



**MINUTES**  
**Cochran City Council**  
**July 13, 2021**  
**Regular Scheduled Meeting @ 7PM**

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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: Carla Coley, Keith Anderson, Jimmy Jones, Andrew Lemmon, Rufus Veal

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

The invocation was given by Councilmember Carla Coley followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilmember Anderson.

Mayor called for a motion to approve the June 8, 2021; agenda as presented.

Councilmember Lemmon made the motion to accept the agenda as presented with Councilmember Jones seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

Mayor called for a motion to approve the minutes from June 8, 2021. Mayor Pro Tem Ates made the motion to accept 6/8/21 minutes with Councilmember Lemmon seconding the motion.  
Motion passed 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**

Employee of the Month. Employee of the month was presented by Police Chief, Jeff Trawick. He presented a certification along with a \$100 check to Officer, Tyler Rewis.

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

Ms. Victoria Freney, LCSW, will present a community mental health initiative. Mrs. Freney with the Response Intervention Team gave her presentation to the Council and her ideas of the program she would like to see come to Cochran.

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

Consider approving GDOT contract for CRRSA Act Funding associated with Cochran Airport in Cochran, Georgia Jim Washburn with the Cochran Airport. Councilmember Jones made the motion to approve the resolution for CRRSA Act Funding Associated with Cochran Airport with Mayor Pro Tem Ates seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

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

Public Hearing and consideration of Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to allow Body Arts Studio/ Tattoo Establishment as a permitted use in DC, B1 and B2 Zoning Districts

Mayor called Public Hearing to order at 7:11PM.

This hearing was called to provide any interested parties with an opportunity to express their reviews or concerns in accordance with the appropriate section of the O.C.G.A. This Public Hearing is on the text amendment to Article 4 Section 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11 of the Zoning Ordinance to add Body Arts Studio/Tattoo establishment as a permitted use in the DC- Downtown Commercial, B-1 neighborhood Business and B-2 community business district. Notice of this hearing was placed on the city social media page, web page and the Time Journal Post.

Mayor Yeomans read the rules that would apply for those wishing to speak.

Actions that the Council could take:

1. DO nothing and table voting on this item for a later time if more information is needed
2. Approve a text amendment as a permitted use
3. Or choose to approve the Planning Commission recommendation that Body Art Studio allowed as conditional use.

Mayor Yeomans called for anyone in attendance who had public input for or against adding the Text Amendment to Article 4 section 4.9, 4.10, and 4.11 of the Zoning Ordinance to add Body Arts studio/ tattoo establishment as a permitted use.

Shawn Ratley, George Holland, Joanne Stallworth and Tammy Elizalde all spoke in favor of the Body Art Studio/tattoo establishment.

Public Hearing closed at @ 7:28PM.

Mayor asked Council if they had any questions for Owner Shawn Ratley. Veal asked Mr. Ratley out of the three options, which one would he want to be approved. Mr. Ratley responded, Permitted use. Mayor Pro Tem asked if the location would be downtown, and he stated yes. Councilmember Lemmon asked about the legal age for tattoos, and it is 18 years of age, Mr. Ratley stated.

Coley began with saying she spoke to other business downtown and they all stated they were excited about his business coming downtown and they were wanting him to be approved and not wait any longer.

Mayor Pro Tem stated he agreed that he didn't need to wait any longer and people should come and spend money in Cochran instead of other places.

Mayor called for a motion. Mayor Pro Tem made the motion to approve the text amendment to article 4 for Sections 4.9,4.10,4.11 of the Zoning Ordinance to add Body Art Studio/Tattoo establishment as a permitted use in the DC- downtown commercial, B-1 Neighborhood Business and B-2 Community Business districts with Veal seconding the motion. Motion passed 4-2.

4 Yes (Veal, Coley, Anderson, Ates)

2 No (Lemmon, Jones)

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

Consider award of LMIG bid for road segment resurfacing. This award will be for resurfacing several City Road segments with the 2021 LMIG funds. The LMIG formula grant received from the state is \$79,175.30. .84 miles will be resurfaced for \$100,000. Dykes Grassing was the sole bidder for the resurfacing project. Councilmember Jones made the motion to award the LMIG resurfacing to Dykes Grassing in the amount of \$100,000 with Councilmember Anderson seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

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

Consider approval of Communication Policy for Council. Council. A revised Communication policy was presented to Council, that was discussed at the June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. Councilmember Anderson made the motion to approve the communication policy with Councilmember Jones seconding the motion. 5-Yes (Coley, Anderson, Ates, Jones, Lemmon) and 1-No (Veal).

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

Consider approving speed bumps for W. Lewis Street and for Dinah Street. Council was asked to consider a speed bump in two different districts. District one and District two. Councilmember Veal asked Council to approve speed bump to be placed on Lewis and Councilmember Anderson asked for two to be placed at Dinah. Mayor Pro Tem made the motion to allow the speed bumps to be placed at the designated locations. Mary Pitts spoke up and asked could a speed bump be placed on Palm Street as well. Mayor Pro Tem withdrew his motion and made a different motion to approve the speed bumps at the locations requested with Councilmember Anderson seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

**Councilmember Jimmy Jones had to leave meeting.**

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

Consider a Resolution to file a 2021 Rural Zone Tax Credit application to benefit the Downtown Business District. This is another application for the city for the rural tax credit so the businesses can take advantage of tax credits for payroll and to add jobs and other upgrades or updates to their business. Councilmember Coley made the motion to approve the resolution to file a 2021 Rural Tax Credit Application with Mayor Pro Tem seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 5-0

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

Consider approving project documentation for the City's 2021 federal CHIP Housing Grant from Georgia DCA. Council was asked to approve the grant consultant contract amendment, the Resolution and documentation related to the City's new \$400,000 CHIP housing rehabilitation grant. The documents are needed to move ahead with this process. The city is wrapping up the \$300,000 CHIP project. Councilmember Coley inquired about the completion of the house and update on what has been done to the houses and when will they be completed. Mr. Newbern explained four of the houses have been completed, two remaining to be complete and still needs to close out. More internal rehabilitation on the other two house were required. Willie Farrow listed everything that was done to each house item by item. Most everything the building inspector noted was replaced so the house was brought to code. Councilmember Veal asked if before and after pictures were taken. Willie stated yes and he will provide them at the next Council meeting. Mr. Farrow also gave all addresses for each house that has been rehabilitated. Mayor Pro Tem Ates made the motion to approve documentation for the City's 2021 federal CHIP Housing Grant from GA DCA with Councilmember Lemmon seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor 5-0.

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

Consider designating two Planning Commissioners as serving four-year terms, and three as serving two-year terms. Council is asked to vote on the terms of the five planning Commissioners. The May Council meeting, the Council voted to stagger the terms of the Planning Commissioners, so the members will serve. Three members will serve the two-year terms and two members will serve four-year terms. Lane Purser and Russell Odom volunteered to be the members to serve the four-year terms and Ray Knighton, Debra Turner and Enda Allen will remain as two-year terms. Councilmember Anderson made the motion to approve 2 Planning Commissioners as serving four-year terms and the remaining three to serve two-year terms with Mayor Pro Tem Ates. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 5-0

**City Manager Updates:**

❖ **American Relief Act update II**

**Council Discussion Items:**

**District 1 (Anderson- 1. Thanked the community and the Police Dept, Sherriff's Dept, and all the volunteers that helped find the young lady and bring her home safe. 2. Attended Public Works Safety meeting, thanked Willie and his team, has been 365 since an accident. 3. Flag sales have increased, and it continues to grow. 400 plus flags in Cochran.**

**Ates- Thanked all the people who looked for the young lady and brought her home safe. He spoke about mental health and the individuals who presented information to Council. Mentioned the Public Works for no accident in 365 and suggested a bonus. Spoke on the shootings not only in our area, but all over and surrounding counties. Give an answer to the City Clerk about the Christmas Parade. Take care of our workers of the city.**

**District 2 (Veal/Coley)-Coley 1. Very impressed how the community came together to help find the young lady and how the surrounding agencies worked so well together. 2. BCHS Beta Show Choir received third in the nation. 3. Would like to see more sidewalk maintenance downtown and keep the weeds out of the sidewalks. She would like a regular schedule for maintenance for downtown.**

**Veal-None**

**District 3 (Jones None – Left Early)**

**Lemmon-None )-.**

Mayor reminded everyone about the change of the meeting for August. The meeting day has been moved to August 17 (third Tuesday of the month) due to Council being out of town for GMA Convention. Work Session is @ 5:30PM. Regular Session @ 7PM.

Mayor stated for everyone to stay safe. Mayor spoke on the shootings in town. He asked if anyone knows anything, tell someone. It will be confidential.

Be kind and check on neighbors. Thanked all City employees, and the Councilmembers for all their hard work and dedication to the City of Cochran. Facebook- If you can't say anything good about something don't say anything. Mayor was told about some negative comments posted about the young lady missing on Facebook.

Public Comments:

Edwin Peacock: 244 Crest Drive- Thank the City for Crest Drive Paving. The flags are amazing. Wish there was a way to keep the name plates facing forward so they can be read. The great job that is done at Cedar Hill Cemetery. It looks so good.

Mary Pitts: 110 Palm Street

Stated Richard was supposed to get back in touch with her about a location of a park. She wanted the Council to tell her what their thoughts were about a public park coming into the city. Councilmember Anderson stated a park would be a great idea, but there are a lot of different things as far as funding goes. He attended a meeting a couple of weeks ago. There has to be a certain amount of people living in the city to be able to qualify for a grant. He stated again it would be a great thing for everyone of all ages to have something to do. He will do more research on the idea. Mrs. Pitts stated she appreciated him for making an initiative to look into a park. Some people she said does not want a park for various reasons. She asked Councilmember Lemmon about a park coming to Cochran. He stated he will give his thoughts on that at a later time. She asked Councilmember Coley what her thoughts were. She stated she felt the same as she did before about a park. Councilmember stated she wished a landowner would donate a piece of property to get started. Mrs. Pitts stated she was not going to give up. She is fed up with all the excuses of why a park is not created. Richard stated he contacted the Regional Commission, and they are going to help with the funding sources and what the requirements are with regards to a park and location and what is needed to get the funding from the state and the federal government. She thanked Richard for his work.

Josset Scott: North Second

Why isn't the City Attorney not at the meetings? Last year a committee was chosen for downtown. So why are the business owners downtown not cleaned up. Don't understand why Cochran does not want to change. She stated there should be grants to get parks in Cochran. She stated a busted pipe has been broken for years. Finish one thing before you start another. She would like to be given an answer when she asks a question. There is nothing here to draw in businesses and families.

Mayor Pro Tem Ates made the motion to adjourn with Councilmember Anderson seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 5-0 8:46pm

  
Tracy B Jones  
City Clerk

