

City of Reidsville
City Council Meeting Minutes
Monday December 12, 2022

5:00 P.M.

Draft Copy- Not approved by Council until January 9, 2023

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Reidsville City Council was held on Monday, December 12, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. Members of Council present:

Carolyn Crume- Blackshear

Lindsay Bennett

Donald Prestage

Doug Williams

Verdie Williams

City Attorney DuAnn Cowart-Davis was present. Nivea Jackson, City Clerk was present also.

The audience was welcomed and led in prayer by Mayor Curtis Colwell. The audience then recited the Pledge of Allegiance in unison. The Mayor asked to entertain a motion to accept the minutes from the November 14th meeting. Councilmember Donald Prestage asked that there be a correction made to the November meeting minutes to reflect his absence. He also requested that motions be recorded to reflect each member's vote. Following the discussion, Mr. Prestage made a motion to accept the minutes and that the necessary corrections be made as noted above.

Motion by: Donald Prestage

2nd by: Verdie Williams

Motion Carried: Unanimously

Next the Mayor open the floor to the Department Supervisors for their reports. Jimmy Brown reported for the Fire Department. Stacey Wilds gave the monthly report for the Reidsville Police Department. Rodney Deloach gave the report for Street and Lanes and Water and Sewer Department. Special note was to all of the limb pickups. Councilman Prestage asked if the Department was caught up with delivering poly carts to residents with broken trash cans. Rodney answered that "No...Nivea called and ordered new cans weeks ago and we are still waiting for them to be delivered." Councilwoman Mrs. Bennett gave an update to the Council on the Recreation Department. She reported that the Recreation Department is looking at some lighting grants. Councilwoman Mrs. Blackshear reported on behalf of the Administration Department. Mrs. Blackshear introduced the new Finance Clerk, Mrs. Kelly McRae. She also announced that

the tax bills did go out over the last week. She stated that our City Clerk, Mrs. Nivea Jackson has completed a certification in “Municipal Revenue Administration”, and with one class remaining to complete the “Personnel Management Certificate”. One of our high school work study students, Miss Areli Esquivel will be leaving the office in a few days. She will be greatly missed because of her ability to translate with our many Hispanic customers. She also announced that on Friday, December 16th, the City will be holding it’s Christmas Dinner at 11:30 a.m. at the Reidsville Garden Club. City Hall will be closed that day for lunch. Also, on December 29th, 2022 the City Hall staff will be conducting their year-end close-out. The office will be closed to the public on this day. The new year’s holiday schedule will cause us to change to our January planning session date, because the first Monday- January 2nd is a holiday. Councilwoman Mrs. Bennett made a motion to conduct the planning session on Tuesday January 3, and continue with the regular meeting as scheduled on Monday January 9, at 5:00 p.m.

Motion by: Lindsay Bennett

2nd by: Carolyn Blackshear

Motion Carried: Unanimously

Councilman Prestage asked the City Clerk for the addresses that are missing for GTS for them to continue sending delinquent letters. Missing addresses have new owners with no updates. Jackson advises Mr. Prestage that she has been out for a week sick. She would forward addresses as soon as possible. Mrs. Kimberly Poulos gave a statement for the DDA. Mrs. Poulos reports they are looking into grants for the Recreation Dept. They have also been asked to check into electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. Bennett encourages Polous to seek out the City of Metter for guidance. The Mayor added that a company has already reached out inquiring about a refueling station. Councilwoman Bennett adds that her husband has been meeting with the people from the upcoming Hyundai Plant and that refueling stations will be huge in Tattnall, Toombs, and Evans.

Councilwoman Verdie Williams gave an update on the Surrency Playground. She stated the Fire Department is going to coordinate with the playground committee to put together the bleachers before MLK Day Celebration. Mr. Devin Jarriel, the City’s Building Inspector was on the agenda to give a report for building inspections for the first time at the City Council meeting.

Under Old Business, Mrs. DuAnne Davis, City Attorney, gave an update of dilapidated properties. Councilwoman Lindsay Bennett made a motion to move forward with fining, serving, or issuing notices to the Burns property owner, also to a property recently sold on MLK Drive and on Church Street. Attorney Davis explained the process of the City legally taking ownership, cleaning the property, and then charging the property owner. Councilwoman Bennett says, “this property has been fined for over a year.” Attorney Davis reminded her that the Council made a motion to give the Church Street property 90 days to clean the property. Councilwoman Bennett made another motion to move forward with legal action against the Burns’ property for continued dilapidation.

Motion by: Lindsay Bennett

2nd by: Verdie Williams

Motion Carried: With one opposition- Donald Prestage

Mr. Devin Jarriel asked the question as the Building Inspector, “what about all of the other properties?” What we do to one we have to do to others, there are so many more that are just as bad as this property. Councilwoman Bennett agrees that there is, but this property is the first one of them all and we are still discussing this years later.”

The Ethics Committee was the next topic of conversation. Councilwoman Lindsay Bennett previously submitted the name of Mr. Brian Nerzig as her choice to serve on the Ethics Board. Each Councilmember submitted a name written on paper to Duann Davis to be tallied. While the tally was going on, the Mayor was going moving forward with the agenda. The next item on the agenda was the USDA loan. The City Clerk, Mrs. Jackson updated the Council regarding the loan. She stated that, “The loan numbers that Bill Powell gave to us previously were being reviewed. The Council would not need to vote to raise the water bills at this time. In a previous year, the Council had voted for a 1% increase each year to keep from having to vote a hike later. Mr. Sydney Clifton, former Mayor was in the audience and responded aloud, “That’s true”. Mrs. Nivea Jackson also informed the Council of Sam Sullivan’s calls to wanting to meet with the Council to increase the trash fees. Councilwoman Verdie Williams says that she distinctly remembers that Attorney Duann Davis added a clause to not revisit this again no time soon. The last increase took place only four to five months ago. Councilwoman Bennett agreed. The Mayor says that he would not entertain the idea.

The next item of discussion was for GMA training. Councilwoman Blackshear reminded everyone that the Council has been encouraged to pick a date and the training would go on regardless of the number in attendance. She also reminded the Council that the Attorney General training would be February 22, 2023 all day at City Hall. Councilwoman Bennett stated she will put in for a day off and she would have to let us know. City Clerk Mrs. Jackson asked each member to give 3 possible days that she can give to GMA.

Next item on the agenda is the MKL Day Parade by New Horizons. Councilwoman Lindsay Bennett made a motion to allow for the MLK Day Parade on Monday, January 16th, 2023.

Motion by: Lindsay Bennett

2nd by: Carolyn Blackshear

Motion Carried: Unanimously

At this time, Attorney Davis presented the Council with the Sexual Harassment Policy to be voted on and enforced at the next meeting. Previously, the Council received a Social Media policy to adopt and enforce. Councilwoman Blackshear proposed in a form of a motion to hold the vote and vote both policies in at the next meeting so that Council will have ample time to review each.

Motion by: Carolyn Blackshear

2nd by: Doug Williams

Motion Carried: Unanimously

Next item on the agenda is repairing of the City Well. Public Works Director - Rodney Deloach has only ascertained one bid for the Well. He has others scheduled to come and give bids. The

estimate is around \$9,000. Councilwoman Lindsay Bennett is suggesting that the Council see all bids before making a decision. Deloach expressed that he hopes that the decision can wait that long. He has been trying to maintain it as much as possible. The purchase is just necessary at this point. Councilwoman Bennett offers a motion to wait until Deloach submits all bids.

Motion by: Lindsay Bennett

2nd By: Donald Prestage

Motion Carried: Unanimously

Special Events were discussed. The Mayor was letting the Council know that when a special event form is submitted, he will let the Council know whether a vote is needed or not, he will make them aware of all events. Councilwoman Bennett interjected and stated that she does not know anything about the City businesses or events. Councilwoman Bennett says she was never informed of T-Mobile coming to Reidsville. She said she only found out about it two weeks ago when she saw the signs going up. Nivea Jackson added that the Vickie Nails, with the DDA brought it up in Council meetings before. Bennett says it was not! Bennett says she shouldn't be asked about things in public that City Hall hasn't informed her about. She states she cannot come up to or make calls to City Hall daily because she works. Donald Prestage made a motion to go into Executive session. The Mayor incepted the motion and asked Attorney Davis did she have those names ready to announce for Ethic Committee before we go into Executive session.

Attorney Davis announced to the Council the names of individuals voted on who will serve on the Ethics Committee. Attorney Davis announced the results; the votes were 3 to 2. Mrs. Mordena Richardson received 3 votes and Mr. Brian Nerzig received 2 votes. Councilman Prestage stated that the Charter states that the persons must be voted in by 4/5 votes of the 6 members being Mayor and 5 Council members. Councilman Donald Prestage made a motion that we wait to vote to get further clarification. Councilwoman Lindsay Bennett made an additional motion to accept Attorney Holly Dyer. City Clerk Nivea Jackson informed the Council there are three motions on the floor. Attorney Davis reads charter and clarifies all three members must be verified by vote of 4/5 of Council and Mayor. Councilman Donald Prestage rescinds his motion for Executive session. Attorney Davis then clarifies who was nominated for the Committee. Councilwoman Lindsay Bennett offers another motion to accept Attorney Holly Dyer as legal Counsel to the Ethic Committee.

Motion by: Lindsay Bennett

2nd by: Donald Prestage

Motion Carried: Unanimously

Next vote will be for Mordena Richardson. Donald Prestage made a motion to accept Brian Nerzig for the ethics committee.

Motion by: Donald Prestage

2nd by; Lindsay Bennett

Motion not carried: (Yay's- Bennet & Prestage)

Nay's – (C. Blackshear, V. Williams, D. Williams)

Next a motion was made by Douglas Williams to accept Mordena Richardson for the Ethics committee.

Motion by: Doug Williams

2nd by: Carolyn Blackshear

Motion Carried: Yay's (C. Blackshear, D. Prestage, V. Williams, D. Williams) Nay's (L. Bennett)

Attorney Davis advises that the Committee has 2 voted members, Attorney Holly Dyar and Mrs. Mordena Richardson. Davis also advised that on this vote the Mayor will need to vote with the Council if 4/5 of the Council didn't vote the same way. The third person is not chosen by the Mayor according to the Charter.

Verdie Williams makes a motion to go into Executive session @5:36pm

Motion by: Verdie Williams

2nd by: Doug Williams

Motion Carried: Unanimously

Motion to return to Regular Session at 5:58pm

Motion by: Donald Prestage

2nd by: C. Blackshear

Motion carried: Unanimously

A motion to adjourn was made by Doug Williams.

Motion by: Doug Williams

2nd by: Donald Prestage

Motion carried: Unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.