

REGULAR MEETING, MAYOR AND COUNCIL, CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, COUNCIL ROOM, OCTOBER 17, 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, City Clerk Audra M. Gutierrez, Deputy Clerk Amanda Huggins, and City Attorney Frank Turner, Jr. present. Assistant City Manager John King was absent.

Mayor Horton gave the 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 Henderson to approve the minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on October 3, 2022.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Baggett to approve **final** reading of a proposed charter amendment to adopt the final operating budget for the ensuing fiscal year no later than the last day of June each year:

“AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND **SECTION 6.02** OF THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON; TO REPEAL ALL OTHER ACTS AND ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.”

Motion carried unanimously.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding Highway 278 CID improvements Phase II. Mr. Sam Hay, Vice Chair of the CID Board, gave a detailed PowerPoint presentation on the history of the Board, progression of Hwy 278 CID improvements, and approval/support of the Project Framework Agreement and CID letter of support for engineering of Phase II. Ms. Thelma Nolley stated the purpose of the roundabout was not clear, citizens of Covington do not care about or want a roundabout, and the project will be a burden to taxpayers. Mr. Rob Fowler of 2141 Emory Street voiced support for the project and SPLOST. Mayor Horton stated four letters need approval from Council including the Project Framework Agreement for Phase II, the Transportation Enhancement Memorandum of Understanding, a modified CID support letter, and the Roundabout Maintenance Agreement.

3. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Morgan to approve the Project Framework Agreement for Phase II, the Transportation Enhancement Memorandum of Understanding, a modified CID support letter, and the Roundabout Maintenance Agreement for Highway 278 CID improvements Phase II.

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

Council member Baggett stated she is not comfortable with decreased County support of project and decreased timeframe given to make a decision. Council member Baggett requested a work session/called meeting scheduled later in the week for more clarification and a final vote.

4. Motion made by Council member Baggett, seconded by Council member Henderson to hold a work session and called meeting of Council on October 19, 2022 at 6:00 PM.

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

5. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve adding "Discussion of approval of a resolution for 30-day moratorium associated with 92 land parcels" to the agenda.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve adding "Discussion of gas hedging load percentage" to the agenda.

Motion carried unanimously.

7. Motion made by Council member Baggett, seconded by Council member Keck to approve adding "Discussion of appointment to Newton County Board of Health" to the agenda.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Keck to approve adding "Discussion of emergency purchase of 911 Communications phone system" to the agenda.

Motion carried unanimously.

9. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Davis to approve a license to sell alcoholic beverages for **off-premises consumption** only for:

**Kroger # 214
Kwik Stop**

**3139 Hwy 278 NE
9199 Hwy 278**

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dwayne Mask and Mrs. Olivia Kedzierski displayed a video presentation of the 2022 Miracle League All-Star Game weekend in Murfreesboro, TN. Mr. Mask and Mrs. Kedzierski approached Council to seek financial support totaling \$25,000.00 for the 2024 Miracle League All-Star Game weekend hosted by the Newton County Recreation Department scheduled for October 4-6, 2024.

10. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Davis to table discussion of financial support totaling \$25,000.00 for the 2024 Miracle League All-Star Game weekend hosted by the Newton County Recreation Department scheduled for October 4-6, 2024 until the November 21, 2022 Council meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

A public hearing was held at 7:47 PM regarding a request to zone 7,859 square feet of parcel from NR-1 to NR-2 at 4181 Floyd Street. Planning and Zoning Director Marc Beechuk gave a detailed staff report. Mr. Gary Massey, property owner, was present to speak in favor of the request. Mr. Lee Durden of 4158 Floyd Street and Mr. Scott Barnett of 4136 Floyd Street were present to speak against request.

11. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Morgan to approve the zoning of 7,859 square feet of parcel from NR-1 to NR-2 at 4181 Floyd Street with the condition that minor plat submission and approval by Planning and Development occur before any construction begins on property.

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

A public hearing was held at 8:10 PM regarding a request by Council to remove a prohibition on rent for-gain in accessory structures in the NR-1 zoning district. Planning and Zoning Director Marc Beechuk gave background and staff report.

12. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Davis to approve **first** reading of an ordinance amending 16.20.020 - Accessory Uses with the condition of owner of property being required to reside in an on-site unit of property.

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

A public hearing was held at 8:17 PM regarding a request by Council to restrict the bringing forth of text amendments by anyone except Mayor or Council. Planning and Zoning Director Marc Beechuk gave staff report.

13. Motion made by Council member Henderson, seconded by Council member Baggett to approve **first** reading of an ordinance amending 16.12.040 - Amendments.

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

14. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Morgan, to table discussion of proposed Procurement Policy changes until the November 21, 2022 Council meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

15. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Morgan to approved lowest bid from Anderson Grading and Pipeline, LLC for the Linwood Aerial Sewer project to replace approximately 110 linear feet of areal sewer line, install 3 new support piers, and repair of minor erosion issues, in the amount of \$129,442.00.

Anderson Grading	\$ 129,442.00
Legacy Water Group	\$ 154,482.50
Site Engineering	\$ 289,230.00

Motion carried unanimously.

16. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Baggett to approve sole bid in the amount of \$19,900.00 from First Due for records management system requested by Covington Fire Department. This includes a budget amendment resolution increasing systems development maintenance account by \$19,900.00.00 and decreasing contingencies account by \$19,900.00, and is contingent on City Attorney Frank Turner, Jr. approving contract.

Motion carried unanimously.

17. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Keck to approve lowest bid from Mason Tractor in the amount of \$24,000.00 for a mulching cutter head requested by the Transportation Department.

Bobcat of Atlanta	\$30,488.74
Mason Tractor	\$24,000.00
Technology International	Option 1 \$34,600.00 Gordini Model-TFF160 Option 2 \$39,050.00 Seppi Model-CL150

Motion carried unanimously.

18. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve a resolution for a 30-day moratorium associated with 92 land parcels.

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

19. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Baggett to approve adding 40% gas hedging load percentage to previously approved 50% max, increasing max percentage to 90%.

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

20. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Keck to approve re-appointment of Liz Pope-Sullivan to the Newton County Board of Health.

Motion carried unanimously.

21. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Baggett to approve sole bid from Ryan Public Safety Systems in the amount of \$356,610.14 for replacement and purchase of 911 Communications phone system.

Motion carried unanimously.

Rev. Avis Williams and Ms. Cheryl Henderson-Williams discussed concern regarding two recent drive-by shootings in the Sandhill area, as well as two locked-up bulldogs fighting. Rev. Williams has discussed concern with Police Chief Stacy Cotton and the Ministers Union, and she notified Animal Control regarding the fighting dogs. Rev. Williams and Ms. Henderson-Williams requested cameras to monitor neighborhood, if possible.

Patrol Captain Brent Fuesting stated 34 of 80 detection devices are installed and the remainder are to be installed after site survey and permits are complete. Captain Fuesting stated the installation should be complete and the cameras functioning in approximately 2 weeks. Captain Fuesting stated there are suspects and CPD is working diligently with Newton County Sherriff's Office to apprehend the criminals.

Mr. Michael D. Jamison requested to move forward immediately with use of Legion Field during Juneteenth weekend 2023. Mr. Jamison stated he has signed national acts for an event, but there is no signed contract with the City due to a hold on bookings.

Community Development Director Ken Malcom stated, per Council request, no commitments for bookings are permanent for 2023 until Council approves a revised event contract and ordinance as discussed at the September 28, 2022 Council Work Session. Mr. Malcom stated everything is prepared to present to Council regarding the contract and ordinance revisions at the November 7, 2022 Council meeting.

Council member Baggett stated Mr. Jamison will have to wait until contract revisions are complete and approved before signing with the City.

Mr. Dan Kratz stated there is heavy equipment 30 ft. from his home at Covington Place and he understands 59 rental properties are to be built behind his home. Mr. Kratz stated there was no notification given on the plans of the rental properties.

City Manager Tres Thomas stated Ashton Estates obtained a land disturbance permit, but there is question if the homes are rental homes.

Council member Floyd stated the paving at Linwood Drive is not feathered to driveways and filming companies are blocking several other driveways in town. Council member Floyd stated young drivers with loud mufflers are disturbing neighbors around the Welcome Center late at night and several individuals are throwing orange parking cones, and encouraged citizens to call 911 for disturbances. Council member Floyd asked for a printout of compensation the production companies are giving to the City for use of police equipment and vehicles.

Council member Baggett mentioned that there are issues with unlocked tossed cars. Council member Baggett reminded everyone to lockup at 9:00 PM every night, and that the City is expecting approximately 7,000 visitors October 21-23, 2022 for a Vampire Diaries convention. Council member Baggett asked citizens to be hospitable.

Community Development Director Ken Malcom stated that, along with the Vampire Diary Convention, Change the World Day is Saturday, October 22, 2022. Mr. Malcom stated much work was done to separate the timing of events and merchants of the Square have many promotional activities for visitors. Mr. Malcom stated the Square is to conduct a soft close at 4:00 PM and a complete closure at 6:00 PM. There is a ticketed event at Legion Field for the convention beginning at 6:00 PM. Mr. Malcom stated the museum has expanded and will be open to public, and the Square will reopen at midnight.

Council member Keck questioned if production filming on Friday nights is permitted.

Mayor Horton questioned Council if anyone is willing to serve on the Newton County Executive Committee Board for Newton County Tomorrow. Mayor Horton mentioned a flier given to him regarding Chevrolet dealers receiving electric vehicle chargers for the City.

Council Member Davis stated she is willing to serve on the Newton County Executive Committee Board for Newton County Tomorrow.

Being no further business meeting adjourned at 9:41 PM.

Steve Horton, Mayor

Audra M. Gutierrez, City Clerk