

**REGULAR MEETING, MAYOR AND COUNCIL, CITY OF COVINGTON,
GEORGIA, COUNCIL ROOM, AUGUST 5, 2024, 6:30 PM.**

Mayor Fleeta Baggett presided with Mayor Pro-tem Susie Keck, Council members: Anthony Henderson, Charika Davis, Kimberly Johnson, Travis Moore, and Jared Rutberg, City Manager Tres Thomas, Deputy City Manager John King, Deputy Clerk Amanda Huggins, and City Attorney Frank Turner, Jr. present. City Clerk Audra M. Gutierrez was absent.

Greg Shy gave the invocation.

Mayor Baggett 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 Henderson, seconded by Council member Keck to approve the minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on July 15, 2024.

Motion carried unanimously.

Planning and Zoning Director Judy Johnson gave a detailed review of the proposed Rural Zone/Downtown Master Plan.

2. Motion made by Council member Johnson, seconded by Council member Rutberg to adopt the Rural Zone/Downtown Master Plan.

Motion carried unanimously.

3. Motion made by Council member Davis, seconded by Council member Johnson to submit the adopted Rural Zone/Downtown Master Plan to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Motion made by Council member Rutberg, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve the sole source bid from United Systems and Software for the purchase of 1,000 ITRON water ERTs amounting to \$105,000.00.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Motion made by Council member Rutberg, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve the purchase of a new bucket truck to replace an older bucket truck for the Electric department amounting to \$233,876.00.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve the final plat for Neely Farms Subdivision Phase 3 (single-family residential).

Motion carried unanimously.

City Attorney Frank Turner Jr. stated no public hearing is required regarding a first reading amending Section 15.24.050 (BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES REQUIRED TO HAVE APPROVED AUTOMATIC SPRINKLER SYSTEMS) AS A PART OF CHAPTER 5.24 (FIRE PREVENTION GENERALLY) due to no change to the zoning code.

7. Motion made by Council member Rutberg, seconded by Council member Keck 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 PROVISION OF TITLE 15 OF THE SAID CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING SECTION 15.24.050 (BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES REQUIRED TO HAVE APPROVED AUTOMATIC SPRINKLER SYSTEMS) AS A PART OF CHAPTER 5.24 (FIRE PREVENTION GENERALLY) THEREOF, TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

Motion carried unanimously.

8. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Moore 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 PROVISION OF CHAPTER 8.04 (GARBAGE, YARD TRIMMINGS AND WEEDS) OF TITLE 8 OF THE SAID

CODE OF ORDINANCES (HEALTH AND SAFETY) FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING SECTIONS 8.04.010 (DEFINITIONS), 8.04.055 (COLLECTION OF HOUSEHOLD GARBAGE – ROLL CART SYSTEM), 8.04.070 (DISPOSAL OF COMMERCIAL WASTE), 8.04.085 (COLLECTION OF RECYCLABLE MATERIALS-RECYCLING SYSTEM), 8.04.090 (GARBAGE COLLECTION – COLLECTION POLICIES, COLLECTION FEES AND FRANCHISE FEES) AND ADOPTING SECTION 8.04.075 (DISPOSAL OF WASTE IN RESIDENTIAL PREMISES WITH CENTRALIZED COLLECTION), TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

Motion carried with Council members Keck, Johnson, Moore, and Rutberg voting for. Council members Davis and Henderson voting against.

- 9. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Johnson to approve levying the 2024 Millage Rate at 5.756 mils.

Motion carried with Council members Keck, Johnson, Moore, and Rutberg voting for. Council members Davis and Henderson voting against.

- 10. Motion made by Council member Davis, seconded by Council member Moore to approve awarding the Alcovy Circle Water Main Replacement Project amounting to \$1,067,425.42 to SH Creel Contracting LLC, as recommended by consultant Ardurra.

GS Construction INC.	\$ 1,652,316.00
Robert's Hauling and Pipeline INC.	\$ 1,163,005.00
Helix Grading and Utility LLC	\$ 1,245,054.00
MTG INC.	\$ 1,191,951.00
SH Creel Contracting LLC	\$ 1,067,425.40
Southeast Connection LLC	\$ 1,210,810.86
RDJE INC.	\$ 1,143,075.00
Anderson Grading and Pipeline LLC	\$ 1,108,065.00
Summit Construction	\$ 1,336,853.65

Motion carried unanimously.

- 11. Motion made by Council member Rutberg, seconded by Council member Johnson to approve a resolution updating city golf cart routes, with a change in Exhibit “A” to state “Jackson Hwy/Monticello St (King Street SE to Covington Bypass Road SE).

Motion carried unanimously.

12. Motion made by Council member Henderson, seconded by Council member Keck to approve participating in a class action lawsuit against BASF Corporation.

Motion carried unanimously.

Lee Mayfield of Mayfield Ace Hardware stated his parking lot has been used frequently for events and the care of the lot after events has deteriorated since COVID hit. Mr. Mayfield stated this year after the Independence Day celebration there was a lot of trash left and firework debris, parking issues, a charcoal fire occurred, and altercations with intoxicated citizens. Mr. Mayfield stated public safety is not able to respond effectively during the events. Mr. Mayfield suggested giving recognition to contributors of the fireworks show.

Cynthia Shell requested a text amendment to add “life coach” as a business type in the zoning ordinance. Ms. Shell stated she has been working out of an office that was in in the Quirky Gypsy.

City Attorney Frank Turner Jr. stated he will work with Planning and Zoning Director Judy Johnson to see if there is a category “life coach” that fits from the listings in the NAICS.

Mayor Baggett stated the text amendment request can be discussed at the next work session on August 19, 2024 as more information is gathered by staff.

Comments from the City Manager:

- Great job on the Downtown Master Plan and big thanks to Planning and Zoning, Downtown and Tourism Development, Economic Development, and ECG (Electric Cities of Georgia)

Council member Henderson has been getting complaints about trash cans not being placed back on the sidewalk or being knocked down after emptying by Lathem.

Council member Johnson stated she has spoken with Barbara at Lathem on a few occasions and can pass along her number to Council member Henderson as she is very helpful.

City Manager Tres Thomas stated he will speak with the Public Works Director Lee Harvey regarding trash cans concerns expressed by Council member Henderson.

Council member Rutberg thanked the Covington Police Department for getting the golf cart routes taken care of so quickly and the Facilities Maintenance Director Luther Bouchillon for getting trash picked up on Hwy 36 quickly. Council member Rutberg stated the discussion regarding crowd management at City events was good, the city staff is awesome, and he is proud of everyone.

Council member Davis asked if there were public spaces in the city for citizens to have meetings besides the library. Council member Davis stated she had a question from a citizen regarding public transit/mass transit and requested an update on the Nelson Heights sidewalks.

Council member Susie Keck stated Bread & Butter has a room that can be reserved by the public for meetings.

City Manager Tres Thomas stated he will check with Chester Clegg at Newton County to follow-up on the public transit/mass transit status and report back. Mr. Thomas gave an update on the Nelson Heights sidewalks project and stated the project should be completed in approximately two or three months.

Council member Johnson stated there was a lot of hard work that went into the millage rate process and the Council worked hard fighting for the citizens of the city to not raise the rate. Council member Johnson further stated a citizen that lives on South Street requested lighting and maintenance of the street.

Transportation Manager John Hendrix stated he will assess the condition of South Street.

Council member Keck asked about the cleaning of the sidewalks on the Square project, and that chewing gum is the major problem.

City Manager Tres Thomas stated normal pressure washing of the Square sidewalks has been discussed, as well as a brush clean, and what will more than likely occur will be a standard pressure washing. Mr. Thomas further stated the sand may need to be replaced, and he can provide a timeline for this soon.

Mayor Baggett stated the next work session needs scheduling to discuss the fireworks events, and Council agreed August 19, 2024 at either 5:00 or 5:30 PM would work. Mayor Baggett further stated the safety of our citizens is priority, and the fireworks contract with Friends of Covington Fireworks will be reviewed.

Being no further business meeting adjourned at 7:46 PM.

Fleeta Baggett, Mayor

Amanda Huggins, Deputy City Clerk