

REGULAR MEETING, MAYOR AND COUNCIL, CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, COUNCIL ROOM, MAY 16, 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.

Pastor Robert Wayne Rutherford of Lifepointe Church of the Nazarene gave the invocation.

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

Mayor Horton presented a proclamation honoring Rev. Robert Wayne Rutherford of Lifepointe Church of the Nazarene for his 27 years of service to the community and acknowledging May 22, 2022 as "Rev. Robert Wayne Rutherford Day" in Covington, Georgia.

1. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Davis to approve the minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on May 2, 2022.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Horton called for Item 9 to be moved and addressed first.

2. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Keck to approve Three Ring Studios Incentive request for the city to contribute up to 50% or \$450,000, plus facilities charge for electrical service and allow pay back over 5 years with a 5.5% interest rate.

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

3. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Keck to approve adding new members to the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee: Water Resources Director Kevin Sorrow, Community Development Director Ken Malcom, and Economic Development Manager William Smith.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Motion made by Council member Henderson, seconded by Council member Morgan to approve removing members from the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee: Janet Goodman (at her request), Scott Andrews, and Trey Sanders.

Motion carried unanimously.

A public hearing was held at 7:12 PM. Property owners Ms. Wade, Mr. J. Bailey, Mr. Greg Herring, and Mr. Travis Moore were in attendance to speak against ordinance and they urged that the ordinance include no certificate limits and no set districts or zones.

5. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Baggett to approve **first** reading of an ordinance for the City of Covington, with changes:

“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 16 OF THE SAID CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE PURPOSE OF **AMENDING SECTION 16.08.010 (DEFINITIONS), AMENDING SECTION 16.16.020 (PERMITTED USES) AND ADOPTING SECTION 16.20.635 (SHORT-TERM VACATION RENTALS)**; TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

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

A public hearing was held at 7:40 PM concerning a text amendment to **Section 16.28 Civic Design Provisions**.

6. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve a **first** reading of text amendment to **Section 16.28 Civic Design Provisions**.

Motion carried unanimously.

A public hearing was held at 8:03 PM concerning a text amendment for additional allowances and standards regulating **Duplexes**.

7. Motion made by Council member Henderson to approve a **first** reading of text amendment for additional allowances and standards regulating **Duplexes**.

Motion **died** for a lack of second.

A public hearing was held at 8:09 PM concerning a text amendment for zoning code clean-up.

8. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Floyd to approve a **first** reading of text amendment for zoning code clean-up.

Motion carried unanimously.

9. Motion made by Council member Baggett, seconded by Council member Floyd to approve the low bid from Loudoun in the amount of \$28,150.00, for replacing the tower lights on the Prime Tower located at 10792 Highway 36.

Loudoun	\$28,150.00
UTC	\$37,750.00
MCI	\$39,273.00

Motion carried unanimously.

10. Motion made by Council member Morgan seconded by Council member Keck to approve the low bid from East Coast Grading in the amount of \$707,517.00 for the LMIG and annual paving project.

MHB Paving	\$769,607.10
Pittman	\$914,637.77
East Coast Grading	\$707,517.87

Motion carried unanimously.

11. Motion made by Council member Morgan seconded by Council member Davis to approve a GICH letter of support for the rehab of the Covington Square.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Horton appointed Chhem “Drew” Chheang to the Covington Re-development Authority replacing Charter member Roger Smith (term expiring).

12. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Henderson to appoint Megan Hulgán to the Covington Development Authority, to replace Council member Baggett.

Motion carried unanimously.

13. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve a lease agreement with Wattum for crypto mining.

Motion carried unanimously.

14. Motion made by Council member Henderson, seconded by Council member Davis, to approve an Impact Fee Proposal from Ross & Associates in the lump sum fee of \$82,200.00.

Motion carried unanimously.

15. Motion made by Council member Baggett, seconded by Council member Keck to begin process of annexation and rezoning of Tax Map Parcels 61/14, 61/15, and 61/16 (property off Williams Rd.).

Motion carried unanimously.

16. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Floyd to appoint Tres Thomas as the City Manager.

Council members Keck, Floyd, and Baggett voting for. Council members Morgan, Davis, and Henderson voting against. Motion carried with Mayor Horton voting for, breaking 3-3 tie.

17. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve a Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan in the amount of \$26,239,000.00 from Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA).

Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Thelma Nolley stated she was in need of a new trash can. She stated the trash is still not being picked up at all houses. She mentioned there was trash all over the curb. She wanted to know what happened with the garbage truck driver that used a racial slur she mentioned at previous Council meeting. She voiced concern for the garbage truck drivers that were no longer working for the city.

Mrs. Tamler Stanley stated she was a resident of the Housing Authority and had been told she was about to be evicted due to her son being accused of destroying an air conditioning vent. She voiced concern that her son was also being threatened to tell who did it. She is not certain if there is a police report of the incident.

Comments from the City Manager:

-Tres stated he was grateful for the opportunity. Assistant John King stated staff will support him 100% in his new role.

Council member Keck mentioned the Glover St. paving project and that Crestview is torn up.

Council member Floyd stated Dearing St. residences need to be pressured washed due to the dust accumulation from work.

Council member Morgan passed out information on drone soccer given to him by Charlotte Cain with www.stonecrestfest.com and asked Council to read over. City Clerk Audra Gutierrez informed Ms. Cain can come and speak at future Council meeting if desired.

Council member Davis stated she has received complaints from residents in the Harristown and Sandhill areas about boarded up houses and they would like to know what can be done. City Attorney Frank Turner, Jr. advised that property owner needs a boarded up structure permit and they have to fix house or destroy it. We can put it before judge after permit expires with a citation.

Council member Henderson expressed concerns about decision made on short term rentals. He was comfortable with putting limits on the number of Air B&B's but not sure about not enforcing unlimited allowance. His fear is that there will be nowhere for anyone to live and big corporations will come in and buy up all the housing. He is interested in seeing how this plays out.

Mayor Horton stated that residents of Washington Street, Hendrick Street, Lee Street, Clark Street, and Brown Street have mentioned a lot of pedestrians, many elderly, crossing the roads and would like four way stops at these intersections. He would like engineering to look into evaluating how to get this done properly. Mayor Horton informed that the CEO of Piedmont Newton hospital and National Ambulance Service will be here at City Hall Council Courtroom on May 24th from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM to answer questions about ambulance service and response time. It will be a public meeting and more than likely a quorum. Mayor Horton reminded that Trey Sanders' last day will be May 20th with the City of Covington and that Assistant Finance Director Ashlan Troutman's last day is May 25th. Mayor Horton wanted the idea of joining with a local nonprofit in sponsoring the Juneteenth Parade to be placed on the next agenda and voted on. Mayor Horton needs text amendment initiation by City Manager to get speed bump ordinance in place that Council member Morgan has been advocating. He would like a work session to discuss the anti-violence and temporary police precinct. Mayor is to meet with Newton County to discuss 2022 SPOLST. There will be a town hall meeting regarding the Downtown parking masterplan on June 1st at 4:00 PM. The location is to be determined. He mentioned there is a budget meeting on May 23rd.

Council member Morgan mentioned he is opening a second business in June which will sell appliances.

Mayor Steve Horton stated there are upcoming Planning Commission appointments needed. Candidates are needed and resumes should be sent to City Clerk, Audra Gutierrez. Mayor stated we need four appointments.

Council member Davis has concerns with the questionnaire inquiring about age.

Council member Floyd reminded that May 30th is Memorial Day and there will be the annual Memorial Day Service at 10:00 AM on the Square. The pastor of Porterdale Baptist Church is to present. Crosses and flags are located by eternal flame.

Being no further business meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM.

Steve Horton, Mayor

Audra M. Gutierrez, City Clerk