

The City Council of the City of Harlem, Georgia met for their Regular meeting on Thursday, December 21, 2017 at the Public Safety Building at 7:00 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 Gregg Stokes; COUNCIL STAFF: City Manager Brett Cook, City Clerk Debra E. Moore, and City Attorney Barry Fleming.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Culpepper at 7:00 p.m.

The Invocation was given by City Attorney Fleming.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Culpepper.

Approve Agenda: Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to approve the Agenda as written; 2nd by Councilmember Stokes. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative.

Approval of the Minutes: Councilmember Stokes made the motion to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2017 Budget Hearing and the minutes of the November 27, 2017 Regular meeting and Executive Session as written; 2nd by Councilmember Bennett. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative.

Public Comment:

Robin Meads; 6628 Ponderosa Lane; Modification to Hickory Woods PUD: Ms. Meads spoke in support of the requested modification to the Hickory Woods PUD.

Marie Turner; 6629 Green Plantation Road; Modification to Hickory Woods PUD: Ms. Turner spoke in support of the requested modification to the Hickory Woods PUD.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Resolution 2017-18 to Adopt the Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2018, Update Employee Classification and Pay Plan, Reserve Fund Policies, Utility Rates and Fees for 2018, and a Revised Schedule of General Municipal Fees – 2nd Reading:

- **Fiscal Year 2018 Operating Budget**
- **Ordinance No. 1717 to Adopt Reserve Fund Policies**
- **Updated Employee Classification and Pay Plan**
- **Ordinance No. 1718 to Adopt Utility Rates and Fees for 2018**
- **Ordinance No. 1719 to Adopt a Revised Schedule of General Municipal Fees**

Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to approve the 2nd Reading of Resolution 2017-18 to Adopt the Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2018 to include the 2nd Readings of Ordinance No. 1717 to Adopt Reserve Fund Policies, Ordinance No. 1718 to Adopt Utility Rates and Fees for 2018, and Ordinance 1719 to adopt a Revised Schedule of General Municipal Fees as well as the Updated Employee Classification and Pay Plan. The motion was 2nd by Councilmember Stokes. Discussion: City Manager Cook

UNFINISHED BUSINESS (cont'd):

Resolution 2017-18 to Adopt the Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2018, Update Employee Classification and Pay Plan, Reserve Fund Policies, Utility Rates and Fees for 2018, and a Revised Schedule of General Municipal Fees – 2nd Reading (cont'd): commented that there were a few changes since the original reading. Some of the Utility Fees changed, but not the rates. In the Pay Classification, he figured out the issue in the time for Police Officers which increased their pay scale. Positions that were funded but not in the classification have been added (Inspector). Mayor Pro tem Thigpen commented on the Pay Scale being geared more towards longevity; awards employees for years of service. He questioned if the Department Heads were open to this; City Manager Cook commented there were no issues. He supports the classification and sees it as a benefit to the employee. With no further discussion, the motion carried with Councilmember Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative.

Ordinance No. 1720 to Adopt a Community Redevelopment Tax Incentive – 2nd Reading: Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to approve the 2nd Reading of Ordinance No. 1720 to Adopt a Community Redevelopment Tax Incentive; 2nd by Councilmember Stokes. Discussion: City Manager Cook reported that there were no changes since the 1st Reading. The fee/penalty is across the board (commercial/residential). The Ordinance is based on a Constitutional Amendment. City Attorney Fleming stated that this is only against blighted properties and is applied equally to Commercial and Residential. The decisions are not on vote by Council, but are taken to the Judge for a ruling. City Manager Cook will meet with Judge Beddingfield in January to get his thoughts and comments. We will do everything on our end before any citation is issued. Mayor Pro tem Thigpen commented that blight is blight whether residential or commercial. City Attorney Fleming responded that Mayor Pro tem Thigpen is referring to equal protection; it's a good reason for doing what we are doing. Apply equally to everything. If we don't include commercial we could see problems and complaints about not applying equally. With no further discussion, the motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative.

Other: There was none at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

Fiscal Year Ending 2016 Audit Approval: City Manager Cook explained to Council we have not received the final report for 2016; we were scheduled to receive it, but it is still not complete. There was an extension requested; the report is due by December 31st. The report is normally approved prior to going to the State Auditor, but the State will accept it without the approval. He gave an overview of the fund balances. They show growth over the last five years; 2017 trends indicate growth. We will schedule a presentation at the January meeting.

Councilmember Bennett recused herself from the meeting at this time due to a conflict of interest with the next Agenda item.

NEW BUSINESS (cont'd):

Consider Application No. RZ-2017-12-01 for a Modification to the Approved Hickory Woods PUD by Larry Prather, Sr.: City Manager Cook reported that the modification was approved unanimously recommending approval of the request by the Planning & Zoning Commission. What is changing is the density dropped, there are bigger lots, green space areas are larger, stormwater management has been improved and the removal of the entrance/exit on the Sawdust Road side. The original plan dictated entrances on North Fairview Drive (City owned) and Sawdust Road (County owned) with accel/decel lanes. Mayor Pro tem Thigpen commented that this plan looks better than the original. He questioned the line of site – engineering issue. City Manager Cook commented that North Fairview Drive was a definite entrance; Sawdust Road was going to be problematic. Mayor Pro tem Thigpen commented on the stormwater/drainage on Sawdust Road. Councilmember Bellavance was interested in knowing the setback from the front of the road; City Manager Cook responded that what was approved is a 25' minimum. City Manager Cook spoke on issues that had been brought up by Planning & Zoning pertaining to connectivity and public safety. He would recommend removing the entrance at this time, but to retain the easement to consider an entrance at a later date in the event there are improvements on Sawdust Road. With no further discussion, Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to approve RZ-2017-12-01 for a Modification to the Approved Hickory Woods PUD; 2nd by Councilmember Stokes. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative.

Councilmember Bennett returned to the meeting at this time.

Update on USDA Rural Development Project for Improvements to Water Distribution System, Waste Water Treatment and Collections System: City Manager Cook and City Engineer John McClellan gave an update on the project. After meeting with EPD we have been told that we can expand our plant up to 1,000,000 gallons by using a new discharge location. EPD capped what we could put in our current tributary. We will run a line and lift station to the new tributary. The new tributary would be at Euche Creek at Harlem-Grovetown Road. Currently for the 500,000 gallons discharge the project was estimated at \$10m; to go to 750,000 gallons the project cost estimate is \$11.8m. The plans are substantially complete at this time. We still do not know what grant funds may be available. Mayor Pro tem Thigpen was in favor of moving ahead with the expansion for the 750,000 gallons discharge. City Engineer McClellan will look to getting information from the City on what we want.

Consider Modification of Position Description: City Manager Cook reevaluated the Community Services Coordinator position that was recently vacated by Stacie Hart. He is proposing it to be more of an Economic Development role; will help in the Theatre. The position will help with the logistics of the Festival. He will be proposing an ordinance at the end of the meeting under other to establish a steering committee for the festival. Councilmember Bellavance made the motion to approve the Position Description for the Assistant Director Downtown Economic Development; 2nd by Councilmember Bennett. Discussion: Mayor Pro tem commented on a correction needed to be made on Job Title to read Assistant Director of Downtown Economic Development. City Manager Cook will be doing the hiring in coordination of hiring the inspector. Motion carried with Councilmember Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative.

NEW BUSINESS (cont'd):

Other: Resolution 2017-19 A Resolution to Approve Additional Funds for Transportation Improvements: The Resolution is for the allocation of additional funds from the T-SPLOST Account in the amount of \$22,000.00 to do the 2017 LMIG Project – resurfacing of Verdery Street. This will be used as a match and allow for the entirety of the street to be paved. Councilmember Stokes made the motion to approve Resolution 2017-19 for the Additional Funds for Transportation Improvements; 2nd by Mayor Pro tem Thigpen. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative.

Consider Ordinance No. 1721 Code Section 30.10 Oliver Hardy Steering Committee – 1st Reading: The Ordinance provides for the establishment of the committee; procedures of the committee; duties and powers; and an effective date. Councilmember Stokes commented that he felt that it should include one member of the police department and one member of the fire department. Line 24 will be changed to read “4” Ex-Officio Members; Line 26 will be changed to read “2” representatives; line 27 will be corrected to read “serve” instead of “save”; Line 28 “coordinator” will be changed to read “coordinators”. Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to approve the 1st Reading of Ordinance No. 1721 for the Establishment of the Oliver Hardy Steering Committee with the recommended changes; 2nd by Councilmember Stokes. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes, and Thigpen voting in the affirmative.

Reports:

- **Council Reports:** Mayor Pro tem Thigpen questioned the status of the three hour parking signs; they have been ordered and should be coming in the next couple of weeks. There will be possible restriping done in January. Councilmember Bennett asked about signage for an autistic child/special needs; City Manager Cook will take under advisement and will look into. There were no other comments from Council.
- **Mayor Report:** Mayor Culpepper expressed his gratitude to the Public Works Department for their actions on the recent leaks located at Hwy. 278 and E. Trippe Street.
- **City Manager’s Report:** City Manager Cook commented on it being a productive year; he reviewed the updates made on Financial Policies and the City’s Fiscal position. City Manager Cook recognized Public Works Director Robert Fields to see if he had any comments on the WWTP Expansion; he had none at this time.

Announcements:

December 22	Employee Luncheon; 12:00 p.m.; Senior Center
December 25-26	City Offices Closed-Christmas Holiday
January 1	City Offices Closed-New Year’s Day Holiday
January 2	Planning Commission Meeting; 6:00 p.m.; Public Safety Building
January 8	Called Meeting; 7:00 p.m.; Public Safety Building (moved to the 11 th)
January 10	Urban Redevelopment Authority Meeting; 9:30 a.m.; City Hall
January 15	City Offices Closed-Martin Luther King Jr Day
January 18	City Council Work Session; 7:00 p.m.; Public Safety Building
January 22	City Council Regular Meeting; 7:00 p.m.; Public Safety Building

Executive Session: Mayor Pro tem Thigpen made the motion to go into Executive Session; 2nd by Councilmember Stokes. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes, and Thigpen voting in the affirmative. The meeting closed for Executive Session at 8:34 p.m.; Executive Session opened at 8:35 p.m.

Councilmember Stokes made the motion to come out of Executive Session; 2nd by Mayor Pro tem Thigpen. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes, and Thigpen voting in the affirmative. Executive Session closed at 9:35 p.m. and the Regular meeting re-convened.

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

Councilmember Stokes made the motion to authorize the Mayor to sign the Affidavit affirming this report; 2nd by Councilmember Bellavance. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative.

With there being nothing further to come before Council, Councilmember Bellavance made the motion to adjourn the meeting; 2nd by Councilmember Bennett. Motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Bennett, Stokes and Thigpen voting in the affirmative. The meeting adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra E. Moore
City Clerk