

REGULAR MEETING, MAYOR AND COUNCIL, CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, COUNCIL ROOM, SEPTEMBER 18, 2023, 6:30 PM.

Mayor Steve Horton presided with Mayor Pro-tem Anthony Henderson, Council members: Susie Keck, Charika Davis, Fleeta Baggett, 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.

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

1. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Floyd to approve the minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on September 5, 2023.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Horton read a proclamation acknowledging Mr. Robert Foxworth for his dedicated and long-standing service to the City of Covington in regards to the annual Fourth of July fireworks celebration.

A discussion ensued regarding granting a cost of living adjustment (COLA) for City of Covington retirees. Human Resources Director Paul Dailey stated the Retirement Review Committee held a special called meeting on September 13, 2023 as requested by Council to discuss options. Mr. Dailey stated the City's actuaries presented a 2.5%, 5%, and 10% COLA increase to the Committee, and the Committee recommended a 5% COLA increase for City retirees. Mr. Dailey stated there has never been a COLA for retirees. Mr. Dailey presented to Mayor and Council two options to pay for the increase, with accompanying resolutions.

Mayor Horton, Council member Morgan, and Council member Floyd recused themselves from vote.

2. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Davis to approve a 5% increase for all retirees currently receiving a monthly benefit from the City of Covington Defined Benefit Plan as of October 1, 2023, including a budget amendment resolution increasing account 100-1510-61.1000 transfer to retirement fund by \$188,753.00 and decreasing account 100-1301-57.9000

contingencies by \$188,753.00. The remaining cost will be paid over the next fourteen years at \$188,753.00 per year.

Motion carried unanimously.

- 3. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve adding "Discussion of Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Local Administered Project Re-Certification (LAP) application" to the agenda.

Motion carried unanimously.

Vickie Floyd of 4213 Dorchester Drive stated thirty appellants heard at the August 7, 2023 Council meeting received notification for a petition to review to the Superior Court of Newton County, naming them as respondents and Q. Dorchester Holding LLC as the petitioner. Mrs. Floyd stated the decisions made at the appeal hearings were by Council to modify and deny approvals of the Historic Preservation Committee (HPC). Mrs. Floyd stated all fifteen items listed in the Grounds for Appeal section of the document refer to actions taken by the HPC, City Council, Rules of Procedure, and City zoning ordinances, not the respondents, and the community is asking for response by the City on their behalf to have the petitions dismissed. Mrs. Floyd stated citizens should be free to approach government entities without fear of retaliatory litigation, and failure to support the community sends a negative message and may discourage many from future participation in government matters.

- 4. Motion made by Council member Baggett, seconded by Council member Floyd to approve the best bid from Jet-Vac Equipment Company amounting to \$496,843.81 to purchase a Sewer Jetter/Vacuum Combo truck as requested by Water and Sewer Department.

Jet-Vac Equipment Company	\$496, 843.81- met or exceeded specifications
Environmental Products Group	\$477,800.00- did not meet specifications

Motion carried unanimously.

- 5. Motion made by Council member Baggett, seconded by Council member Floyd to approve the County-Wide Safety Plan (CWSP) Joint Consent Agreement for Walton County.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Bill Ross from Ross + Associates was present to discuss a proposed Impact Fee Ordinance and stated State law requires two public hearings prior to adoption of the proposed Impact Fee Ordinance. Mr. Ross stated the maximum fee schedule is currently drafted in the ordinance, and the CIE (Capital Improvements Element) is still under review at the State. Mr. Ross stated he is expecting to hear back from the State any day now, and the CIE will need State approval prior to the final reading and adoption of the ordinance. A public hearing was held at 7:05 PM. Mayor Horton suggested a work session with legal and City Council present to discuss the ordinance further.

6. Motion made by Council member Davis, seconded by Council member Morgan to approve the **first** 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 16TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2001, AS AMENDED BY PREVIOUS AMENDMENTS, **TO ALTER CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF TITLE 14 OF THE SAID CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADOPTING CHAPTER 14.36 (DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEES);** TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

Motion carried unanimously.

7. Motion made by Council member Baggett, seconded by Council member Keck to approve initiation of text amendments to Section 16.28.025 Building Typology, including addressing:

- density of townhomes that currently have a maximum gross density of 10 units per acre
- stacked flats within NM and CR zoning districts currently have a maximum gross base density of 10 units per acre and maximum gross density with bonuses of 15 units per acre
- CM, TCR, and TCM zoning districts currently have a maximum gross base density of 16 units per acre and maximum gross density with bonuses of 26 units per acre,

among other areas, as well as a resolution imposed until December 31, 2023 regarding a moratorium read into record by City Attorney Frank Turner, Jr. on barring the acceptance of applications of zoning petitions, preliminary plat

petitions, and special use permits petitions for new residential development as it relates to current maximum density.

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

- 8. Motion made by Council member Henderson, seconded by Council member Davis to approve a resolution imposed until November 22, 2023 regarding a moratorium barring the acceptance of applications of zoning petitions, preliminary plat petitions, and special use permits petitions for new residential development related to tax parcels enumerated at Exhibit "A" of said resolution. The resolution also instructs staff to initiate such re-zonings and zoning map amendments as deemed appropriate to present to City's Planning Commission, Mayor, and City Council for consideration and adoption.

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

- 9. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Baggett to approve sole bid from The Quarry at Neely Farms amounting to \$0.00 for the SR 36/Martin Luther King Jr. Ave. at Neely Farms Road widening and traffic signal installation.

Motion carried unanimously.

- 10. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Davis to approve lowest bid from A & S Paving amounting to \$745,767.67 for the 2023 Local Maintenance & Improvement Grant (LMIG) street resurfacing projects, with a contingency of \$111,865.15 (15%), contribution from GDOT of \$190,303.46, and the City's portion of \$667,329.36 from SPLOST for nine street resurfacing projects.

Stewart Brothers	\$ 1,043,769.12
ShepCo Paving, Inc.	\$ 938,043.88
A & S Paving, Inc.	\$ 745,767.67
Summit Construction & Development, LLC	\$ 849,020.62

Motion carried unanimously.

11. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Local Administered Project Re-Certification (LAP) application.

Motion carried unanimously.

12. Motion made by Council member Davis, seconded by Council member Keck to approve LMIG funding acceptance associated with Williams Road and City Pond Road improvements, ex post facto, amounting to \$2,337,000.00.

Motion carried unanimously.

13. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Floyd to approve sole bid from ONYX Media Services as second/additional sound provider for production and technical support of sound for approved Legion Field concerts events.

Motion carried unanimously.

A discussion ensued regarding traffic calming measures in residential neighborhoods. City Manager Tres Thomas stated there is an approved manual explaining the process of requesting traffic calming measures in residential neighborhoods and reviewed the process in detail. City Attorney Frank Turner Jr. stated all new residential developments are required to have speed control measures in place as of October 2022. Council member Morgan stated citizens are asking for traffic calming measures in many neighborhoods, and areas have become unsafe due to unruly driving. Council member Morgan stated he would like a work session to discuss amending the ordinance so neighborhoods needing traffic calming measures urgently can get them based on Council decision. Council member Keck stated she agrees traffic calming measures should be more prevalent. Mr. Turner and Mayor Horton stated each neighborhood should be looked at case by case. Council member Davis stated it would not hurt to revisit and possibly revise the manual as the City has grown. Council member Floyd stated the bulb out on Floyd Street is another concern. Mayor Horton stated speeding at Washington Street by The Center and The High Rise is a problem. Consensus by Council is to schedule a work session.

Comments from the City Manager:

- GDOT proposing a quick response project in Covington at intersections of

Hwy 278 and Adams Street, Floyd Street, Hannah Street, and Industrial Boulevard, approval letter from City of Covington needed to move forward needed on City letterhead preferably

14. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve adding "Discussion of letter to GDOT to move ahead with quick response intersections project in City of Covington at intersections of Hwy 278 and Adams Street, Floyd Street, Hannah Street, and Industrial Boulevard." to the agenda.

Motion carried unanimously.

15. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Keck to approve letter to GDOT to move ahead with quick response intersections project in City of Covington at intersections of Hwy 278 and Adams Street, Floyd Street, Hannah Street, and Industrial Boulevard.

Motion carried unanimously.

Council member Davis requested an update on the Dinah Pace water main replacement project, and on the warming shelter.

City Manager Tres Thomas stated bidding for the Dinah Pace water main project occurs in October 2023 and selection of a contractor happens in November 2023, with project completion predicted early spring 2024. Mr. Thomas stated a request for proposal (RFP) will be sent for the warming shelter once the City gets specifications from the County. Mr. Thomas stated the County is willing to participate with funding, which is required.

Council member Keck stated the health department, as of last Friday, has the RSV vaccine available, and it is recommended for anyone over age 60.

Mayor Horton stated he was happy to see youth groups out selling doughnuts on the Square Saturday morning as he had not seen that in a while, and he is still not in favor of the alcohol open container trial.

Being no further business meeting adjourned at 8:18 PM.

Steve Horton, Mayor

Audra M. Gutierrez, City Clerk