

**REGULAR MEETING, MAYOR AND COUNCIL, CITY OF COVINGTON, GEORGIA, COUNCIL ROOM, OCTOBER 16, 2023, 6:30 PM.**

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

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1. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Morgan to approve the minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on October 2, 2023.

Motion carried unanimously.

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Thelma Nolley of 3163 Stone Mountain Street stated it is not fair that a white supervisor cursed a black manager at the City and was not fired, that grants are received for only one side of the City, and that City employees got paid overtime to work weekends for work that can be done Monday through Friday, regarding a commode pickup.

Marcea Chapman of 7133 Turner Lake Circle stated she has resided at the Rainbow Homeless Shelter for the past three months and was told to leave with her children for no reason by Pastor Clara Lett. Ms. Chapman further stated the living conditions are awful with bed bugs, mold, and mildew. Ms. Chapman stated she has been refused copies of signed documents by Pastor Lett and was told the Sherriff's office would be removing her if she did not leave. Ms. Chapman further stated she had nowhere to go, and she has tried to speak with the shelter's Board with no help. City Attorney Frank Turner Jr. stated Code Enforcement is looking into the living conditions, and the City cannot intervene with the landlord situation involving the Housing Authority and Pastor Lett.

Makala Hammons of 7133 Turner Lake Circle stated she was told to leave the homeless shelter after residing nine days there for not following rules by using foul language and not having five hundred dollars in rent. Ms. Hammons further stated someone stole from her at the shelter and she was not able to meet the rent. Ms. Hammons stated there was blood and a roach found in her bedding as well.

Council member Baggett left meeting at 6:51 PM.

Felencia Ferguson of 10194 Azalea Drive stated she lives in Covington Place and the amount of noise and traffic on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Ave/Covington Bypass Road is ridiculous, and another eight hundred homes added to the congestion is not feasible. Ms. Ferguson further stated she did not move to a small town to live by a busy, congested highway. Ms. Ferguson stated she would like to know a plan to preserve the quality of life for residents living near the Covington Bypass.

Denise Williams, P.O. Box 1442, stated there are many issues at the homeless shelter, and Pastor Lett tells others she receives no assistance from either the City or County in regards to funding the shelter. Ms. Williams further stated a recording of Pastor Lett yelling at residents was forwarded to several citizens, and she has assisted another resident that has been told to leave the shelter.

Council member Baggett returned to meeting at 7:00 PM.

Council member Henderson left meeting at 7:01 PM.

Amanda Caler of 10107 Azalea Drive stated she lives in Covington Place and works at the Ford dealership on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Ave/Covington Bypass Road.

Council member Henderson returned to meeting at 7:02 PM.

Mrs. Caler stated no one can exit the neighborhood in either direction onto the Bypass Road, and there has to be a plan for traffic congestion before any more development occurs. Mrs. Caler further stated residents are considering moving.

Amber Colley of 9185 Golfview Lane stated the lack of emergency services should be considered before adding more density, especially on the Covington Bypass Road.

Joanne Cartey of 10191 Azalea Drive stated her yard is extremely close to the Covington Bypass and the noise is unbelievable. Ms. Cartey further stated she moved from New Jersey and the increase in density that is being proposed along with what is already a highly condensed traffic area reminds her of living by the airport.

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

<b>El Chaparro Tex Mex Cantina dba El Chaparro</b>	<b>6193 Hwy 278</b>
<b>HanBaoBao Inc. dba Nagoya Japanese Steakhouse</b>	<b>1065 Access Road</b>
<b>TWINSO Enterprises LLC dba The Social Goat Tavern</b>	<b>1115 Church Street</b>
<b>Local Coffeehouse and Study Lounge LLC dba @local</b>	<b>1109 Church Street</b>

Motion carried unanimously.

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3. 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:

**Quiktrip Corporation dba Quiktrip #821**  
**Quiktrip Corporation dba Quiktrip #798**  
**Quiktrip Corporation dba Quiktrip #1739**

**11124 Hwy 142**  
**3214 Hwy 278**  
**10900 Town Center Dr.**

Motion carried unanimously.

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A public hearing was held at 7:17 PM regarding a SUP request for an automotive repair (window tinting) business at 7187 Washington Street Ste H. Interim Planning and Zoning Director Renee Criswell gave staff report and recommendation from the Planning Commission. Mr. Cameron Walker of 165 Trelawney Lane was present to speak in favor.

4. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Floyd to approve a SUP request for an automotive repair (window tinting) business at 7187 Washington Street Ste H, with conditions:

- Abide by all referenced ordinances under Section 16.20.100 for Automotive Repair and Maintenance
- Abide by all referenced ordinances under Section 16.20.500 Outdoor storage
- Should request be approved, all ordinances supplemented use standards pertaining violation and subject to penalties found under Chapter 1.12 of the Covington Code of Ordinance
- All window tinting operations must take place within the existing enclosed bay

Motion carried unanimously.

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A public hearing was held at 7:26 PM regarding a request for rezoning of tax parcels C061029A and C061029B, 8185 Old City Pond Road and Old City Pond Road, from M1 (Light Industrial) to M2 zoning (Heavy Industrial), for Equipment Rental Business, as well as an amendment of the FLU from COM (Commercial) to IND (Industrial) on parcel C061029A. Interim Planning and Zoning Director Renee Criswell gave staff report and recommendation from Planning Commission. Mr. John Nix of 945 Bank Street Conyers, GA 30012 and Jared Lucas with Yancey Brothers Equipment Rental of 503 W Pharr Road Decatur, GA 30030 were present to speak in favor.

5. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve request for rezoning of tax parcels C061029A and C061029B, 8185 Old City Pond Road and Old City Pond Road, from M1 (Light Industrial) to M2 zoning (Heavy

Industrial) for a Equipment Rental Business, as well as amending the FLU designation from COM (Commercial) to IND (Industrial) on parcel C061029A, to include all conditions recommended by staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

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A public hearing was held at 7:39 PM regarding a SUP request for a Mixed Use development at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Ave/Covington Bypass Road for tax parcels C082005B and C082005 by Neely Farms, LLC. Interim Planning and Zoning Director Renee Criswell gave staff report and recommendations from Planning Commission. Mr. Chris Folgman of 4306 Jack's Creek Road Monroe, GA 30056 was present to speak in favor. Mr. Warren H. Liem of 10184 Malcolm Drive, Mrs. Felencia Ferguson of 10194 Azalea Drive, Mr. Matt Crowe of 843 Cornish Mountain Creek Oxford, GA 30054, and Mrs. Amber Colley of 9185 Golfview Lane were present to speak against.

6. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Keck to **deny** a request for a SUP for a Mixed Use development at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Ave/Covington Bypass Road for tax parcels C082005B and C082005 by Neely Farms, LLC.

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

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Mayor Horton called for a recess at 8:10 PM.

Mayor Horton called meeting back to order at 8:19 PM.

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A public hearing was held at 8:25 PM regarding a SUP request for Single Family Attached Townhomes at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Ave/Covington Bypass Road, tax parcel C082005C, by Neely Farms, LLC. Interim Planning and Zoning Director Renee Criswell gave staff report and recommendation from Planning Commission. Mr. Chris Folgman of 4306 Jack's Creek Road Monroe, GA 30056, Mr. Sam Hay of 2141 Emory Street, and Joshua Scoggins legal representation for developer were present to speak in favor.

7. Motion made by Council member Morgan to approve a SUP request for Single Family Attached Townhomes at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Ave/Covington Bypass Road, tax parcel C082005C, by Neely Farms, LLC.

Motion **dies** for lack of second.

8. Motion made by Council member Baggett, seconded by Council member Keck to **deny** a SUP request for Single Family Attached Townhomes at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Ave/Covington Bypass Road, tax parcel C082005C, by Neely Farms, LLC.

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

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9. Motion made by Council member Davis, seconded by Council member Morgan to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the revised Emory Street/SR 81 Bridge Replacement Natural Gas Contract PI No.: 0013751 with GDOT, with accompanying resolution.

Motion carried unanimously.

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10. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Henderson to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the revised Emory Street/SR 81 Bridge Replacement Water and Sewer Relocation Contract PI No.: 0013751 with GDOT, with accompanying resolution.

Motion carried unanimously.

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11. Motion made by Council member Morgan, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve the best bid from RDJE Inc. for the Sanitary Sewer Brick Manhole Rehab/Replacement project, not to exceed budgeted \$1,500,000.00 for project.

ENG	RCM Utilities	GCU	MME	RDJE Inc.
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Motion carried unanimously.

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12. Motion made by Council member Keck, seconded by Council member Henderson to approve a 90-day extension for the Special Event Resolution in the Downtown Entertainment District.

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

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13. Motion made by Council member Floyd, seconded by Council member Morgan to approve adding a new position in the Telecommunications Department, a

Telecommunications Technical & Communications Specialist, along with accompanying budget amendment resolution.

Motion carried unanimously.

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Comments from the City Manager:

- Community Development department has presentation to bring to Council in a future work session
- Tuesday, October 24, 2023 from 5:30 PM- 7:30 PM at Legion Field public information meeting regarding the Turner Lake Widening Project to be held

Deputy City Manager John King stated City of Covington is officially GICH (Government Initiative for Community Housing) alumni after four years.

Council member Henderson questioned if Pastor Lett submitted a bid for the warming shelter.

City Manager Tres Thomas stated the RFP is due next week.

Council member Floyd stated he was disappointed the results of the health insurance RFP will not be submitted to Council until January 16, 2024, when a new Mayor and Council is seated.

Council member Davis asked for an update on the Dinah Pace Water main project and the RFP submissions for the warming shelter.

Council member Baggett stated there were three homeless women at the meeting and she will make sure they are looked after until something is figured out with the homeless shelter, which is a mess. Council member Baggett stated the ballots are messed up and provisional ballots may need to be asked for when voting.

Council member Keck stated the police have a fund to help with housing the homeless short-term and the City may need to work and collaborate with Pastor Lett to provide help. Council member Keck further stated to pay attention to the school tax question on the ballots. Council member Keck stated she understands the Neely Farms decision may go to court and something may still come of it, but hopefully another entrance can be added on Hwy 278.

Council member Baggett stated there is no security at the homeless shelter at night except for cameras, and is not sure why the City spent so much for security for the warming shelter in past years.

Mayor Horton stated everybody's issues are important, there should be no personal agendas in politics, and a work session is needed to discuss homelessness.

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Being no further business meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.

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Steve Horton, Mayor

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Audra M. Gutierrez, City Clerk