



**MINUTES**  
**Cochran City Council**  
**Tuesday, December 12, 2017**  
**Regular Meeting @ 7:00 PM**

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*Community House located at 192 South Third Street, Cochran, GA 31014*

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Present: Mayor Gary Ates, Mayor Pro Tem Andrew Lemmon, Councilmembers Regina Gooch, Keith Anderson, Charles Cranford, Jon Thrower & Fleming Gilman

Call to order by Mayor Gary Ates @7:00PM

The invocation was given by Mayor Gary Ates followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilmember Jon Thrower.

Councilmember Jon Thrower made a motion and Mayor Pro Tem Andrew Lemmon seconded the motion to approve the Agenda for December 12, 2017 meeting and to approve the November 14, 2017 minutes. Motion passed unanimously with all voting in favor. 6-0

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- 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**

Proclamation of appreciation to Mayor Gary Ates for his service on the Cochran City Council. City Manager read proclamation honoring Mayor Gary Ates. Mayor Pro Tem Andrew Lemmon presented Mayor Ates with a plaque honoring him and thanking him for his time served on the City of Cochran Council as a Councilmember and as Mayor. Motion was made to adopt the Proclamation to honor Mayor Gary Ates by Councilmember Jon Thrower with Councilmember Regina Gooch seconded the motion. Motion was passed with all voting in favor 6-0.

### **ITEM #2 – Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern**

Proclamation of appreciation to Councilman Charles Cranford for his years of service on the Cochran City Council. City Manager, Richard Newbern, read proclamation honoring Councilmember Charles Cranford. Mayor Gary Ates presented Councilmember Cranford with a plaque honoring him and thanking him for his time served on the City of Cochran Council.

### **ITEM # 3 – Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern**

State Senator Larry Walker (R-District 20) discusses issues related to the 2018 legislative session at the State Capitol. Mr. Walker gave an update on the 2018 legislative and how he has worked with many cities to get them grant money they needed to make extensive improvements. He touched on the traffic flow of cargo through Bleckley County and how industries had the opportunity to grow in our area. Mr. Walker stated he was very excited about working hand in hand with Cochran to help make things happen.

### **ITEM # 4- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern**

Introduction of Mr. Scott Cox, Georgia Power Company Regional Supervisor for the Cochran area. Mr. Cox worked with GA transmission for 17 years and now he is the Area Manager for the Southeast Region with GA Power. Mr. Cox gave an update on the closing of the office in Cochran and soon will close the office in Hawkinsville. He stated the services will not be effected by the closings. He expressed how grateful and excited he was to be a part of the Cochran/Bleckley County community and how he was eager to work with and serve each and every citizen.

### **ITEM # 5 - Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern**

Public Hearing on abandonment of Holland Lane near East Dykes St. and abandonment of a portion of Bollinger Lane. Mrs. Gwendolyn Arnold stud before Council and stated each of the property owners were in agreement to the lane closure. None were opposed. Several Councilmembers questioned what the lane's current name was and what it was prior. Mrs.

Arnold detected it was Harris Street Lane prior. Councilmember Jon Thrower made the motion to abandoned Holland Lane near East Dykes St a portion of Bollinger Lane. Councilmember Regina Gooch seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

**ITEM # 6 - Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern**

Consider award of contract to Georgia Two – Way in the amount of \$ 19,900.00 for installation of Public Safety Antennas. Funds will come from general funds and SPLOST. Fire Chief Kevin Noles addressed the Council with the project of the antennas. He stated the money was allocated in Fire budget and Police budget to take care of their share of \$5,000.00 each and the remaining balance will come from SPOLST. Three quotes were presented to Council and Chief Noles along with Chief Coley asked the Council to award the bidding to Georgia Two Way to erect the antennas. Councilmember Jon thrower made the motion to award contract to Georgia Two -Way in the amount of \$19,900.00 and the remaining balance come from SPOLST. Councilmember Charles Cranford seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

**ITEM #7 – Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern**

Consider approving vendor for State Law Firefighter Cancer Insurance HB 146. Fire Chief Kevin Noles provided Council with 3 quotes from Insurance Companies to cover all firemen with the State Law HB 146. This insurance will take effect January 1, 2018. He explained this was a budgeted item. Councilmember Jon Thrower made the motion to approve the vendor (GMA) for State Law Firefighter Cancer Insurance Policy HB 146. Mayor Pro Tem Andrew Lemmon seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

**ITEM #8 – Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern**

Consider appointment of new City Board Member at Cochran Bleckley Recreation Department to fill available seat January 2018. A recommendation of Chris Adams was made by Councilmember Jon Thrower. Councilmember Thrower stated he spoke with Mr. Adams and he is willing to accept the 5-year term of City Board Member at Cochran Bleckley Recreation Department that will take effect January 1, 2018. He stated he has children that are very active at the Recreation Complex and he would like the opportunity to fill the position. Councilmember Jon Thrower made the motion to appoint Chris Adams to serve the 5-year term as the City Board Member at the Cochran Bleckley Recreation Department with Mayor Pro Tem seconding the motion. Motion was passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

### **ITEM #9 – Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern**

Consider awarding bid for Crest Drive/10<sup>th</sup> Street Sewer Extension project to Pyles Plumbing and Utility Contractors, Inc in the amount \$356,806.57.

Project to be funded by GEFA Sewer Funds. Skip Layton, City Engineer, approached the Council explaining the bidding process. 3 bidders were present and the bids were opened one by one in their presence. The lowest bidder was Pyles Plumbing and Utility Contractors, Inc. The Council was asked to award the bid to Pyles Plumbing for this sewer project to be paid through GEFA Loan. Councilmember Fleming Gilman made the motion to award the bid to Pyles Plumbing and Utility Contractors, Inc. Councilmember Keith Anderson seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

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

- Mr. Freeman- Mr. Freeman expressed his frustrations about complaints of yards being messed up. He asked instead of being written up, could the Code Enforcement come by his home and talk with him. He stated he was a hardworking man and he cleaned his yard up as asked but now he is trying to help others get their yards in order.
- Catherin Guyton- Mrs. Guyton asked if there was a leash law for dogs in Cochran. Police Chief Coley replied there was. She stated she was upset because it was not being followed. She complained stray dogs of all sizes and cats as well, would come in her yard and mess up her yard. Mrs. Guyton questioned if the City still had Animal Control and Chief Coley answered yes. He stated he would talk to Mr. Miller about this situation and have him take care of it.
- Mike Story Mr. Stoy stated he over heard rumors around Cochran that the Council was planning on removing City Manager Richard Newbern and replacing him with Chris Coley. He asked were the rumors true? The Council answered Mr. Stoy, that this was a rumor and they were unaware of the talk around town. Mr. Stoy spoke on some unfinished business that needed to be handled concerning consolidation. He encouraged the Council to follow up on this action. He went on to elaborate on Council signing a resolution to turn all electronic devices off during the Council meetings.
- Gwendolyn Arnold- Mrs. Arnold approached Council with a few complaints about Code Enforcement in Cochran. She wants the City to have a protocol on threatening letters which are sent out to residents to clean up the yards and that their houses are condemned. Mayor Ates encouraged Mrs. Arnold to go by City Hall and talk with City Manager Richard Newbern about the issues she was experiencing.

### **VIII -City Manager Discussion/Items/Updates**

- Council Retreat – January 24-27, 2018 at Little Ocmulgee State Park in McRae
- November 28 – GICH team met
- Purchasing Ordinance – Attorney Still has this and is working on it
- LMIG Grant application to be filed by end of the month with State of GA DOT  
Mr. Newbern stated he needed a motion to apply for the annual LMIG Grant.  
Councilmember Jon Thrower made the motion to apply for LMIG grant with Mayor Pro Tem Andrew Lemmon seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

### **Finance Report-**

Tracey Hudson, Finance Administrator, provided the Council with a financial report of revenue, expense and SPLOST Summaries. She briefly summarized handout and opened the floor for questions. No one had questions at this time.

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATE:**

Provided Council with Monthly Report. Stated the fire department cleaned up a dilapidated house by burning it and doing fire training as well. He explained 59 fire fighters came from surrounding counties came out to participate in the training exercise.

### **POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATE:**

Provided Council with monthly report. He stated he budgeted for one new vehicle and would like to discuss the purchase in upcoming council meeting. The generator will be installed in January that was approved in October. The electrical company has had a delay in plans. The Police department was audited and they are in compliance. Chief Coley reported that the City had no burglaries in the month of December.

### **PUBLIC WORKS:**

Tony Darsey, Interim Public Works Director, provided Council with monthly report. Asked if anyone had questions; no questions were asked.

### **CODE ENFORCEMENT:**

Updated the Council on the fire training of the demolition of a dilapidated house. He stated he was proceeding to get more houses tested and approved to burn for training purposes for the Fire Department.

### **SKIP LAYTON:**

Skip Layton, City Engineer, provided Council with a monthly report on projects going on at this time. GEFA CWSRF 15-002, GEFA DWSRF 15-019, DWSRF 15-009, CDBG 2015, CDBG 2016, Cochran/Bleckley Recreation Complex, & Cochran Storm Drainage Improvements.

**CITY CLERK:** Mrs. Jones updated the Council about the new teleprompt that is in place if you call City Hall. Gave update on taxes. Taking taxes from 15, 16 and now 17. Staying very busy. Mentioned new employee, Lorna Hyde. Councilmember Jon Thrower thanked Mrs. Jones and the staff for fewer complaints about City Hall and the friendliness at the front.

### **There were no other department updates.**

#### **IX Council Discussion Items**

Each Councilmember took time to thank Mayor Ates and Councilmember Cranford for all the years each one served on City Council.

Councilmember Cranford asked Mr. Newbern for an update on the sewer project. Mr. Newbern stated he thought they were making progress but not sure of the status.

**Mayor Ates Thanked all the Councilmembers for being such a pleasure to work with for many years. He also thanked the Citizens of Cochran.**

#### **X Announcement of Upcoming Meetings and Events**

- Regularly Scheduled City Council Meeting – January 9,2018 @ 7:00 pm

Councilmember Thrower made the motion to go into executive session with Mayor Pro Tem Andrew Lemmon seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor 6-0. 8:53PM

Motion was made by Councilmember Charles Cranford to come out of Executive Session and back to regular session. Councilmember Gilman seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor 6-0. 11:05PM

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Andrew Lemmon to adjourn with Councilmember Keith Anderson seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor 6-0

**Adjourn @ 11:10PM**

(SEAL)

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Tracy B Jones  
City Clerk