

The City Council of the City of Harlem, Georgia met for a Called meeting on Tuesday, July 5, 2016 at 4:30 p.m. at the Public Safety Building with Mayor Robert W. Culpepper presiding.

Present: COUNCIL: Mayor Robert W. Culpepper, Mayor Pro tem John Thigpen, Councilmember Daniel Bellavance, Councilmember Jennifer Bennett and Councilmember Gregg Stokes; COUNCIL STAFF: City Manager Jason M. Rizner, City Clerk Debra E. Moore and City Attorney Barry Fleming. VISITORS: City Engineer John McClellan and Public Works Director Robert Fields.

Purpose: Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion Project  
Historic Preservation Commission Appointment

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Culpepper at 4:33 p.m.

The Invocation was given by City Attorney Fleming.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Culpepper.

Mayor Culpepper requested to move the HPC Appointment agenda item to the first item; Council concurred.

**Historic Preservation Commission Appointment:** Mayor Culpepper made the recommendation to appoint Joe Lokey to the Historic Preservation Commission. Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to accept the recommendation and to appoint Joe Lokey to the Historic Preservation Commission; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Stokes. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen in the affirmative.

**Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion Project:** City Engineer McClellan presented Council with several funding scenarios for the proposed project. The cost of the WWTP Project is \$8,287,000.00. This is for the Waste Water Treatment Plant, expansion to the North and rehab on the South. Currently we make a profit on water, but USDA does not consider water revenue in regards to the sewer project. We would need to have a water element in order for water revenue to be considered. His original scenario without and water projects showed an increase of \$43.31 per month in sewer cost or a total of \$64.17 per month. Mr. McClellan is recommending incorporating water projects into the scope of the project so that the net effect on the customers is lower (increase of \$26.55 per month or a total of \$47.41 per month). Mr. McClellan presented the water projects to include Lone Oak, the needs for the Elementary and Middle Schools, Brown Road, Forrest Drive, Lake Avenue, and others. There was some discussion on tap fees to be used as an incentive to tie into the system; the tap fees are not taken into consideration with the USDA loan only the projected revenue from water/sewer. Mayor Culpepper questioned if we would be locked into the loan if no grant is offered. Mr. McClellan stated that we would not be until the Letter of Conditions was issued and if we were able to meet those conditions. Mr. McClellan is recommending doing the project in two phases. Note: the project cost (including water projects) is estimated at \$11,858,844.04 with an estimated \$3,000,000.00 grant for a net cost of \$8,858,844.04. The interest rate is 2.25% for 40 years. Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to proceed with USDA Phase I and Phase II to include water projects; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Bennett.

**Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion Project (cont'd):** Discussion: City Attorney Fleming addressed some of Council's questions pertaining to the requirement to tie-in to the system and tap fee incentives. He referred to Code Section 54.02 which requires use of the sewer system if it is available; Code Section 52.03 which included the information on taps and being able to adjust the rates for different areas; and Code Section 52.12 as it pertained to wells. There can be no wells in the City without Council's approval. Well water cannot mix in with the City water system and it cannot go thru the sewer system. With no further discussion, the motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative.

As there were no further items for discussion, Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to adjourn the meeting; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Bellavance. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative. The meeting closed at 5:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra E. Moore  
City Clerk

Present: CITY STAFF: City Manager Jason M. Rizner and City Clerk Debra E. Moore

The Millage Rate Hearing was opened by City Manager Rizner at 9:10 a.m.

This is the first of three required Public Hearings on the proposed increase in the City Millage Rate from 8.35 mills to 9.35 mills.

**2016 Tax Digest and Millage Rate:** The increase is due in part to the expected reduction in LOST (Local Option Sales Tax) proceeds in 2018. Additional revenue will be required in order to be able to maintain the level of service provided by the City of Harlem. The proposed increase will generate \$545,039.00 in taxes. This is a 13.16% increase over 2015 or \$63,371.00. The digest increased \$608,158.00 due to reassessments, new construction and other changes to the tax digest. The current digest is at \$58,292,908.00.

**Public Comment:** N/A; there was no one in attendance.

City Manager Rizner closed the Millage Rate Hearing at 9:12 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra E. Moore  
City Clerk

Millage Rate Hearing, City of Harlem, Georgia  
July 18, 2016  
Public Safety Building

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Present: CITY STAFF: City Manager Jason M. Rizner, City Clerk Debra E. Moore and City Attorney Barry Fleming.

The Millage Rate Hearing was opened by City Manager Rizner at 6:02 p.m.

This is the second of three required Public Hearings on the proposed increase in the City Millage Rate from 8.35 mills to 9.35 mills.

**2016 Tax Digest and Millage Rate:** The increase is due in part to the expected reduction in LOST (Local Option Sales Tax) proceeds in 2018. Additional revenue will be required in order to be able to maintain the level of service provided by the City of Harlem. The proposed increase will generate \$545,039.00 in taxes. This is a 13.16% increase over 2015 or \$63,371.00. The digest increased \$608,158.00 due to reassessments, new construction and other changes to the tax digest. The current digest is at \$58,292,908.00.

**Public Comment:** N/A; there was no one in attendance.

City Manager Rizner closed the Millage Rate Hearing at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra E. Moore  
City Clerk

Present: COUNCIL: Mayor Robert W. Culpepper, Mayor Pro tem John Thigpen, and Councilmember Daniel Bellavance; CITY STAFF: City Manager Jason M. Rizner and City Clerk Debra E. Moore; VISITORS: Peter Chong (Columbia County Tax Commissioner's Office) and Anthony Guillebeau.

The Millage Rate Hearing was opened by Mayor Culpepper at 6:00 p.m.

Note: The Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were not done at this time.

This is the third and final of the required Public Hearings on the proposed increase in the City Millage Rate from 8.35 mills to 9.35 mills.

**2016 Tax Digest and Millage Rate:** The increase is due in part to the expected reduction in LOST (Local Option Sales Tax) proceeds in 2018. Additional revenue will be required in order to be able to maintain the level of service provided by the City of Harlem. The proposed increase will generate \$545,039.00 in taxes. This is a 13.16% increase over 2015 or \$63,371.00. The digest increased \$608,158.00 due to reassessments, new construction and other changes to the tax digest. The current digest is at \$58,292,908.00.

**Public Comment:** N/A; there was no one in attendance.

City Manager Rizner closed the Millage Rate Hearing at 6:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra E. Moore  
City Clerk

Called Meeting, City of Harlem, Georgia  
July 25, 2016  
Public Safety Building

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The City Council of the City of Harlem held a Called Meeting on Monday, July 25, 2016 at the Public Safety Building at 6:15 p.m. with Mayor Robert W. Culpepper presiding.

Present: COUNCIL: Mayor Robert W. Culpepper, Mayor John Thigpen, Councilmember Daniel Bellavance, Councilmember Jennifer Bennett, and Councilmember Gregg Stokes; COUNCIL STAFF: City Manager Jason M. Rizner, City Clerk Debra E. Moore and City Attorney Barry Fleming.

Purpose: Approve 2016 Tax Digest and Millage Rate

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Culpepper at 6:15 p.m.

**2016 Tax Digest and Millage Rate:** The proposed millage rate is 9.35 mills; this is an increase of 1 mill over the 2015 rate of 8.35. The increase is due in part to the expected reduction in LOST (Local Option Sales Tax) proceeds in 2018. Additional revenue will be required in order to be able to maintain the level of service provided by the City of Harlem. The proposed increase will generate \$545,039.00 in taxes. This is a 13.16% increase over 2015 or \$63,371.00. The digest increased \$608,158.00 due to reassessments, new construction and other changes to the tax digest. The current digest is at \$58,292,908.00. The proposed tax increase for a home with a fair market value of \$100,000 is approximately \$40.00; for a home with a fair market value of \$175,000 is approximately \$70.00.

Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to approve the proposed millage rate of 9.35 mills for 2016; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Bennett. Motion carried by a vote of 3-1. Councilmembers Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voted in the affirmative; Councilmember Bellavance voted in the negative.

As there were no further items for discussion, Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to adjourn the meeting; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Bellavance. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen in the affirmative. The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra E. Moore  
City Clerk

Present: COUNCIL: Mayor Robert W. Culpepper, Mayor Pro tem John Thigpen, Councilmember Daniel Bellavance, Councilmember Jennifer Bennett and Councilmember Gregg Stokes; COUNCIL STAFF: City Manager Jason M. Rizner, City Clerk Debra E. Moore and City Attorney Barry Fleming; CITY STAFF: Robert Fields, Rob Lewis, Tripp Lonergan and David Jenkins.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Culpepper at 6:30 p.m.

The Invocation was given by City Attorney Fleming.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Culpepper.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

**Ordinance – Second Reading:**

- **Soil Erosion, Sedimentation and Pollution Control:** We are the Local Issuing Authority (LIA) for permits related to these matters. When changes are made to the state statutes that govern our area, we are required to update our Ordinance accordingly within 12 months. This ordinance replaces the ordinance we currently have in place. Council will need to approve this as the second reading.

**Other:** There was none at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

**Public Safety Building Debt Refinancing:** We have been working with Andrew Tritt of Stifel to refinance the Public Safety Building at a lower interest rate and shorter term. Mr. Tritt presented Council with information on the recommended refinancing thru Regions Bank. The refinancing would be at a rate of 2.4369% with a term of 152 month. The debt payments will begin in April 1, 2017 with interest being due semi-annually or annually. The final payment will be on April 1, 2029. The financing will be repaid by SPLOST funds. The City will realize a savings of \$510,443.00 in interest over the life of the loan. A required Public Hearing has been set for this Thursday, July 28, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. at City Hall. There is a pre-closing set for August 2, 2016 at Fleming-Nelson office at 11:00 a.m. and the actual closing will occur on August 3, 2016. The balance of the available funds, \$35,000.00+, from BB&T will be used to pay-off the existing loan. The new loan has no pre-payment penalty. Council will need to approve the Resolution authorizing the Mayor to sign the closing papers, etc. for the refinancing.

**City of Augusta Mutual Aid Agreement:** The agreement is for Mutual Aid on Fire Calls. The agreement has been reviewed by the Fire Department and is recommended for approval.

**Ordinance – First Reading:**

- **Right-of-Way:** This is an ordinance to establish a Chapter in the City of Harlem's Code of Ordinances to be known as "Streets, Sidewalks and Other Public Places". It is to administer and regulate the public right-of-way in the public interest and to provide for the issuance and regulation of right-of-way permits.

Council will need to approve the first reading.

NEW BUSINESS (cont'd):

**Variance – 165 Verdery Street:** Guillebeau Iron is pursuing an expansion of their existing building. The construction would place the northwest corner of the new construction 4 feet 6 inches from the rear property line. The current rear setback required is 25 feet. He is requesting a variance to the rear setback. The request has gone before the Planning & Zoning Commission for review and recommendation; they are recommending for approval. Council will need to approve the recommendation.

**Other:** Mayor Culpepper would like to include URA (Urban Redevelopment Agency) appointments under **Other** during the Regular meeting.

**Other – Executive Session:** Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to go into Executive Session; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Stokes. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative. The meeting closed at 6:50 p.m. with Executive Session opening at 6:53 p.m.

Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to come out of Executive Session; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Stokes. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative. Executive Session closed at 7:00 p.m. and the Work Session reconvened.

City Attorney Fleming reported that one Real Estate matter was discussed and that no final action was taken.

Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to authorize the Mayor to sign the Affidavit acknowledging this report; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Stokes. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative.

As there were no further items for discussion, Councilmember Stokes made the motion to adjourn the Work Session; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Bennett. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen in the affirmative. The meeting closed at 7:02 p.m.

Debra E. Moore  
City Clerk



The City Council of the City of Harlem, Georgia met for their Regular meeting on Monday, July 25, 2016 at the Public Safety Building following the Work Session that was scheduled at 6:30 p.m. with Mayor Robert W. Culpepper presiding.

Present: COUNCIL: Mayor Robert W. Culpepper, Mayor Pro tem John Thigpen, Councilmember Daniel Bellavance, Councilmember Jennifer Bennett and Councilmember Gregg Stokes; COUNCIL STAFF: City Manager Jason M. Rizner, City Clerk Debra E. Moore and City Attorney Barry Fleming; CITY STAFF: Public Works Director Robert Fields, Police Captain Rob Lewis, Fire Chief Tripp Lonergan and Community Development Director David Jenkins.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Culpepper at 7:03 p.m.

**Approve Agenda:** Mayor Culpepper is requesting to amend the Agenda to include URA Appointments and a Real Estate item under Other. Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to approve the Agenda to include the requested amendments; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Stokes. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen in the affirmative.

**Approval of the Minutes:** Councilmember Stokes made the motion to approve the minutes of the June 27, 2016 Work Session, Regular meeting and Executive Session as written; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Bellavance. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes, and Thigpen in the affirmative.

**Public Comment:** There was none at this time.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

**Ordinance – Second Reading:**

- **Soil Erosion, Sedimentation and Pollution Control:** Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to approve the second reading of the Soil Erosion, Sedimentation and Pollution Control ordinance; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Stokes. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen in the affirmative.

**Other:** There was none at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

**Public Safety Building Debt Refinancing:** Councilmember Stokes made the motion to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the Resolution for the refinancing of the Public Safety Building project; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Stokes. Discussion: The refinancing is thru Regions Bank at a rate of 2.4369% with a payoff date of April 1, 2029 and will be repaid by SPLOST funds. The City will save an estimated \$510,443.00 over the life of the loan. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative.

NEW BUSINESS (cont'd):

**City of Augusta Mutual Aid Agreement:** Councilmember Stokes made the motion to approve the Mutual Aid Agreement between Augusta, GA (consolidated government of Richmond County and the City of Augusta) and the City of Harlem for mutual aid as it pertains to fire calls; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mayor Pro tem Thigpen. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen.

**Ordinance – First Reading:**

- **Right-of-Way:** Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to approve the first reading of the ordinance establishing a chapter to the Code of Ordinances to be titled “Streets, Sidewalks and Other Public Places”. It is to administer and regulate the public right-of-way in the public interest and to provide for the issuance and regulation of right-of-way permits. The motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Bennett. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen in the affirmative.

**Variance – 165 Verdery Street:** Councilmember Stokes made the motion to approve the variance request of Guillebeau Iron as it pertains to the rear setback for the expansion of his existing building; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Bennett. Discussion: The variance is to change the rear set back to four feet six inches from the required twenty-five feet. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative.

**Other: URA Appointments:** Mayor Culpepper would like to appoint John Spivey of Phillips Crossing and Ryan Murphy of West Forrest Street as members to the Urban Redevelopment Agency. Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to approve the appointments of John Spivey and Ryan Murphy to the Urban Redevelopment Agency; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Stokes. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen in the affirmative.

**Other: Real Estate:** As part of the refinancing of the Public Safety Project it was discovered that a portion of the property for Station 2 had not been turned over to GMA in the original Bricks & Mortar agreement. GMA has only temporary ownership. In order to proceed with the refinancing, the City must transfer the property to GMA. Due to the essence of time, the City will transfer the property to the Urban Redevelopment Authority who in turn can transfer the property to GMA. Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to authorize the Mayor to sign the documents to transfer the property that Station 2 sits on at Campbell’s Way to the URA for the refinancing project; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Stokes. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen in the affirmative.

**Department Reports:** The following departments gave reports for the month of June 2016:

Public Works Department	Robert Fields, Public Works Director
Police Department	Rob Lewis, Police Captain
Fire Department	Tripp Lonergan, Fire Chief
Community Development	David Jenkins, Community Development Director
Administrative Department	Jason Rizner, City Manager

NEW BUSINESS (cont'd):

**Announcements:**

July 28	Public Hearing – Public Safety Project Refinancing; 10:00 a.m.; City Hall
August 2	Planning Commission Meeting; 6:00 p.m.; Public Safety Building
August 3	Called Meeting; 5:30 p.m.; Public Safety Building
August 10	Urban Redevelopment Agency Board Meeting; 9:30 a.m.; City Hall
August 22	Work Session/Council Meeting; 6:30 p.m.; Public Safety Building

**Executive Session:** Executive Session was held during the Work Session. There were no further items for discussion.

**Items from Executive Session:** There were no items to come before Council.

As there was nothing further for discussion, Councilmember Stokes made the motion to adjourn the meeting; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Bennett. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative. The meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra E. Moore  
City Clerk