



MINUTES
Cochran City Council
Tuesday, August 8, 2023
Regular Scheduled Meeting @ 7:00 PM

City Auditorium, 102 N Second Street, Cochran, GA 31014

Present: Mayor Billy Yeomans

Councilmembers: Gary Ates, Jimmy Jones, Andrew Lemmon, Carla Coley, Rufus Veal
City Attorney- Jim Elliott

Absent: Councilmember Keith Anderson

5 Councilmembers Present. One Councilmember Absent.

Call to order by Mayor Billy Yeomans @ 7:00PM

The invocation was given by Councilmember Ates and the Pledge led by Councilmember Coley.

Mayor asked for any corrections, additions or deletions to the August 8, 2023, agenda.

Councilmember Ates made the motion to accept the agenda with a second by Councilmember Lemmon. Motion passed 5/0.

Mayor asked if there were any corrections or questions to the July 11, 2023, minutes
Councilmember Jones made the motion to accept the 7/11/23 minutes as corrected with a second by
Councilmember Ates. Motion passed 5/0

- I. Call to Order by the Mayor**
- II. Invocation**
- III. Pledge of Allegiance**
- IV. Attendance**
- V. Adopt Agenda**

VI. Agenda Items

ITEM #1- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Employee of the quarter - Public Works. Willie Farrow, Public Works Director, presented Kenji White with the employee of the quarter.

ITEM #2- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Chamber of Commerce request to the City Council for approval of road closure downtown on N Second Street for Country Fest on Saturday, October 21. Staley Bell, Chamber of Commerce President, addressed the Council regarding closing portions of the road for Country Fest. Also, Mi Waters, Co-chair of Country Fest, is requesting Country Fest to be moved to the downtown area on 2nd Street. She is asking for Council approval to block off 2nd Street for the event. With the Council's approval, a letter could then be sent to DOT to request the road closure. Councilmember Coley made the motion to approve the road closure of downtown for Country Fest on October 21 with a second by Councilmember Veal. Motion passed 5/0.

ITEM #3- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Public Hearing and consideration on proposed abandonment of a portion of City rights-of-way on Taylor Drive.

Mayor called the Public Hearing to order @ 7:14pm.

This hearing was called to order to provide to consider the proposed abandonment of a portion of City rights – of – way on Taylor Dr. This is the northeast portion of Taylor Dr along the frontage of 5 lots owned by Woody Butts.

Public input:

City Clerk, Tracy B Jones, read a letter that was submitted to her by Donnie Dixon which was not able to attend the meeting. This letter addressed his concerns along with Terea Daniels, Sandy Boutwell, Diane Boutwell and Lucile Alligood. The letter was opposing the abandonment of the rights-of-way on Taylor Drive.

Connie Ryals & Elaine Barrs -101 Taylor Drive. Mrs. Ryals clarified the portion to be abandoned would not affect her mother who lives at 101 Taylor Drive. Mayor answered her – No, it would not. Joe Meadows showed Mrs. Ryals and Mrs. Barrs a map of the portion requesting to be abandoned.

Public Hearing closed at 7:24PM.

Mayor asked if any Council would like to express their concerns.

Councilmember Coley asked to treat this area like any multiple lot development and require Mr. Butts to adhere to standard development plans as if it were a small scale subdivision.

Mr. Butts stated he would do whatever is required.

City Engineer, Skip Layton, addressed the Council concerning the sewer lines, storm water and the topography of the lots.

Councilmember Jones made the motion to approve the abandonment of a portion of City's rights-of-ways on Taylor Drive with a second by Councilmember Ates. Motion passed 5/0.

ITEM #4- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Public Hearing and consideration of a variance request from P-2 Construction, LLC for 124 Village Circle (Parcel # A13-156 Lot # 54) which is a .23-acre parcel, to exceed the maximum lot coverage by .26%; and 128 Village Circle (Parcel # A13-156 Lot # 53), which is a .24-acre parcel to exceed the maximum lot coverage by .75%.

Mayor called the Public Hearing to order @ 7:31pm.

This hearing was called to order to provide to consider a variance request from P-2 Construction, LLC for 124 Village Circle (Parcel # A13-156 Lot # 54) which is a .23-acre parcel, to exceed the maximum lot coverage by .26%; and 128 Village Circle (Parcel # A13-156 Lot # 53), which is a .24-acre parcel to exceed the maximum lot coverage by .75%.

Mayor called for any public input.

Kevin and Lisa Wright - Village Circle. Mrs. Lisa and her husband expressed their concerns regarding the variance that is being requested. They are opposing this variance.

Jeffrey Dykes – 179 Village Circle- Mr. Dykes expressed his opinion in favor of the variance.

Jill Fisher – 153 Village Circle – Expressed her disappointment in the development of Village Circle.

Chris Coley- 135 Janet Drive – He expressed his concerns regarding the issues with Village Circle and within the City.

Jack Tucker – Sister Jill Fisher lives in Village Circle – Expressed his concerns regarding the construction of the houses in Village Circle.

Mayor closed Public Hearing @ 7:50PM.

A Councilmember discussion was held regarding the variance requested and the potential violations in the Village Circle community.

Mark Moore, Paul Cribbs Attorney, stated he was unaware if Mr. Cribbs was aware of the ordinances at the time, he submitted plans for construction which were approved by the County. Mr. Cribbs did not intend to violate any ordinance.

Mayor asked for a motion to grant variance. No motion was made. No action taken.

ITEM #5- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Public Hearing and consideration of a variance request from Red Coal Properties, LLC for 112 Village Circle (Parcel # A13-156A Lot # 57), which is a .23-acre parcel that will exceed the maximum lot coverage by 1.39%.

Mayor called the Public Hearing to order at 8:05PM.

This Public Hearing is called to consider a variance request from Red Coal Properties, LLC for 112 Village Circle (Parcel # A13-156A Lot # 57), which is a .23-acre parcel that will exceed the maximum lot coverage by 1.39%.

Mayor called for any public input.

Jill Fisher – 153 Village Circle – Expressed her concerns regarding the construction of houses on Village Circle.

Public Hearing closed @ 8:11pm.

Mayor called for a motion. No motion was made. No action was taken.

ITEM #6- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Public Hearing and consideration of variance requests from Crown Jules Construction LLC for 106 Village Circle (Parcel # A13-156 Lot # 59), which is a .23-acre parcel that will exceed the maximum lot coverage by .39%; and 108 Village Circle (Parcel # A13-156A Lot #58), which is a .23-acre parcel that will exceed the maximum lot coverage by .36%.

Mayor called the Public Hearing to order at 8:15pm.

This Public Hearing is called to consider a variance request from Crown Jules Construction LLC for 106 Village Circle (Parcel # A13-156 Lot # 59), which is a .23-acre parcel that will exceed the maximum lot coverage by .39%; and 108 Village Circle (Parcel # A13-156A Lot #58), which is a .23-acre parcel that will exceed the maximum lot coverage by .36%.

Mayor called for public input.

Public Hearing closed at 8:18PM.

Mayor called for a motion. No motion was made. No action was taken.

ITEM #7- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Public Hearing and consideration of a variance request from Crown Jules Construction LLC for 106 Village Circle (Parcel # A13-156 Lot # 59), which is a .23-acre parcel, to adjust the northeast-side setback from the required 10 feet to 8.1 feet at the front of the parcel and 8.3 feet at the back of the parcel.

Public Hearing was called to order at 8:17pm.

This Public Hearing is called to order to consider variance request from Crown Jules Construction LLC for 106 Village Circle (Parcel # A13-156 Lot # 59), which is a .23-acre parcel, to adjust the northeast-side setback from the required 10 feet to 8.1 feet at the front of the parcel and 8.3 feet at the back of the parcel.

Mayor called for public input.

Joe Kelley – 163 Lucas Rd – Expressed his concerns about how the construction took place and the remedy for the violations not to take place in the future.

Lisa Wright – Village Circle – She expressed her frustrations of the construction on the houses and the county inspector not coming to inspect the houses.

Joe Meadows asked about the zoning of the lots in the subdivision at Village Circle.

Public Hearing closed @ 8:30pm.

Mayor called for a motion. No motion was made. No action was taken.

ITEM #8- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Consider approving the application of a permit to Georgia DOT for a proposed school zone with school flashers on Ga. Hwy. 26 in front of the Primary School. Bleckely County Primary School has requested East Dykes Street, in front of the primary school, to become a school safety zone by placing speed flashers installed. GDOT has approved this permit, subject to the City Council’s approval. A discussion about having solar instead of the big electrical boxes took place. The inquiry about solar options will be discussed with the GDOT office in Tennell GA. The Council can approve the consideration up to \$10,543. Jons made a motion to approve the application of a permit to GA DOT for safer school zone in the amount up to \$10,543 with a second by Councilmember Lemmon. Motion passed 5/0

ITEM #9- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern

Consider approving an updated budget for the City Park. The city received a grant by the Governor’s office of Planning and Budget in the amount of 1,155,000 for the City Park. The Council is asked to allocate \$217,000 to the City Park project. Skip Layton, City Engineer submitted a revised layout of the park. The park plan has been scaled down to cut costs. Councilmember Coley made the motion to allocate \$217,000 from City ARPA account toward the city park project with a second by Councilmember Veal. Motion passed. 5/0.
Councilmember Coley made a motion to approve the total budget of the park as presented with a second by Councilmember Veal. Motion Passed 5/0.

Announcement of Upcoming Meetings and Events

City Manager – Community in schools meeting; 8/24/23 Mayor and Council invited.

Pay plan still under review by the Regional Commission.

City Clerk: Election qualifying City Council - August 21 -25, 2023

City Attorney – None

Council Discussion Items:

District 1

Anderson- Absent

Ates -NONE

District 2

Coley – NONE

Veal – NONE

District 3

Jones – NONE

Lemmon – NONE

Mayor Comments

Thanked everyone for coming. Take care of your neighbor. Encouraged to stay hydrated. He mentioned qualifying and inquiries of the liquor licensing.

Public Comments (Please note that every individual who signs up to speak prior to the meeting will be given a total of 3 minutes to address the Mayor and Council.)

John Crowe – 118 Dykes Street (Business) Expressed his issues with his bill increasing after his services have been discontinued and no longer being used. Richard stated he would look into this issue.

Chris Coley – 135 Janet Drive – Expressed his concerns about the City paying for the pedestrian pathway in the county and increase in fire fighter salaries.

Vanesa Sanders -106 Janet Drive – Expressed her concerns about being notified if there is an emergency or any information that needs to be sent out to citizens. She stated a text message system would be sufficient.

Jospeh Kelley – Lucas Road – Expressed his concern about the Christmas Parade not being televised now. Concerned about the lack of economic interest in the City of Cochran.

Motion to adjourn the meeting @ 9:20PM.

(SEAL)

Tracy B Jones
City Clerk