



**MINUTES**  
**Cochran City Council**  
**Tuesday, December 12, 2023**  
**Regular Scheduled Meeting @ 7:00PM**

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

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Present: Mayor Billy Yeomans, Mayor Pro Tem Gary Ates  
Councilmembers: Keith Anderson, Andrew Lemmon Carla Coley Rufus Veal  
City Attorney: Jim Elliott – Absent  
Absent: Councilmember Jimmy Jones

Call to order by Mayor Billy Yeomans @ 6:58PM

The invocation was given by Councilmember Andreson.  
The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Veal.

Mayor asked for any corrections, additions, or deletions to the December 12, 2023 agenda. Councilmember Coley made the motion to add two (2) items to the agenda - Item #11 – Vote on committee to discuss SPLOST with county official, Item #12 – Paving of Berkley Road with SPLOST funds. A second was made by Councilmember Veal. Motion passed. 5/0.  
Councilmember Lemmon made the motion to accept the agenda with changes and a second by Councilmember Coley. Motion passed 5/0

Mayor asked if there were any corrections or questions to the November 14, 2023 minutes. Councilmember Ates made the motion to approve the 11/14/23 minutes with Councilmember Lemmon seconding. Motion passed 5/0

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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**

Employee of the Quarter – Police Chief, Trawick presented Officer Willie Inman with the employee of the quarter to show appreciation of his commitment to the City of Cochran.

Mayor Yeomans presented Councilmember Veal with a plaque to show appreciation of his service to the City Council.

Mayor Yeomans introduced the new appointed Chamber of Commerce President, Melissa Barker.

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

Consider appointing a member of the Planning Commission to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Ray Knighton. A brief discussion between the council concerning the wording of the motion and the language of the planning commission and the intent. Councilmember Coley made the motion to accept the recommendation from the Planning Commission, Leigh Anne Taylor, to fill the vacancy left by Ray Knighton with a second by Councilmember Anderson. Motion passed 5/0.

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

Consider amending the FY 2023/24 budget to allocate matching funds for the 2023 CDBG grant award. The council approved the 2023 CDBG award at the November meeting. \$60,000 of the match is expected to be spent between now and June 30 to cover the led removal and grant administration.

A motion will need to include “amend by ordinance FY 2024 budget for the CDBG grant”. Councilmember Ates made the motion to amend the FY 23/24 to allocate matching funds for the 2023 CDBG grant with a second by Councilmember Anderson. Yes (4)- Ates, Anderson, Coley, Lemmon. No(1) – Veal. 4/1. Motion passed.

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

Consider allocating funds from the City’s ARPA budget to help finance the rehabilitation costs of the CHIP-financed home improvements at 175 Johnson Street. This is the last house to be rehabilitated in the 2021 CHIP program. It is estimated to cost more than what is in the CHIP budget. Council authorizes the amendment to move the ARPA money to the CHIP funds so the City will have confidence to bid out the remaining home improvements. A discussion was held between the Council and City Manager. Councilmember Anderson made the motion to allocate funds from the City’s ARPA budget to help finance the rehabilitation costs of the CHIP-financed home improvements at 175 Johnson Street with a second by Councilmember Ates. Yes (3) – Anderson, Ates, Lemmon. No (2) – Coley, Veal. 3/2 Motion passes.

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

Consider approving the City Holiday Schedule of Calendar Year 2024. Council was asked to approve the suggested Holiday schedule. Councilmember Veal suggested to add Juneteenth to the 2024 holiday schedule. Councilmember Ates made the motion to approve the 2024 holiday schedule with the addition of Juneteenth with a second by Councilmember Veal. Motion passed. 5/0.

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

Consider approving proposed speed bumps on Jessup Street. Councilmember Veal submitted a petition to add three speed bumps/calming devices on Jessup Street. The Police Chief, Fire Chief and Public Works Director reviewed documentation, and all are in favor of the speed bumps. Councilmember Anderson made the motion to approve the proposed speed bumps on Jessup with a second by Councilmember Veal. Motion passed 5/0.

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

Consider setting program regulations for the City's ARPA-funded roof, windows, and doors program. There are 9 elements to the program in which Richard, City Manager, explained.

Mayor suggested to the Council to take the documents given and study the information and bring the item back to the January Work Session. All Councilmembers agreed.

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

Consider the purchase of a pick-up truck in the Public Works Department. Public Works Director, Willie Farrow, addressed the Council with the necessary purchasing information. This will be purchased with SPLOST funds and also was on the PW five year plan. Councilmember Ates made the motion to approve the purchase of the pickup truck with a second by Councilmember Lemmon. Motion passed 5/0.

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

Consider approving the Language Access Plan (L.A.P.) that is a requirements of the City's 2023 CDBG project. This is a federal requirement of the CDBG program. The L.A.P. must be approved by the Council. City Attorney reviewed the documents and approved it. Councilmember Anderson made the motion to approve the L.A.P. with a second by Councilmen Ates. Motion passed 5/0.

**ITEM #10- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern**

Consider approving a contract with Dependable Home Inspections from Thomas, GA to perform inspections of houses eligible for the 2024 CDBG grant application. A suggestion was made by Councilmember Coley to use local contractors and building inspectors. City selected the contractor and building inspector by the recommendation of Rhonda Gilbert. Councilmember Ates made the motion to approve the contract with Dependable Home Inspectors from Thomas, GA with a second by Councilmember Anderson. Yes (3)– Ates, Anderson, Lemmon. No (2) – Coley, Veal. Motion passed 3/2

**ITEM #11- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern**

Consider approving a Councilmember committee selected by Mayor Yeomans, to negotiate SPLOST funds with the County. Councilmember Veal made the motion to nominate Councilmembers Coley, Ates, and upcoming councilmember who will be sworn in at the January meeting, Savant along with the City Manager with a second by Councilmember Coley. Motion passed 5/0.

**ITEM #12- Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern**

Consider approving paving the remaining section of Berkley Road with SPLOST funds. Councilmember Coley made the motion to approve the paving with a second by Councilmember Ates. Motion passed. 5/0.

**City Manager –**

- **DOT – Sidewalk North Ash to bypass to City Park.**
- **RELEAF Grant – Not selected at this time.**
- **GRANT pending – Walking Trail/ playground at Willie Basby Park**
- **Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas**
- **Christmas Parades– Thanked City Clerk for all her hard work along with the Police, Fire and PW.**

**City Attorney – NONE**

**City Clerk –**

- **Swearing in Newley Elected Officials (Teddars & Savant)and current Elected Official (Ates) at the January meeting if desired**
- **Cities United update.**

**Council Discussion Items:**

**District 1**

**Anderson –** Thanked Veal and Jones for their service on Council. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

**Ates –** Thanked Veal and Jones for their service on Council. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all  
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**District 2**

**Coley –**Shout out to DDA/ Chamber for business after hours. Shout out to BC Schools again.

**Veal –** Appreciate working with all the Council. Addressed the water bill issue with a customer & CM.  
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**District 3**

**Jones –** Absent

**Lemmon –** NONE

**Mayor Comments**

- ✓ **A lot of sadness in the area, pray for our community.**
- ✓ **Stay Safe**
- ✓ **Thanked all City Workers**
- ✓ **Thanked Vannessa Sanders for feeding the needy during Thanksgiving.**
- ✓ **City Manager -Yearly review – Review committee – Anderson/Ates /Lemmon**

**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.)

- ✓ **Chris Coley** – 135 Janet Drive – Addressed concerns about how much money is asked to be spent on CHIP. Thanked Councilmember Veal for his service on Council.  
Mr. Coley stated there are two things’ people are concerned about in Cochran.  
1- Customer Service 2- Accountability.

Executive Session – Yes – Personnel Item/litigation.

Motion made by Councilmember Ates to go into executive session with a second by Councilmember Anderson. Motion Passed 5/0. 8.39PM.

8:43PM – Executive Session.

8:44PM - Regular Session – Motion by Councilmember Ates, with a second by Councilmember Coley.

Motion to adjourn by Councilmember Ates, with a second by Councilmember Anderson.

Motion passed. 5/0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45PM

(SEAL)

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Tracy B Jones  
City Clerk