

Council Meeting
June 6, 2022

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

Others Present: John Flythe, Rhonda Rowe, Tim Tanner, Chad Castleberry, Randy Lane and 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 May 16, 2022 as presented. Councilman McClain seconded. Councilwoman Hayes wanted to clarify that she had not confirmed that we had advertised in the newspaper; she had not seen anything in the newspaper about a job fair. There were no further additions or deletions and all voted in favor to accept the minutes.

Alcohol License (Family Dollar Stores of Georgia, LLC): The council was advised of the receipt of an alcohol license application from Family Dollar Stores of Georgia, LLC. Fees have been paid and a background check did not contain a record of a criminal history on the applicant. Councilman Greene made a motion to approve the issuance of an alcohol license. Councilman Paige seconded. The decision was unanimous.

Res. #22-04: This resolution, authorizing the execution of the lease documents under GMA's direct leasing program for the knuckleboom truck that was ordered last year and received in May, was presented to the council. Councilman Cowart made a motion to approve the resolution. Councilman Paige seconded. All were in favor.

Sonny Jackson (The Jackson Event Center): Sonny Jackson appeared before the council to discuss the property located on E. 3rd Street between N. Poplar and N. Maple Streets. He would like to rehab the property for use as a convention & event center. He stated it should seat 250 people with tables and chairs included; removing tables and chairs it should hold 400 people. He would like to have a restaurant in one end. He assured the council it would not be a night club. Anytime there was a crowd of over 100 people, he will consult with the police chief to see if he wants extra security. He presented a drawing of the proposed building upon completion and stated he would like to start next month on the renovations. The building will have remote divider walls and will consist of more than 10,000 square feet. Councilwoman Hayes asked if the restaurant will be open daily? He advised he will be leasing it out for someone to do catering but he is hoping they will have it open daily. The name of the facility will be The Jackson Event Center. He hopes to have it completed by the middle of next year. He noted it would be well-lighted and is open for suggestions. He is asking for the council's support of this project. After a show of hands, all members indicated they are in favor of his project. He further noted the zoning is good and the only issue is a dilapidated house next door.

Utility Billing Discussion: City Manager John Flythe noted that another billing had been issued this past week. We are hoping to get another out within the next 2 to 3 weeks. He asked the council to think about the handling of penalties and reconnection fees on future billings. He stated that customers need to pay their bill within 30 days. After that, work out a payment arrangement on the balance. He did not think we want to impose any interest. He also reminded the council that we have a number of people in transition, meaning they have moved into a residence , stay a short time, and then move out of the community. He did note that we have social security numbers, etc. on those individuals so hopefully we will be able to collect on any such accounts left. When we get to the issuance of more than one billing within a 30 day period, we need to come up with a payment plan. Mayor Duke stated we need to think about it and possibly have a work session. The bottom line is the city is sending out bills that need to be paid but customers have got to show good faith effort in making payments. Mr. Flythe further stated that we are able to download and store meter readings so the information is there and recorded. The data is good; we may have had issues with the program itself, but the data is available. Councilman Cowart asked of there had been any problem with that side to which Mr. Flythe replied no, not outside of regular maintenance. He stated we have had problems getting new meters so we may have to make a change at some point in the future with that side. Mayor Duke asked the members to be thinking about a payment policy for customers.

Police Department Equipment: The city manager advised we will have a request to come before the council at a later meeting concerning equipment needed for certification purposes.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.

Rhonda P. Rowe, City Clerk

Luther L. Duke III, Mayor
