

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF SKY VALLEY, GEORGIA
March 31, 2015
Wednesday, 10:00 AM
FELLOWSHIP HALL, 817 SKY VALLEY WAY**

MINUTES

Mayor Goodgame called the meeting to order.

Those present: Mayor Goodgame, Councilors Greene, Howard, Larsen, Lively, City Manager Lapeyrouse, Chief Dills, and City Clerk Cantrell.

Cathy Turner gave the invocation. Mayor Goodgame led the Pledge of Allegiance.

SPECIAL BUSINESS

City Clerk Cantrell administered the oath of office to Councilor Milner Lively.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilor Larsen made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2015 Regular Council Meeting, 2nd Councilor Howard, unanimously approved.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Councilor Greene made a motion to adopt the agenda, 2nd Councilor Larsen. Councilor Howard said he would like to add a Resolution Honoring the Service of Councilor Whatley to the agenda. Councilor Greene amended his motion to include this addition. The motion passed unanimously.

MAYOR'S REMARKS

Mayor Goodgame said he spoke at the State of Rabun address. It was recorded by Sky 104, and they are airing segments of it on the radio.

He said that Councilor Lively spoke to someone with the Georgia Municipal Association, GMA, about the situation with the Verizon cell tower. GMA recommended contacting their legal division to see if they can assist us in finding out information. We continue to pursue every avenue possible in working with Verizon to have the cell tower installed as soon as possible. He added that Verizon has been selling some of their wireless division to Frontier, and he does not know if this is impacting the Sky Valley tower or not.

We have added a new event to our marketing events this year – a beer fest on Memorial Day weekend. City Clerk Cantrell has been working very hard on this event.

We are also continuing our landscaping and beautification work. We will have a joint beautification and marketing committee meetings to help schedule during the year when different beautification projects should be done. We are working on a landscape plan for visitor center and an area where people can have a picnic lunch.

COUNCIL REMARKS

Councilor Larsen said he would like us to contact Georgia Power because they put an electrical box just a little past where the pavement ends on Knob Drive that is incredibly crooked. He wants to see if we can get it leveled.

CITY MANAGER & DEPARTMENT REPORTS – EXCEPTIONS AND QUESTIONS

City Manager Lapeyrouse reported on the snow from February.

We should have all of our garbage equipment in by the end of April, but we are going to move forward with the city picking up trash on Mondays and recycle on Thursdays beginning April 6th. We have had several complaints about garbage being missed by Waste Away, so we are looking forward to providing this service in-house again.

City Manager Lapeyrouse reported that the Beer Festival and 5K tickets will be live and on sale by the end of this week.

Mayor Goodgame said that because of the snow, we were unable to meet last month. He said that some of the outlying and steeper roads are very dangerous for the city employees and our equipment to handle. We are looking at subbing out scraping some of these streets. We had a situation where a police vehicle almost slid off a very steep road. We understand that everyone wants to be able to get out and drive, but we have to put our employees' safety ahead of clearing the snow. He said that we contracted with someone to use a four-wheeler to clear some areas, and we will continue to do so in the future.

NEW BUSINESS

- Resolution – Healthcare Reimbursement Plan

Mayor Goodgame said this is part of the transition from the group plan we had with GMA to a reimbursement plan and provide the same level of benefit to the employees. City Manager Lapeyrouse said that allows the city to reimburse the employees for their health insurance. She explained that now, each employee is responsible for obtaining health insurance, and that this plan allows the city to reimburse them up to \$700.00 per month. Councilor Greene made a motion to approve the reimbursement plan, 2nd Councilor Howard. Councilor Howard said there was no cost schedule attached to this and asked about the rates. City Manager Lapeyrouse explained that the plans are through the healthcare marketplace and rates are based on family income so each employee's rate is different. She said that this reimbursement amount was sufficient to cover each employee's cost for health insurance, and it is less than what the employee-only premium was with the group plan. The motion passed unanimously.

- Proposed 30' x 30' easement to Windstream for new switchbox near Sky Valley Fire Station

Mayor Goodgame presented the proposed easement and said that the area had been flagged, and it is very unobtrusive. City Manager Lapeyrouse added that it will help reduce the demand on another switchbox and will help with internet speeds. Councilor Greene made a motion to approve, 2nd Councilor Howard, unanimously approved.

- Modification of Members of the Visitor Center Committee

City Clerk Cantrell said that Lynn Becker and Myrna Warner would like to serve on the Visitor Center Committee. Councilor Larsen made a motion to add them to the committee, 2nd Councilor Greene, unanimously approved.

- Bates-Carter Engagement Letter for FY 2014 Audit

Mayor Goodgame presented the audit engagement letter adding that Bates-Carter did a wonderful job with last year's audit and helped us get some prior years' adjustments made. Councilor Larsen made a motion to approve, Greene, unanimously approved.

- Event Dates

- Beer Festival and Run – Saturday, May 23
- Fall Fest – Saturday, October 17

Mayor Goodgame said we want to approve dates for the Beer Festival and Run and the FallFest. Councilor Howard made a motion to approve the event dates as stated, 2nd Councilor Greene, unanimously approved.

- Ordinance – Fee Schedule

Mayor Goodgame said that we have an ordinance that sets fees for garbage and water rates and also for different types of inspections and services we provide. We need to update this ordinance because we changed the water and garbage rates, and we also want to change some of the permit fees for work to your home to a flat fee of \$75.00 to help encourage home improvements. He said he wanted to change the language for unfinished areas under building permit fees and make that a flat fee of \$75.00 as well. Councilor Howard made a motion to approve the Fee Schedule Ordinance with this change, 2nd Councilor Greene, unanimously approved.

Helen Kleiber asked if there is a fee for when we have to go pick up scattered garbage. City Manager Lapeyrouse said our garbage ordinance does allow us to charge a fee, however we need to update the garbage ordinance, and we will need to discuss that along with the new ordinance.

- Community Garden

Mayor Goodgame said he was starting heirloom tomato seeds, and when he was researching this, he discovered that community gardens are on the upswing. He said that City Manager Lapeyrouse had researched this previously but it never got off the ground. He asked if the council was interested in this that we pursue a community garden. Councilor Greene made a motion to approve creation of a community garden, 2nd Councilor Larsen, unanimously approved.

- Resolution Honoring Councilor Whatley for his Service to the City

Mayor Goodgame said that we have a special session on the April agenda to honor Councilor Whatley and present a plaque to Kristen at that meeting. Councilor Howard read the Resolution and made a motion to approve, 2nd Councilor Greene, unanimously approved.

PUBLIC FORUM AND GENERAL COMMENTS

Steve Brett thanked Officer Edwards for his assistance during the snow storm.

A resident asked if the City will be pursuing the Neighborhood Watch program and signs. Mayor Goodgame said that we have a Neighborhood Watch Committee, and that we will be installing the signs. He added that the signs are privately funded.

Debbie McAfee asked when the Visitor Center Committee should plan to meet and staff the visitor center. Mayor Goodgame said that they will want to meet at the end of April or early May, and that City Clerk Cantrell will be organizing a meeting.

Bob MacNair asked if we will pay for the Visitor Center parking lot paving with our SPLOST money because there are also several streets that need to be paved. Mayor Goodgame said that the city has received SPLOST funds of \$350,000 toward paving and has \$75,000 saved from 2014 plus what we budgeted for 2015. All of these funds will be combined for the 2015 paving projects.

Susan Cillo asked where we are on negotiations with Merrill to tear down the old lodge. Mayor Goodgame said that they are dead. He said we can force him to tear it down, however if we do, we put our monthly leases with him in jeopardy such as the waterfall and the city park. He said he is concerned with us losing the only recreational assets we have. He also owns the overlook on Hwy 246, and he has allowed us to have our sign there. Our biggest priorities are getting cell service and sewer. He met with a County Commissioner this morning discussing sewer, and he said that the County Commission is aware that if Sky Valley had sewer and could have some development, it would also help the whole County generate tourism and income.

Lynn Becker said that on Sky Valley Way, heading toward the entrance, from the speed bumps to the entrance on the right, it would look much better if some of the brush was cleared. Mayor Goodgame said we would check to see if that is on right of way or golf course property and see about it being cleaned up.

Councilor Larsen made a motion to go into executive session, 2nd Councilor Greene, unanimously approved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilor Howard made a motion to reconvene regular session, 2nd Councilor Greene, unanimously approved.

Personnel

Councilor Larsen made a motion to approve personnel changes of:

Isaac Cannon – from part time to full time public works employee

Jerry Shope – moved from police officer to public works department

Cory Justus – from on-call officer to full time officer

The motion was seconded by Councilor Greene, unanimously approved.

Real Estate

Councilor Larsen made a motion to approve Mayor Goodgame and City Manager Lapeyrouse to discuss a possible real estate acquisition with the property owner, 2nd Councilor Greene, unanimously approved.

Councilor Howard made a motion to adjourn, 2nd Councilor Greene, unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted:



Hughel Goodgame, Mayor

Attested:



Mandi Cantrell, City Clerk