

Council Meeting
March 21, 2022

Members Present: Mayor Buddy Duke, members Terry McClain, Greg Paige, Walter Cowart, and Celestine Hayes. Councilman Jody Greene was absent.

Others Present: John Flythe, Rhonda Rowe, Tim Tanner, Chad Castleberry and several members of the public.

Invocation was given by Councilman McClain.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes: Councilman Paige made a motion to approve the minutes of March 7, 2022 as presented. Councilman Cowart seconded. Councilman McClain stated that he would like to add one correction. He stated that in Ms. Hayes' "letter for the record" presented at the last meeting, it indicated at the January 18, 2022 meeting he had said there could be up to 11 members on the Land Bank board. He doesn't think he made that statement and wanted to make this rebuttal a part of the record. There was no further discussion and after a call of the votes, all members voted in favor of accepting the minutes of March 7, 2022.

Housing Authority Appointment: The council was advised that Vivian Sharpe's appointment to the housing authority expires on March 21, 2022. The executive director had written that Ms. Sharpe has been a pleasure to work with and they hoped that she would accept another appointment. Councilman Paige made a motion to approve the reappointment of Ms. Sharpe. The term will end on March 21, 2027. Councilman McClain seconded with all in favor.

Res. #22-03: This resolution, authorizing the execution, delivery and performance of an intergovernmental agreement among the City of Adel, Barnesville, City of Forsyth, City of Monticello, Jackson, City of Sylvania, City of Fitzgerald and Fitzgerald Water, Light & Bond Commission to provide electric service to a premises in Fitzgerald, Georgia, was presented to the council. City Manager John Flythe stated this is basically the same agreement the 7 cities signed when we entered into the agreement for Blockstream located in Adel. Blockstream is expanding its operation to include a new premise in Fitzgerald. Likewise, all 7 participants will share in the revenues and expenses of providing electrical service to the premise in Fitzgerald. Councilman McClain made a motion to adopt the resolution. Councilman Paige seconded. All voted in favor with the exception of Councilwoman Hayes, who cast an opposing vote.

Salaries of Elected Officials Discussion: The council was advised that we have checked with the County and the annual salary of commissioners is now \$13,500 with an additional \$1,200 per year for the chairman. That was the last piece of information staff has been asked to obtain. It was noted that each of the members have also been provided with a list of those salaries for comparable MEAG cities. Councilman Cowart questioned with what is being paid now, on a percentage basis, for the council compared with the mayor, what percentage difference is that? His thoughts would be to do the \$13,500

for the city council with the Mayor getting a percentage above that. City Manager John Flythe noted for the benefit of the audience that any increase would not take effect until after 2023; after the next election. The city attorney noted there is a legal process that has to be followed when increasing salaries such as running an ad in the paper to give the public adequate notice before you can take a vote. Mr. Flythe noted there has not been a change to the salary of the mayor and council in over 30 years. Mayor Duke added the only change has been to the per diem to which they would now do away with and go to a straight salary amount that the council decides. Mrs. Hayes questioned doing away with the per diem. Mayor Duke explained the per diem is not reported on a W-2 and we need to get to a point where all the pay is reported on the W-2. Again, this will not take effect until January 2024. Altheia Paige asked if this would be included in the budget. Mr. Flythe replied it would be in the 2024 budget. Mr. Tanner, the city attorney, was not prepared to speak on the full process tonight since he was not aware this item was on the agenda. After a discussion, the council agreed for Mr. Tanner to review all the legal aspects and report his findings to the council at the next meeting.

Billing Update: The city manager reported that as of today the programmer was running a consumption report. This is the last step before processing a billing edit report. He also noted that an extraordinary number of calculations have been run as well. He asked the city clerk to report on her discussion today with a sister city that is in our same position. City Clerk Rhonda Rowe advised that city has produced one billing, just as we have. They have also been in discussions with an alternate vendor to take over their billing program; however, that particular vendor has declined for now, stating they would be interested in their business once they are further along with their current situation. Mayor Duke noted that hopefully we will have a bill sent out soon.

Response to Letter for the Record: City Manager John Flythe responded to Councilwoman Hayes' "letter for the Record" presented at the last meeting. He was contacted by several people after reading the article in the newspaper and wants to respond to that letter by stating the City of Adel has never received a bad result from the state on our water. He noted that testing is administered by the State, that division being the Environmental Protection Division. In Councilwoman Hayes' letter, it stated there were three incidents of maximum contamination violation. Those incidents were not in the City of Adel; they were in a mobile home park located outside the corporate limits of Adel. Additionally, the letter stated "also what was alarming to me is that a 2017 study found that Georgia is the lowest in the country for safe drinking water". Mr. Flythe advised regulations are promulgated for all states in the country. The state department comes down every quarter and does a complete testing of the water. We go out several times a month to check for bacteria. "We have not had a bad test, as far as I know, ever." Again, he thinks our water is excellent. If we had a problem, the state would do the same thing they do for treatment plants. They would issue an order, come down and issue certain requirements for you to do; they have not done that, period.

Main Street/Downtown Development Authority Request: The city has received a request from the Main Street and Downtown Development Authority to have a "farmer's market" in the summer on the property we purchased where the old Ace Hardware was located. They are looking at every 2 weeks during the summer; but at least twice per year. Mr. Flythe noted he does not see a problem, adding that we planted seed and grass is coming up. Councilman McClain made a motion to allow use of the lot for a farmer's market. Councilman Cowart seconded. There were no opposing votes.

Main Street Director: The city manager advised the council that Brandie Dame is no longer with us and we are currently advertising for the position. The main street board and downtown development authority will go through the applications, do interviews and send over a recommendation. That person reports to the city and is paid by the city. Their boss is the city but they also receive instruction from those boards, along with the mayor and council.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.

Rhonda P. Rowe, City Clerk

Luther L. Duke III, Mayor
