

**October 10, 2023**

The Eastman City Council met in a regularly scheduled meeting on the above date at 6:00 p.m. The following members were present: Buddy Pittman, Sebrina Williams, Raymond Mullis, and Ronnie Woodard. Councilor Hamilton monitored the meeting via Facebook Live. Others present were City Attorney Rita Llop, City Manager Spencer Barron, Police Chief Billy Cooper, Fire Chief Scotty Whitten, City Clerk April Sheffield, City Inspector Jack White, and Stormwater Supervisor Wynnon Pittman. DDA members Andrea McCranie, along with Dan, and Roy Grenade were in attendance. Present from the community were Graham Snyder, Mark Peacock, EM Harrington III, Shelly Svendsen, Martha Wright, Brian Dennis, John Battle, Susan and Mitchell Coffee, and the Lanci family.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Pittman.

The invocation was given by Councilor Mullis.

Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** The first order of business will be to approve the agenda.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** The only change would be to take off the tax billing contract with PUBLIQ, the number 8. We're still waiting on documents from them.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** All right. Council, y'all good with the rest of it? Then **I entertain a motion to amend the agenda and remove #8, the approved tax billing contract with PUBLIQ and as you make the motion to approve the amendment, we will also include in it to approve the agenda as it stands with the change.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** So moved.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS:** Second.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Have a second. All in favor show of hands. Motion carried unanimous.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2023, regular meeting. I think y'all got those in your packets over the weekend. Do y'all have any questions about them? If not, **I need a motion then to approve the minutes of the September 25th, 2023, regular meeting.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** So moved.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCILOR WOODARD:** Second.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a second from Councilman Woodard. All in favor show of hands. **Motion carried unanimous.**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**FIRST READING OF BLOODWORTH ANNEXATION ORDINANCE:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Now we'll move on to unfinished business. Tonight we have the first reading of the Bloodworth annexation ordinance. If y'all remember, that was the property out across from the college. And we annexed that in for some.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** 7 acres. 7.3 I believe.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** 7.3 acres out there across from the school. So, tonight will be the first reading. **I need a motion to approve the first reading of the Bloodworth annexation ordinance.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** So moved.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS: Second.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a second from Councilwoman Williams. All in favor show of hands. **Motion carried unanimous.**

**APPROVE 2023 MILLAGE RATE:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is to approve the 2023 millage rate.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes, we've gone through the mandatory hearing process, and this will be the final vote to approve our millage rate as it stands at 7.5 mills.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** All right, **I need a motion to approve the 2023 millage rate at 7.5 mills.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS: So moved.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCILOR WOODARD: Second.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a second from Councilman Woodard. All in favor show of hands. **Motion carried unanimous.**

**SECOND READING OF THE ALCOHOL ORDINANCE REVISION:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next item on the agenda is the second reading of the Alcohol ordinance revision.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes, Sir. We've gone through the process required to amend that ordinance based on the changes requested by Council. So tonight will be the second reading of that, and if you vote, it will be approved. Is that correct?

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** That's correct.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Council, do y'all have any questions?

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** No Sir.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** If not then **I'll entertain a motion then, to approve the second reading of the Alcohol ordinance revision.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS: So moved.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS: Second.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a second from Councilwoman Williams. All in favor show of hands. **Motion carried unanimous.**

**CITY/DDA PROPERTY TRANSFER:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is the city/DDA property transfer.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes, Sir. This will be the vote to approve the transfer according to whatever requirements our city attorney tells us are dictated by law to swap the property across the street with the property that the DDA owns up at the Cotton Mill.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** All right Council, do y'all have any questions concerning that? I think we've been over and looked at it and talked about it. And then had discussion about it. **I'll entertain a motion then to approve for the property transfer from the city over to the Downtown Development Authority.**

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Pursuant to the requirements of the law.

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** Right, yeah. I will prepare any documents necessary to do that. To transfer the property.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** OK, now.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** It'll just make it quicker and easier for her to work it out if y'all add that in.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Pursuant to the state law. **So, I need a motion to approve that.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS: So moved.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCILOR WOODARD: Second.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a second from Councilman Woodard. All in favor show of hands. **Motion carried unanimous.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**FIRE REPORTS:**

**FIRE CHIEF WHITTEN:** For the month of September, we ran a total of 45 calls, 26 inside the city and 19 outside the city. Brush fires, we had two. Vehicles fires, we had one. Natural gas leaks, 2. Medical, 11. Rescue vehicle, 15. Electrical alarms, two. Lift assist, 4. Life flight, 2. Check smoke, one. Power lines and trees, three. And public service, 2.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** I got a question for you. I've had people questioning about this tailgate thing coming up. They need to see you?

**FIRE CHIEF WHITTEN:** Yes.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** That's what I told them. OK, I'm good.

**POLICE REPORTS:**

**POLICE CHIEF COOPER:** For the month of September, we used 862 gallons of fuel. We answered 731 calls. 23 of those were traffic accidents. We patrolled 10,118 miles. Also, we had a lady that was going around selling sponsorship for a calendar for the Police Department. I'd just like to put out there that it is a really good response from our local businesses. I just want to say thank you.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** I like the way you are doing this report now.

**CHIEF COOPER:** It's got a lot more information, but I'd be here 25 minutes trying to tell you each.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** Well, I know. I'm just glad we can sit and read it. Appreciate it.

**APPROVE MONTHLY BILLS:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is to approve the monthly bills for September 26th through October 10th. Council, y'all got those in your packets over the weekend. Do y'all have any questions about them? If not, **I need a motion then to approve the monthly bills for September 26th through October 10th.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** So moved.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second?

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS:** Second.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a second from Councilwoman Williams. All in favor show of hands. **Motion carried unanimous.**

**SCHEDULE MEETING FOR APPROVAL OF LIQUOR STORE APPLICATIONS:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is to schedule a meeting for approval of liquor store applications.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes. So the question of the hour: who gets the liquor store applications? So, what we're asking is that the application window closes Thursday at 5:00. We're asking council to set a specially call meeting at 5:30 after that to review the applications from 5:00 to 5:30 and then vote to either give them out or not. We have 3 contenders right now that are in various stages of applying. If we have five or more, we're going to have the Magistrate Judge here Thursday night at 5:30 to draw four from the hat. But right now, that's not necessary. We only have three in the process. Rita, does that sound like a?

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** Municipal Court Judge will come and select if you receive four or more.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** I'm sorry. Municipal, not magistrate.

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** Yeah. So far you have 3.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** We only have three in the process right now. To answer the public's questions, that will be the meeting where it's either approved or disapproved. The ordinance was approved tonight.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** And what time was that?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Well, the window closes at 5:00, so that gives you all 30 minutes to review them. And you can review what they've submitted up to this point at any time. But at 5:30 is when you convene a meeting to make the decision.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** So, we need to be here at 5:00 to discuss this in a work session like? OK.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** But if you meet in a work session now, we have to set that. But now you can individually review the applications and come up with your thoughts. Or your questions rather for the meeting.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** Ok.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** I would suggest we have a meeting. A called meeting so we can get it done.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** I agree with you 100%.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Oh yeah.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Thank you.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** All right, council, Y'all have any other questions? If not, then I'll entertain a motion to have a called meeting Thursday evening at 5:00. We'll review the applications and all and following that, at 5:30, we will have a Council vote to approve and accept.

**CITY CLERK SHEFFIELD:** So, you want to have a work session at 5:00 and a meeting at 5:30?

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** It'll be this Thursday?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** I'm ok with it if that's what you want.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** We can have the meeting at 5:30, but still be here at 5:00 to look through the applications if you want to.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** But if y'all meet in bank and discuss them, it's got to be a work session. Doesn't it?

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** No, we can discuss it at a called meeting.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** But I mean the 5:00 to 5:30, I thought, would have to be a work session.

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** You can consider all the applications in a called meeting.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** At 5:30.

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** At 5 or 5:30. Yes, 5:30, sorry.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Alright, so.

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** The City Hall closes at 5.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Right. So from 5:00 to 5:30, can they sit up here and talk and look at them or is that considered a work session?

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** Yeah, I think if they're going to sit up here and talk about the applications, it should be in a called meeting.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes, so that needs to happen at 5:30, right?

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** Correct.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** OK. If you want to come here at 5 and take those applications and sit in my office and look at them, you can and you can, and you can. But a quorum, and correct me if I'm wrong on this, a quorum of you cannot sit and discuss them between 5 and 5:30. **ATTORNEY LLOP:** Correct.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** Wouldn't it be better just to call the work session?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** If that's what y'all want to do.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** Well, then I know we covered that way. Ain't that right?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Some of this is just y'all's decision how you want to handle it. But you've got to meet at 5:30 to vote. How you want to handle from the time I've got the last application is up to you.

**COUNCILOR WOODARD:** The date again was?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Thursday, October 12th.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** This coming Thursday. We'll regroup. We'll make it simple. I'll entertain a motion to have a work session Thursday, October the 12th at 5:00 PM strictly for package store application reviews. And then we will move into a called meeting at 5:30 PM, Thursday, October 12th, to vote on them.

**GRAHAM SNYDER:** Is that open to the public where people can address any concerns that they may have.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes, Sir. And you can also address any concerns leading up to that just to make you all aware. You don't have to wait until then. If you have something, reach out to your councilperson. And we do have some concerns that will be brought up.

**COUNCILOR WOODARD:** I can't make the 12th.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Ok. So, we've already ran the ad in the paper, so we can't back down from that date. So we have a quorum if the three of y'all can make it. If the three of y'all cannot make it, we can't have the meeting. Because the other Councilman is not going to participate. I've got to have three.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** I'll be here.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I'll be there.

**COUNCILOR WOODARD:** It may be close, but I'll say that I'll be there.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** OK. Well, all you can do is your best.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** **Well I need a motion then to have a work session Thursday, October 12th at 5:00 PM, followed immediately by a called meeting at 5:30 PM to vote on the applications. COUNCILOR MULLIS: So moved.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS:** **Second.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a second from Councilwoman Williams. All in favor show of hands. **Motion carried unanimous.**

**METHODIST CHURCH STREET CLOSURE REQUEST:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is the Methodist Church request for street closure.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes, Sir. Every fall season, the Methodists ask to close Foster Street to have a little trick or treat carnival type thing, and they're asking that we would please allow them to close it from 6:00 to 9:00 PM on Wednesday, October 25th.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** That's where he played basketball at, isn't it? That street there.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes, Sir, it is between the basketball court, the parking lot and the Methodist Church. And we'll have some barrels and some stuff to help them rope it off. If y'all approve. It's going to be Wednesday, October 25th, at 6:00 to 9:00 PM. And as far as I know, Chief Cooper, we've never had any problems with that one. Have we?

**POLICE CHIEF COOPER:** No.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** All right, Council y'all have any questions about that? If not, **I need a motion to approve the closure of Foster Street on Wednesday, October 25th from 6:00 to 9:00 PM at the Methodist Church.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** **So moved.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCILOR WOODARD:** **Second.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Have a second from Councilman Woodard. All in favor show of hands. **Motion carried unanimous.**

**APPROVE TRANSFER OF ARPA MONEY:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is to approve transfer of ARPA money.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Normally our life insurance premium tax money comes in in October. We anticipate it being between 4 and 500,000, but it hasn't got here yet and the general fund is sinking. So I'd like to transfer exactly 200,000 from our ARPA reserve into the General Fund. We may not need it, but I'd rather move it over just in case. I can't tell you what day the check will get here.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Council, do y'all have any questions? OK, if not, **I need a motion then to approve to move \$200,000 from the ARPA money over into the General fund.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** So moved.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS:** Second.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Have a second from Councilwoman Williams. All in favor show of hands. **Motion carried unanimous.**

**CONGO LANE ANNEXATION REQUEST:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is the Congo Lane annexation request.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** We have a request from Ms. Addie Mae Johnson's property, 2.0 acres, for water service, or extended water service. And as is the Council's new policy, we don't extend water anywhere that's not in the city limits anymore. So her request is that we annex in her property, and you'll see the resolution, the plat, the required documents to start that process. And this is on Condor Lane and Jenkins Drive, or where they come together rather.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** All right, Council y'all have any questions? **If not, then I will need a motion to approve the annexation process for the Congo Lane annexation request.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** So moved.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS:** Second.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Have a second from Councilwoman Williams. All in favor show of hands. **Motion carried unanimous.**

**CITY MANAGER REPORT:**

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Just two quick things. Number one, please everyone remember our sewer system cannot handle wipes even if it says they're biodegradable. Do not put them into the city sewer system. It is causing problems all over the city. And secondly, City Hall received a petition form regarding one of the applications on Main Street for the liquor store. Just want to go on the record. We do have that, but that is for the next meeting. OK. So just want to acknowledge we do have the petition and the Council has it. Other than that, I think I'm good right now.

**NO OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**GRAHAM SNYDER:** Could you once again elaborate on the Congo Lane annexation and what the parameters are?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** OK, so if you go down Congo, if you go down Forest Lake, if I'm thinking right, and you turn left on Congo Lane. You'll see Jenkins Drive going off to the right. And there's a two-acre parcel right there where the family is asking to get city water. And you know, the policy is now we don't give city water unless you're in the city. She's asking to come into the city.

**GRAHAM SNYDER:** What about those entities that are currently receiving water and sewer that are outside the city? Are they going to annex into the city?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** So that is a significant problem. We've identified over, what did we come up with, about 400 people outside the city that are getting city services and we're working to resolve that within the law. Now whether that's going to be a substantial rate increase, or whether that's going to be. I just don't know what that's going to be. I'll be honest. It's a problem we've got to work through and it's a problem we're not going to exacerbate by doing it anymore. As long as the Council stays firm on that.

**BRIAN DENNIS:** What's the zoning for the annexation?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** R-1, I'm sorry I forgot to mention it.

**BRIAN DENNIS:** Everything that is put in through the annexation has to be R-1, there are no options?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** No, Sir. We changed that so that the Council can approve any annexation you request now.

**BRIAN DENNIS:** So it can be whatever you request with the annexation?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes, the homeowner or the property owners requested an R-1. And my understanding, and y'all correct me, is it's residential. They're wanting to live there.

**BRIAN DENNIS:** But you can request now to get water if you have a multifamily lot.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** If you come into the city. And if it's zoned appropriately.

**BRIAN DENNIS:** If it is zoned appropriately. What do you mean?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Well, R-1 has requirements, R-2, B-1, and B-2 depending on where you want to put it and what the zoning rules are. So if you asked to bring it in R2, and the Council agrees to do that and then agrees to run water to you, yes. But that's a lot of what ifs. And I can't tell you what they'll do till they have the facts to consider it.

**BRIAN DENNIS:** Right. I got a piece of property that has two houses on it. And it is on five acres. I want to get city water to both those houses on that 5-acre parcel. It should be multi-family when it's annexed in.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** It's got to go through the P&Z process, the annexation process, and then finally come to them. So I don't want to even hazard a guess yet. But I'll be glad to talk to you afterwards. And if I'm wrong on that, we'll get Rita to help me out. I think we're still going through P&Z, right or we're cutting them, no, April said we're cutting them completely out. OK, so you can bring it all to the Council.

**CITY CLERK SHEFFIELD:** And that is only if you qualify to get water or sewer there. There may not be a way to get it to that property.

**BRIAN DENNIS:** Right, right. Once you get past the hurdle of water can be there. With two properties on the parcel, it can't be R-1.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** I would think you'd have to bring that. You're asking me how? What if? You know, without me even knowing.

**BRIAN DENNIS:** Now we actually had called about getting water for these two houses.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** OK, I'm sorry. I would say just my guess is R-2 is what it would.

**CLERK SHEFFIELD:** You would still have to make sure that it fits the criteria. **INSPECTOR WHITE:** You would also have to make sure it follows lot size and footage requirements.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Right. And that's part of the rule, if it creates an island, you can't come in. An island is a piece of property completely surrounded by the county.

**CLERK SHEFFIELD:** It has got to touch something that is already city. You can't just skip a whole area and then annex in.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** They need to get with you after the meeting.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yeah. I agree.

**BRIAN DENNIS:** It's got to be bordered by other city property.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** The best thing is if you're interested in that, get your plats, get all your stuff, and come down here to City Hall and talk to them. Because like I said, right now you're asking about something that we have no idea what you're talking about. We'll be here all night trying to figure if we could get you

water and annex you in. We don't know. So the best thing is to bring you plats of what you're talking about?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Just apply. That's step one.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** And then come down and they'll be glad to help you go through that process and tell you yea or nay. It'll come before us before we can, you know, we can do it.

**VIA FACEBOOK:**

**COUNCILOR HAMILTON:** I am sorry that I was not able to attend. I had to report to Milledgeville today to re-qualify. Thank you for your patience! I have heard the meeting and documenting accordingly. Thank you again for your concerns and helping this city move forward.

**CHARLOTTE HOPKINS:** Thank you all for presenting these live. We appreciate it.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**On a motion from Councilor Mullis and a second from Councilor Woodard, the meeting was adjourned.**

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CHAIRMAN

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CITY CLERK