



**MINUTES**  
**Cochran City Council**  
**March 10, 2020**  
**Regular Scheduled Meeting @ 7PM**

---

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

---

Present: Mayor Billy Yeomans Mayor Pro Tem Jones  
Councilmembers: Rufus Veal, Carla Coley, Keith Anderson, Gary Ates Jimmy Jones, Andrew Lemmon

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

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

Mayor Yeomans asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda. Richard stated MGAG sent a resolution to be adopted to appoint a representative to the MGAG voting delegate. He asked the Council to add this to the agenda to get consideration. Mayor asked for a motion to accept the agenda for March 10, 2020. Councilmember Ates made the motion with Councilmember Jones seconding. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

Mayor Yeomans asked for any additions or corrections to the February 11, 2020 minutes. Councilmember Ates made the motion to approve the February 11, 2020 minutes with Councilmember Lemmon seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0.

- 
- 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**

Proclamation declaring Wednesday, April 1, 2020 as National Census Day Proclamation. Mayor Yeomans read the proclamation for National Census Day. He thanked Dr. Mike Stoy for all the hard work he has done to get this started.

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

National Nutrition Month- given to District Health Director. Proclamation was not read at this time.

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

Employee of the Month – Administration. Mr. Newbern stated Tracy Jones, City Clerk, supervises City Hall staff. He asked Mrs. Jones to present her item. Mrs. Jones presented Lorna Hyde, Utility Billing Clerk with a \$100 check along with a subway gift card and a certificate. Tracy thanked Lorna for her hard work and dedication to the City of Cochran.

Willie Farrow, Public Works Director presented Charlie Beck with a certificate for 20 years of employment with the City of Cochran.

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

Introduction of new Customer Service Clerk Mercedes Sanders by City Clerk Tracy Jones. Tracy Jones presented the new Customer Service Clerk, Mercedes Sanders to Council and to the citizens of Cochran.

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

Consider filing a grant application with the Georgia DOT Roadside Enhancement and Beautification Council for up to \$50,000 in state funds to assist with landscaping and beautification of rights-of-ways. Mr. Newbern stated the Council was asked to authorize the filing of a grant application for GDOT Roadside enhancement and beautification Program. At this time, there is not a match required. Funds can only be spent on plants and other greenery. Irrigation could match this and install irrigation at each of the gateway signs entering the City. Mayor asked for a motion to approve the filing of the application for the GDOT Roadside Enhancement and Beautification grant. Councilmember Lemmon made the motion to approve the filing of the grant application with Councilmember Jones seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

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

Consider Resolution authorizing the extension of GEFA Drinking Water SRF Loan# 15-019 through August 1, 2020. Mr. Newbern explained the amounts and the reason for extension. He stated what has been improved so far and what else will be replaced or improved. This should be completed by Summer 2020. Mayor asked for a motion to extend the GEFA Drinking Water Loan. Councilmember Ates made the motion to authorize the extension for the GEFA loan with Councilmember Anderson seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0.

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

Consider Resolution authorizing the extension of GEFA Clean Water SRF Loan #15-009 through August 1, 2020. Mr. Newbern explained this loan was like the 15-019 extension. This one extended the sewer loan. He stated what has been improved so far and what else will be replaced or improved. This should be completed by Summer 2020. Mayor asked for a motion to extend the GEFA Clean Water Loan 15-019 Councilmember Jones made the motion to authorize the extension for the GEFA loan with Councilmember Ates seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0.

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

Consider budget amendment to bring the FY 2018-19 budget in line with actual revenues and expenditures. Mr. Newbern explained is to bring the expenditures and revenues in balance so the yearly audit will come to a conclusion. Mayor called for a motion to amend the FY 2018-2019 budget. Councilmember Lemmon made a motion to amend the budget with Councilmember Jones seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

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

Consider award bid on street striping contract. Mr. Newbern asked Willie Farrow, Public Works Director, to explain the two sealed bids City received. Mr. Farrow explained, one from Sikes Brothers of Metter for \$77,469.40 (lowest) and the other was from Mid -State Construction & Striping for \$101,358.00. The Council is asked to award the bid to Sikes Brothers with the understanding that their final contract amount will be negotiated as close as possible to the budgeted figure. Mayor Yeomans called for a motion to award the bid to Sikes Brothers. Councilmember Ates made the motion to award the bid to Sikes Brother's with Councilmember Veal seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

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

Consider appointment to the Library Board. Mayor Yeomans stated he received a letter from the Library Board to consider an appointment to the Library Board. The appointment will be for Rebecca Nees. Mrs. Nees term is up, and she is interested in being reappointed. Mayor asked for a motion to reappoint Rebeeca Nees to the Library board. Councilmember Ates made the motion to reappoint Rebecca Nees to the Library Board with Councilmember Lemmon seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

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

Consider appointment to the Cochran- Bleckley Recreation Board to fill the vacant position of Gary Ates. Mayor Yeomans recommended former Councilmember Jon Thrower. Mayor stated he spoke with Jon Thrower and he was interested in serving on the Board. Mayor called for a motion to appoint Jon Thrower to the CBRD Board. Councilmember Coley made the motion to appoint Jon Thrower to CBRD Board with Councilmember Anderson seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

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

Consider allowing Cochran Fire Department to perform the fireworks display in the First Baptist Church parking lot. Fire Chief Brock Wilcher addressed the Council with this request. Chief Wilcher stated to the Council this display will be for Founders Day and it will go as planned just like for Country Fest. Mayor called for a motion to allow CFD to perform the fireworks display at the FBC for Funders Day. Councilmember Jones made the motion to allow the CFD to perform display with Councilmember Ates seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor 6-0.

### **ITEM # 13 Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern**

Consider reappointing Diana Itson and Glenn Sawyer to one term to the DDA board. Mayor called for a motion to appoint the two nominated. Councilmember Lemmon made the motion to reappoint Diana Itson and Glenn Sawyer to the DDA board with Councilmember Jones seconding the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

### **ITEM # 14 Presented by City Manager, Richard Newbern**

Consider appointing an MGAG voting delegate and an alternate voting delegate.

Mr. Newbern explained the resolution from MGAG for the City's voting delegate. This is to make sure the delegates are current. Mayor called for a motion to appoint voting delegates to MGAG.

Councilmember Ates made the motion to appoint the Mayor with the Mayor Pro Tem Jones being the alternate. Councilmember Lemmon seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting in favor. 6-0

### **ITEM # 15 Presented by Mayor Pro Tem, Jimmy Jones**

Concerning wastewater issue – Mayor Pro Tem Jones stated storm water did a lot of damage. The owner of Quick and Easy Lube stated he would like some help from the City on the damage his business endured from the storm water. Mr. Jones asked the Council what their thoughts were on fixing this issue. Mr. Newbern stated the legality of assisting a private owner would need to be discussed with the City Attorney. He recommended this issue to be passed to the City Attorney. A brief conversation was held by the Council concerning drainage issues with the storm water throughout the City. Skip Layton City Engineer stated the City does not have a balanced storm water system. He made the Council aware of the issues that the city could face dealing with private and public. Drainage in Goody's parking lot is called a "blue line stream." This is the "waters of the state". No one can touch that "blue line stream" without the state's authorization. Drainage basin starts beyond the bypass and runs through the City. Skip gave a run through of the size of the pipes which run through the city which cause the flooding. A lot of the problem is private, and it will take a lot of money to fix this problem.

There are ways to fix the problems, Skip stated, but it is up to the City Council on how to fix it. Richard stated he would work with Skip to develop a long-range plan for storm water drainage for the City with cost estimates so the Council will have something to make decisions on.

### **City Manager Discussion/Items/Updates:**

- ❖ Annual City Council Retreat April 2-4 Lake Blackshear
- ❖ Clean Up Day April 25/ Chamber voted to co-sponsor
- ❖ Tire removal along with Clean Up day/Bleckley Co will join in
- ❖ Temporary Employee for the inventory of Cemetery
- ❖ Emergency replacement of the pipe on Porter Road
- ❖ GA Public Service Commission Update
- ❖ GICH Meeting Postpone due to City Manager Convention Postpone to 3/26
- ❖ GMA Advisory on Coronavirus Update
- ❖ Budget meetings with Department Heads
- ❖ Mayor of Dublin will be at Rotary next Tuesday. He is the president of GMA
- ❖ Council filed a legislative delegation of 15 road segments including bypass. Representative Mathis has indicated he was not prepared to file the legislative delegation at his time. The County was not looking favorable on this movement.

## **Department Head Updates:**

- ❖ **Police** – Councilmember Veal asked about the number of cases how many are being solved and how long it takes to solve cases.
- ❖ **Fire**- Painting fire hydrants, Founders Day, Middle GA Career Day, Pig Palace for Farm Day, 74 calls in the month of February. Councilmember Coley asked about the contractor who caused several leaks, did the City pursue the contractor to compensate the City for that? Councilmen Coley also asked about the fire hydrant that was hit by the semi-truck. They delay is the location of the hydrant. As soon as the church decided where to put the hydrant, it will be replaced.
- ❖ **Public Works** – Councilmember Veal asked when the cemetery would be updated. Willie stated we are discussing hiring someone at this time. This employee will work with the Public Works Director to get the cemetery inventory back in order.
- ❖ **Financial Administrator**- Report given to council, no questions were asked.
- ❖ **Code Enforcement** – Councilmember Veal and Councilmember Ates asked questions to Code Enforcement, James Smith about the oil spill on Dykes Street and the EPD. A brief discussion was held between Council, City Manager and Code Enforcement. Mr. Newbern explained how the EPD handled this situation and what the City needed to do to contain this spill.
- ❖ **City Engineer, Skip Layton**- CDBG water and sewer work is ongoing. Gave update on the GEFA along with Railroad issues.

## **Council Discussion Items:**

- Lemmon –None
- Jones – None
- Coley – DDA Update with downtown improvements
- Anderson – None
- Veal – None
- Ates – Asked City Manager about playground equipment for the Willie Basby Park.

## **Announcement of Upcoming Meeting and Events**

- ✓ **Work Session Prior to Council Meeting April 14, 2020 @ 5:30PM**
- ✓ **Regularly Scheduled City Council Meeting –April 14, 2020 @ 7PM**

## **Public Comments**

- Edwin Peacock – Expressed his concerns with the ditch issues in Crest Drive in the Bleckley and Cochran area. Stated he was not in favor of Consolidation.
- Sandra Watkins – Expressed her concerns about the CHIP lottery and how she was unhappy of an issue she was faced with. Council and Mrs. Watkins had a discussion.

Adjourned @ 9:13PM (Motion made by Ates 2<sup>nd</sup> by Anderson) Passed (6-0)

Executive Session @ 9:24PM

Adjourned Executive Session @ 9:53PM (Motion made by Ates 2<sup>nd</sup> by Veal) Passed (6-0)

Back into Regular Session @ 9:53PM (Motion made by Ates 2<sup>nd</sup> by Veal) Passed (6-0)

City Manager, Richard Newbern discussed the issue with Patrick Taylor. He stated Mr. Taylor was asking for the City to reimburse him for his hotel stay while he was not able to live in his mobile home. The amount of \$800 per month in total of \$7200.00 is being requested. Mr. Newbern stated this could be placed on the agenda for the April meeting or could be on the retreat agenda. He stated the Council could consider this reimbursement to Mr. Taylor.

Meeting adjourned @ 9:57PM (Motion made by Ates 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jones) Passed (6-0)

(SEAL)

---

Tracy B Jones  
City Clerk