

CITY OF SYLVESTER, GEORGIA
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 101 N MAIN STREET
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2019, 7:00 P.M.



The Honorable William "Bill" Yearta, Mayor (present)
The Honorable Randy Hill, Ward 2, Mayor Pro Tem (present)
The Honorable Melvin Powell, Ward 1 Councilmember (present)
The Honorable Charles Jones, Ward 3 Councilmember (present)
The Honorable Larry Johnson, Ward 4 Councilmember (present)
John Hayes, City Manager; Carolyn Williams, City Clerk (present)
Kimberly Reid, City Attorney (present)

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

- 1) CALL TO ORDER: Mayor William Yearta**
- 2) INVOCATION GIVEN BY: Dr. Willie Mae Marlin**
- 3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

4) SPEAKER APPEARANCES

Mr. Paul Forgey, Executive Director of the Albany/Dougherty County Land Bank discussed land banks. A land bank is an entity created by a joint agreement between the City and the County it is in. Land banks hold land and are explicitly set-up to take delinquent property and extinguish back taxes as provided by state law. This tool allows acquisition of blighted property to be sold and put back into productive use. Original owners always has the right to reclaim property. Georgia passed a law that a Regional Land bank can be formed. Mayor Yearta thought this was a valuable tool that could get properties back on tax rolls.

Mr. Forgey stated that Downtown Sylvester is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. There are tax incentives for rehabilitating structures for commercial or residential use in a National Register District. There are areas he would suggest to be designated as Historic Districts which provides additional incentive for people to rehabilitate their homes.

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5) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- i) Council Meeting – August 19, 2019
- ii) Work Session – September 3, 2019

Councilman Hill moved to approve the minutes and was seconded by Councilman Jones – ***Motion Carries***

6) CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

- i) Event Permit – Block Party – Unity Baptist Church
- ii) Banking Resolution No: 2019-12

Councilman Johnson motioned to approve the Consent Agenda and it was seconded by Councilman Hill – ***Motion Carries***

DISCUSSION OF GENERAL BUSINESS ITEMS

7) MAIN STREET-KAREN SINGLETARY-PRESENTATION FROM WCHS CTA PROGRAM

Ms. Singletary presented a project from the WCHS CTA Program called the Bench Project. Main Street and the Bench Committee will market the idea to the public and ask for sponsors. The sponsors will have a plate placed on the back of the bench with an “in memory of” or “In Honor Of” depiction. The cost of the bench is \$675 which includes the plate and powder coating. Mayor Yearta invited all the members of the program and their parents to come down front. The students thanked the City for allowing them to be a part of this project, and how it is helping them to learn this valuable skill. Ms. Edwards recognized their instructor, Mr. Miller of SRTC, which allows dual- enrollment for the students. There was a replica of the proposed bench in the Council Room.

8) ADVANCE DISPOSAL – STEVE EDWARDS

Mr. Edwards came forth stating that he had been before the Council before and he was here for approval of the contract. Mr. Edwards noted that Advance was engaged in the community and did a good job. Mayor Yearta recommended Council move forward with the contract and reminded them of their support during the hurricane. There would be no cost increase the first year and the remaining term depended on the CPI. Advance seeks an annual 1-year contract with a renewable 90-day window.

Mayor Yearta moved to approve the Advance Disposal Contract and it was seconded by Councilman Johnson – ***Motion Carries***

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9) EVENT APPLICATION-GEORGIA PEANUT FESTIVAL ROAD BLOCK PERMIT/PARADE PERMIT
KAREN RACKLEY

Ms. Rackley remarked that this will be the 56th Annual Peanut Festival. She requests approval of the above permits, as they are the same as in past years. Ms. Rackley thanked the Council for their continued support.

Mr. Hill motioned to approve the permits and was seconded by Mr. Powell – ***Motion Carries***

10) CANCER PINK-OUT DAY – SHARON LYLES

Ms. Lyles addressed the Council for their support of the Cancer Pink-Out Day. Mr. Powell asked her in the future to request funds preferably in March before the budget talks begin. The event will be held the fourth Wednesday in October.

Mr. Powell motioned to approve the request for the requested \$2000 and it was seconded by Mr. Jones – ***Motion Carries***

11) DDA FUNDRAISER – JENNIFER BANN/KAREN SINGLETARY

Ms. Singletary is asking to have a Bike-A-Thon fundraiser November 12 to raise money for the many different things the DDA sponsors. Josh Bann, Accel Cycling Studio, presented a hand-out highlighting the different levels of sponsorship. He explained the teams, entry fees, credit card usage, costs, etc.

Mr. Johnson moved to approve the DDA Fundraiser to host a Bike-A-Thon and it was seconded by Mr. Hill – ***Motion Carries***

12) TELEVISED COUNCIL MEETINGS – COUNCILMAN POWELL

Mr. Powell would like for the Council Meetings and Work Sessions to be televised on our local channels so the public can be better informed.

Mr. Powell moved to televise Council Meetings and Work Sessions and was seconded by Mr. Jones

DISCUSSION: Mr. Johnson asked if there was a quote for this service, and was told the school will be performing the task of televising the meetings. Following discussion –
Motion Carries

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13) JW HOLLEY CONTRACT

Councilman Johnson would like clarity on some aspects of the contract and suggests that it goes back to the Work Session. Mayor Yearta favors going back to Work Session also for further review.

Mr. Johnson motioned to carry the JW Holley Contract back to the Work Session and was seconded by Mr. Jones – Mr. Hill **Opposed – Motion Carries**

14) ITEMS FROM:

CITY MANAGER

- Continue to have problems at Shipp Park and repeated 911 calls. Citizens now are asking for refunds. Asking City Attorney for input.
Attorney Reid: Ms. Reid suggested to document 911 calls being followed up on and not found credible. The damage to the Department not responding to the noise problem is very low. Put in the officer's report that neighbors state that there is not excessive noise. She will look at Ordinances to see if they address the situation. She suggests to discuss in Executive Session if there should be any action against the person making the 911 calls. Mayor Yearta indicated that there were issues at the Park not just to the renting of the building. He will talk with the City Manager and the PD about the situation. He would like a solution to the problem that would benefit the neighborhood and public safety.
- There may be potential problems with egress and ingress of the development on Hwy 82-will provide details later
- The inmate crew had an accident in Americus (out of county) and was operated by the guard. It was revealed that the usage of the vehicle was in conflict with the contract, and Terrell County will correct this procedure.
- We have options for Window Treatment and may be installed by next meeting
- Bids are going out for resurfacing of Kelly Street (LMIG)

CITY ATTORNEY

- Have followed-up with the Board of Elections and have not received any response.

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WARD – 1

- Mr. Powell wanted to know if the school will film meetings and events since they are taking over the Access Channel. Mr. Hayes noted that they will need training. Ms. Edwards explained that a few things need to be worked out regarding after hour events but she is confident it can be worked out. NTS cannot do the necessary training, so another source must be found. Mayor Yearta suggested that CNS of Thomasville could do the training. The original intent of the channel was for the school to be involved and with school activities. Mr. Powell replied that the public would like to know what is going on in City government. The station could be used as an information outlet.
- After attending the GMA Board Meeting, It is important to get involved in the Census so we may receive benefits from the Federal Government.
- GMA offers many services that we may take advantage of, that will lower our premiums. Would like staff to reach out to them in the future.

WARD – 2

- Mr. Hill is still getting complaints about dogs and he will touch base with BFHS

WARD – 3

- Mr. Jones wanted to know whether all benches would be replaced. Mr. Hayes said that the current benches will be repositioned in the parks, and the new benches put on the streets. There is a campaign in place for donors to purchase benches. An investment in downtown equals a return on investment. A salary study has been initiated to close disparities in wages.

Mr. Powell offered a motion to allow the City Manager and school to work together through sponsorship for the benches and it was seconded by Mr. Johnson – ***Motion Carries***

WARD – 4

- Mr. Johnson would like to see a bench at the Splash Park and 1 or 2 by the train
- Would like the JW Holley contract to come back to the Work Session, and possibly a 20-30 minute meeting before the Work Session for discussion.

MAYOR

- As follow-up from ECG, look at rate study to work PCA into rates, to help our higher usage customers

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- We need to be able to pay our employees
- Ensure all enterprise funds are contributing fairly, not just electric fund
- Need to assess the overall condition of the city, and make sure our services are covering our costs
- Make sure spending equals revenue, not using reserves
- Possible other revenue source could be internet to smaller businesses, and possibly residential. We may qualify for loans to explore broadband

Mayor Yearta motioned to convene an Executive Session to discuss potential litigation and possible land acquisition and was seconded by Mr. Jones- ***Motion Carries***

EXECUTIVE SESSION: 8:25

After discussion of potential litigation and property acquisition, no official action was proposed or taken and regular session reconvened.


REGULAR SESSION RECONVENED: 8:50

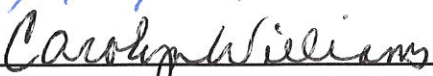
Mr. Powell moved to accept the minutes as read in Executive Session and was seconded by Mr. Hill – ***Motion Carries***

Mr. Powell motioned to adjourn and was seconded by Mr. Johnson-***Unanimous Consent, Motion Carries***

Mayor Yearta duly adjourned the meeting at 8:51 pm.





William Yearta, Mayor
Mayor Pro Tem


Carolyn Williams, City Clerk