLC for a 53-unit townhome development located at 10860 Covington Bypass Road. Mayor Horton reminded Council the applicant also requested a variance allowing front entry garages, and staff recommended no more than fifty percent plus one have front entry garages. Mayor Horton stated staff also recommended a wood fencing requirement around the development of at least six feet in height, and the developer agreed to all conditions.

2. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Davis to **deny** a SUP request by 78 Development Partners, LLC for a 53-unit townhome development located at 10860 Covington Bypass Road in conjunction with a variance request to allow front entry garages and a wood fencing requirement around development of at least six feet in height.

Motion carried unanimously.

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3. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Baggett to approve **final** reading of an ordinance for the City of Covington:

“AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, TO AMEND THE COVINGTON MUNICIPAL CODE, ENACTED AND ADOPTED

ON THE 16<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF OCTOBER, 2001, AS AMENDED BY PREVIOUS AMENDMENTS, TO ALTER CERTAIN PROVISION OF TITLE 13 OF THE SAID CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE PURPOSE OF **ADOPTING SECTION 13.08.340 (ELECTRIC VEHICLE FAST CHARGING TARIFF) OF CHAPTER 13.08 (ELECTRIC SYSTEM) THEREOF**, TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

Motion carried unanimously.

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Finance Director Randy Smith stated the purpose of the Truist Master Resolution for Deposit Account is so that when one of the signers changed, going through each account individually to make the change would not be necessary. Mr. Smith discussed the several controls in place to prevent fraud or wrongdoing.

4. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Davis to approve the Truist Master Resolution for Deposit Account as is, without requiring two signatures.

Motion carried unanimously.

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5. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Baggett to approve adding “Discussion of initiating text amendments to Section 16.16.020 Data Processing Centers and Section 16.28.025.A Duplexes” to the agenda.

Motion carried unanimously.

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Mr. Jerry White thanked the Council for the denial of the SUP request by 78 Development Partners, LLC for a 53-unit townhome development located at 10860 Covington Bypass Rd.

Ms. Janet Goodman stated the 33% percent salary increase approved for Mayor and Council is ridiculous as these are public service positions. Ms. Goodman stated elected officials are to look after others and their responsibility is to the citizens. Ms. Goodman stated that if people have to vote for someone to get a raise the possibility of it happening is unlikely. Ms. Goodman urged reconsideration of the decision.

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6. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Morgan to approve removing an item from the consent agenda, “Sole bid awarding

Newton County Ministers Union the Thanksgiving Feeding Project to be held at Legion Field on Friday November 24 and Saturday November 25, 2023.”

Motion carried unanimously.

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7. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Baggett to approve an application for a license to sell alcoholic beverages for **off-premises consumption and on-premises ancillary tastings only:**

**Regal Beer & Wine Package Store      12651 Town Center Dr., Ste 109**

Motion carried unanimously.

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8. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Davis to approve adding “Discussion of bids regarding the Thanksgiving Feeding Project to be held at Legion Field on Friday, November 24 and Saturday, November 25, 2023.”

Motion carried unanimously.

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9. Motion made by Council member Davis, seconded by Council member Morgan to approve extending the public hearing comment period from 10 minutes to 15 minutes per side in regards to discussion of the zoning of 8173 and 8193 Monticello Street from NR1 to NR2 and NR3 for a purposed 63-lot detached and attached single-family residential development.

Motion carried unanimously.

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A public hearing was held at 7:06 PM regarding the zoning of 8173 and 8193 Monticello Street from NR1 to NR2 and NR3 for a purposed 63-lot detached and attached single-family residential development. City Planner Renee Criswell gave a detailed staff report. Mr. Bob Richardson of 8173 Monticello Street and Mr. John Nix of 945 Bank Street Conyers, GA were present to speak in favor. Corydell HOA President Mr. Sidney Haggard of 10139 Malcolm Drive, Ms. Sandra Stigall of 10108 Malcolm Rd, Mr. David Strickland of 1107 Davis Street SE, and Mrs. Lee Aldridge of 7219 Louise Street were present to speak against.

10. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Baggett to approve amending the future land use map (FLUM) from single-family

residential (SFR) to single-family residential (SFR) and multi-family residential (MFR) at 8173 and 8193 Monticello Street.

Motion carried with Council members Morgan, Baggett, Davis, and Floyd voting for. Council member Keck voting against.

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- 11. Motion made by Council member Baggett, seconded by Council member Morgan to approve the zoning of 8173 and 8193 Monticello Street from NR1 to NR2 and NR3 for a purposed 63-lot detached and attached single-family residential development.

Motion carried with Council members Morgan, Baggett, and Davis voting for. Council members Keck and Floyd voting against.

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A public hearing was held at 8:00 PM regarding a SUP request regarding an Automotive Repair (Window Tinting) at 7101 Hwy 278. City Planner Renee Criswell gave a detailed staff report and recommendations. Mr. Troydelle McFarlin of 7101 Hwy 278 present to speak in favor of SUP request.

- 12. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Floyd to approve a SUP request regarding an Automotive Repair (Window Tinting) operation at 7101 Hwy 278, with conditions and recommendations from staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

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- 13. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Morgan to approve the best bid from Parrish Technology amounting to \$70,560.00/year, or \$8,525.00/month in regards to IT Support Services for the 911 Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP).

Parrish Technology	\$70,560.00/year; \$8,525.00/month
SoftSages	\$54,000.00/year; \$4,500.00/month
CTSI Outsourcing	Option 1 = \$23,100.00/year; \$1,925.00/month Option 2 = \$18,900.00/year; \$1,575.00/month
INTERDEV	\$89,112.00/year; \$7426.00/month with no 16 hour support remote or on-site

Motion carried unanimously.

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A discussion ensued regarding a MEAG trust transfer. Finance Director Randy Smith stated in 2023, the City budgeted to use MEAG funds to pay for infrastructure and new developments at an amount of \$6,269,594.00. A total of \$2,337,060.15 currently needs transferring of this amount to the City pooled account within the electric fund for purchase and installation of the Tantalus meters. Transfer documents and supporting purchase orders were presented for Council’s review.

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- 14. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Davis to approve the best bid from Mauldin & Jenkins amounting to \$70,000.00 for fiscal year 2023, and \$375,000.00 for five-year total, regarding audit services for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, with renewals for the subsequent four fiscal years.

Mauldin & Jenkins	\$70,000.00 for FY 2023; \$375,000.00 for 5-year total
CKH CPA's and Advisors	\$70,000.00 for FY 2023; \$379,300.00 for 5-year total

Motion carried unanimously.

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- 15. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Floyd to approve amending the current budget to include additional revenues and expenditures as actual figures become available.

Motion carried unanimously.

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- 16. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Davis to approve the City’s fiscal year 2023-2024 budget.

Motion carried with Council members Morgan, Baggett, Davis, and Keck voting for. Council member Floyd voting against.

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- 17. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Morgan to approve initiating text amendments to Section 16.16.020 Data Processing Centers and Section 16.28.025.A Duplexes.

Motion carried unanimously.

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18. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Baggett to approve the best bid from the Newton County Ministers Union for no charge regarding the Thanksgiving Feeding Project to be held at Legion Field on Friday, November 24 and Saturday, November 25, 2023.

Newton County Ministers Union	No charge
Feeding GA Families	\$25,000.00 annually

Motion carried unanimously.

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Comments from the City Manager:

- Newton County taking applications for low-income senior home repair program for homeowners over age 55 that have no greater than 80% annual median income and homeowners may apply online. Individual assistance for filling out the online application is available at the Newton County Admin building on Usher Street, Porter Memorial Library on Hwy 212, or Newton County Family Connection on Geiger Street. A flier will be posted on City website once an updated version available.

-Electric Director Joel Smith and others recently attended ECG Engineering and Operations Conference in Savannah, GA and received recognition for the Major Electric System Improvement Award.

-Friday June 16, 2023 was Fire Chief Jeremy Holmes' last day with the City. Deputy Fire Chief Joe Doss shall serve as Interim Fire Chief, please welcome him.

Council member Davis stated she received a question from a resident on Ponderosa Drive stating they believed privacy fence construction was planned on that side of Central Park. Council member Davis stated the resident voiced concerns of an increased presence of raccoons that may endanger pets.

City Manager Tres Thomas stated he spoke with Community Development Director Ken Malcom and they will verify with Special Projects Coordinator Randy Conner to confirm if a privacy fence was part of the Central Park Master Plan.

Mayor Horton stated the City was named Tree City USA 2022 by the Arbor Day Foundation and this was the 31<sup>st</sup> year of receiving the award. Mayor Horton read a proclamation recognizing the service of Samantha Furhey and her retirement from the Newton County Board of Education as Superintendent, and a proclamation acknowledging the seventh anniversary of Pastor Shelton J. Brown as Senior Pastor and Teacher for the Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church.

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19. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Davis to enter into Executive Session at 8:32 PM for the purpose of discussing land.

Motion carried unanimously.

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20. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Baggett to enter into Regular Session at 8:45 PM.

Motion carried unanimously.

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21. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Baggett to add "Discussion of the contract to sell 3.99 acres, parcel CO807J, to Newton Land Investments, LLC."

Motion carried unanimously.

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22. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Davis to add "Discussion of the contract to sell 7.95 acres, parcel CO80-7, owned jointly with Newton County, to Newton Land Investments, LLC, contingent upon agreement to sell property with Newton County."

Motion carried unanimously.

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23. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Davis to approve a contract to sell 3.99 acres, parcel CO807J, at \$65,000.00/acre, to Newton Land Investments, LLC.

Motion carried unanimously.

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24. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Davis to approve a contract to sell 7.95 acres, parcel CO80-7, owned jointly with Newton County, to Newton Land Investments, LLC, at \$65,000.00/acre, contingent upon agreement to sell property from Newton County.

Motion carried unanimously.

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Being no further business meeting adjourned at 8:49 PM.

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Steve Horton, Mayor

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Audra M. Gutierrez, City Clerk