

**MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING  
CITY OF CAMILLA, GEORGIA  
JANUARY 11, 2021**

The regular meeting of the Mayor and City Council of the City of Camilla was called to order at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, January 11, 2021 by Mayor Owens.

Roll call indicated the following present via teleconference: Councilman Campbell, Councilwoman Willingham, Councilman Morgan, Councilman Twitty, Councilman Pollard, and Councilman Palmer.

City Manager Steve Sykes and City Attorney Tommy Coleman were present via teleconference. City Clerk Cheryl Ford was also in attendance.

**OPENING PRAYER AND PLEDGE**

Mayor Owens gave the invocation and the Mayor led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

On motion by Councilman Campbell, seconded by Councilman Palmer, the January 11, 2021 agenda was approved as presented by a unanimous vote.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On motion by Councilman Twitty, seconded by Councilwoman Willingham, the minutes from the December 14, 2020 City Council Meeting were approved as presented by a unanimous vote.

**SPEAKER APPEARANCES**

Barbara West, scheduled speaker, was not present to speak.

**ELECTION OF MAYOR PROTEM**

Mayor Owens asked for nominations for Mayor Protem for the City of Camilla City Council for year 2021. Councilman Campbell recommended Vernon Twitty. Mayor Owens stated they had a nomination on the floor for Mayor Protem, Vernon Twitty, and stated he would be taking a roll call vote. City Attorney Coleman asked the Mayor to see if there were further nominations before the vote. Mayor Owens asked for other nominations and there were none. Councilman Palmer moved the nomination be closed. The election of Vernon Twitty as Mayor Protem for calendar year 2021 passed by 5-0 vote with Councilman Twitty abstaining.

**CHRISTI DIXON – DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

Mayor Owens stated Christi is at the meeting to talk about COVID-19 testing and vaccinations. Mrs. Dixon thanked them for the invitation to speak and stated she received some questions and hopes to answer those during the discussion. They are still testing in Mitchell County, giving vaccines, and it is a busy time in public health. In mid-December they received 200 doses of COVID vaccine and a week later received 500 doses. They had 700 total doses within the health department the month of December and up to the first of January. They gave vaccines to the health care population which also included long-term care facilities staff and residents that were taken care of by each entity owning the long-term facility. The public health department has not

**CHRISTI DIXON – DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH (cont.)**

vaccinated any of the long-term care facilities such as Pelham Parkway, Mitchell Convalescent, and Savannah Court and those were taken care of by the individual entity. They did ensure all the people were vaccinated and made sure they were covered for their vaccines. They began giving to health care workers in the outer lying areas such as doctors' offices, nurses in corrections departments, and nurses that work in home health along with pharmacies because those are considered clinical. They gave, before this week, about 60 doses and this week received another 500 doses of vaccine for the second round of COVID vaccinations for people who already got their first vaccine. During that phase they were able to vaccinate a few essential workers and public figures they were told they could to begin with. When they started to vaccinate they were told to hold up because health care people around the State had not been all been vaccinated. They wanted to get all the health care workers vaccinated initially. They have now opened up to all first responders, all law enforcement if they are POST certified and in corrections, and people 65 and over along with their care givers. To date they have given 213 vaccines at the health department and today gave about 70. They are able to get more than the 10 doses out of the vial which is a blessing to them because they are allowed to use every drop in the vial. Sometimes they are able to get 11 and sometimes just the 10. They are still testing once a week and saw the numbers spike exponentially for about 2 weeks. They tested 201 one week and the week before 213. This past week they were back down again and tested around 145 and she does not know how many are scheduled for testing this coming week. She looks for a decrease since we are over the hump from the holidays and almost past the 14 days plus from Christmas. She is hoping the test numbers go down this week and is looking to have more RNs for testing, not within the local health department, but at the district level. They are going from city to city doing the testing so they do not have to use their staff at the SPOC site. She stated someone had asked about contact tracing and commented they are not involved with contact tracing in Mitchell County like they were before. They were doing some contact investigations meaning they would call the positives and say "who are your contacts?" and give them information about how to quarantine and isolate themselves. The contact tracing is being done by people hired through the State and work at the district level. She stated she not could answer Mr. Morgan's question about the total contact tracing to determine the source of the resurgence but could assume it is from family contact. Where it started they would not know and even with contact tracing they could not trace it that far. She asked for questions she may not have covered. Councilman Morgan asked if they were finished predicting or was there more. Mrs. Dixon replied the only thing she answered was his question about the seniors who are not ambulatory. Hopefully if they are non-ambulatory they have home health and the home health agency can give the vaccine. They do not have any plans currently to go out and vaccinate in anyone's home. When they come in and get vaccinated they have to wait 15 minutes and have CPR certified people on site. With this vaccine there are potential things that could go wrong and they are more comfortable giving the vaccine inside the health department where they have 5 or 6 CPR certified people along with drugs in a med cart. They have an adequate supply of those drugs as opposed to taking a small amount to someone's home and have to give with potentially just 1 or 2 CPR certified people. Councilman Morgan thanked her for that information and commented he has more questions but would open up to other members first. Councilwoman Willingham asked about the people who would be taking the test, including herself, and for her to go over what the steps are, what people should be looking for, and the process. Mrs. Dixon asked if she was speaking about the testing or the vaccine and



### **CHRISTI DIXON – DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH (cont.)**

Councilwoman Willingham replied the vaccine. Mrs. Dixon replied when they come to the health department they have someone at the door to check temperature, determine if you are having any COVID symptoms, and you have a mask on. Today was their first day doing a number of people and they are scheduled every 15 minutes. Today it worked fabulously for them and no one had to wait in the car. They thought their waiting room would be full with people coming in but the way it is scheduled it flowed and very few people had to sit in the waiting room. When you come in it takes about 10 to 15 minutes to get all the information from you, get you vaccinated, and in the computer. After 15 minutes you can leave and they do not anticipate any one being exposed, to the best of their ability, to anyone having the vaccine. The waiting room is socially distanced and the person monitoring the door is cleaning chairs after you leave and making sure people don't come in if they are symptomatic. They had one person come in today who told them at the door they were not symptomatic but at the window wanted to know when they could get tested because they were having symptoms. Mrs. Dixon asked if that answered her question and Councilwoman Willingham replied she was trying to make sure when people got there they had everything they need, which is basically themselves. Mrs. Dixon commented they are asking them to bring their insurance information. There is no charge for the vaccine and to her knowledge never will be. Right now insurance companies are not set up for them to charge an administration fee, which is how they get paid. It is being provided free and they are hoping once insurance catches up and gets all the codes in place and they can bill the insurance company an administration fee for the vaccinations and recoup some of the money it is costing them to provide the vaccine. If they do not have insurance it does not matter and they still get the vaccine. If they have insurance and choose not to give to them they still receive a vaccine. Councilman Pollard wanted to know how they are communicating with the public. Mrs. Dixon replied their public information officer (PIO) at the district level is putting out press releases, in the news media, and the public health Facebook page. She has sent some of her testing information to city leadership and if she hasn't sent Steve's January test sites, they are testing every Wednesday in Mitchell County from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Most of it is word of mouth, people calling, their PIO, and their Facebook. Councilman Pollard asked if it was their Facebook or local public health. He asked about age groups, when changes are made and who they distribute to, and how it is being handled. She commented they met weekly with district level people and are in daily communication via email. They are getting the go ahead to release the other population and right now have a step-by-step guideline from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). The ACIP determines when the vaccines are forwarded and who gets them. They have a step-by-step stay which the Governor and State chose to modify because it is just a recommendation from the ACIP. Councilman Pollard asked if it is by appointment only to be vaccinated or can people just walk in. Mrs. Dixon replied it is appointment only and the reason is because the vaccine is so fragile. They do not have the Pfizer but the Moderna so it is not as fragile as the Pfizer. If she has one person walk in at 8:00 a.m. and that is the only person she has to walk in that day, once the vial is open it has to be used within 6 hours. If she is scheduling people and has extra doses that day, since sometimes there are 11 doses in the vial, and someone walks in she can get them while they are in the health department if she knows she has the extra dose. It is best for them to schedule because they can schedule up to 60 a day. They are concentrating on providing extended hours and maybe a weekend clinic but would still schedule people to come in. Once they open the vial they have to get all 10 doses within 6 hours. Councilman Pollard asked for a phone number people could call to schedule a



### **CHRISTI DIXON – DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH (cont.)**

vaccination. Mrs. Dixon replied the district put out through their PIO an Albany number and they begged them until they finally gave them control over their appointments. They can call the health department at 355-3081 and when the lady starts speaking if they will dial 7500 it will take them to their clerk or they can dial extension 7501. If they don't get an answer they can leave a message and will be called back as soon as they can. They are either on the other line or helping someone at the window. If it rings for a long time it will ring to the outer offices and the nurses will catch it. Councilman Pollard thanked her for the information. Councilman Morgan thanked her for bring this important information to them and the citizens watching. He asked her to repeat the total number of vaccines administered. She replied 203 and they are scheduled through January 28<sup>th</sup>. The next available appointment is January 29<sup>th</sup>. He asked if they received 500 more for the second round and if the 500 would go back to the total surplus. She replied it could back into the surplus but right now they have tried to plan ahead to do both. They can still order first round doses and as of today they are not limited on how many they order. They are trying not to have too many on hand so the larger areas can have access to them. When they finish the 200 they have 300 on the books for this week, 300 on the books for next week, and 300 the next week and know they have to order more of the first round doses. They will be ordering 500 more doses today and trying to stay ahead of the game. Councilman Campbell asked when they come to get the first round and complete it, were they prepared to give them a date for the second round at that time or do they have to call back. Mrs. Dixon replied they are giving appointments for the second round and wanted to make sure those are scheduled so the people can get back in and they are not filling up with first round doses. The 20<sup>th</sup> of the month they will start doing both. They started on the 18<sup>th</sup> last month so January 20<sup>th</sup> will be their first day to give the second dose. On that date they will be giving first and second doses. They are scheduling so those don't fill up with first doses and prevent being able to give second doses which is why they are considering extended hours and potentially some weekends. Once they start filling up the days ahead with second doses the people will still need to be vaccinated. She commented they have tested 1,247 in Mitchell County and the last two weeks had 35 positive which is 13.6% of the population. When you look at the contiguous counties we are probably right in the middle of those. Baker has 7% and other counties around us from 13 to 25 percent. We are not the highest but we are not the lowest. They would like to be the lowest but she does not know if we will ever beat Baker County. Councilman Morgan asked about the testing opportunities and for her to go over them again. She replied they are testing every Wednesday from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon this month and as long as the numbers stay up they will continue every week. Testing is at First Baptist Church and appointments are needed but not required. No one will be turned away if they do not have an appointment. They can be registered on site and it makes it flow a lot faster if they are registered and do not have to wait in line. If you have made an appointment and are behind three car loads of people having to be scheduled, it may take them an extra 3 to 5 minutes to schedule someone. If you are sitting behind someone who has to schedule it may seem a little unfair at times, especially when the lines get really long. Mayor Owens asked if there were any other questions for Christi. Councilman Twitty asked if she had a phone number to call to make an appointment for the test. She replied the testing number is different from the vaccination number and is 352-6567. The first day they opened up it was the same number for both and had over 300 people call so the people waiting in the queue were getting cut off. They call the health department number at 355-3081 for the vaccine and call 355-6567 for the testing. Councilman



### **CHRISTI DIXON – DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH (cont.)**

Pollard asked if there was an expiration date for the vaccine. She replied there is and once they get the vaccine in they have to scan the barcode on each package and expiration is usually about 6 months from the day they get it. It is good in the refrigerator for up to 6 months and they keep it in the freezer and rotate out what they need each day to the refrigerator, even though it is good in the refrigerator for up to 6 months. Mayor Owens asked if there were other questions for Christi. There being none she commented she really appreciates the support she is getting from them and the opportunity to share.

### **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

City Manager Sykes reported on the following:

1. Quit Claim Deed/Abandoned Alley – this does not require Council action but for their information he included in the packet minutes from September 2016 showing the City of Camilla took action to close a public alley. The Council took action and the alley was closed. The next item is a quit claim deed which was never completed. The reason it is coming up now is because someone who has property that backs up to the alley is trying to include the alley in with their deed. In order for them to do that the deed needs to be signed by the City so the property can properly close. He has given the deed to the Mayor and asked for his signature. Mayor Owens requested him to present at the meeting so they would be aware he was signing a quit claim deed so long after Council action. Mayor Owens commented the only thing he wanted to make sure of before he signed anything related to property is they are aware what he is doing and if there were objections or questions they had an opportunity to weigh in before he signs, considering it was from 2016. He asked for any thoughts or concerns from Council. There were none.
2. Hazardous Pay Award for December 2020 – they heard Christi talk about the numbers we are seeing locally and the numbers are approaching the same levels we saw in April at the beginning of the pandemic. Early on a hazardous level was set in the policy which was 5 new positive cases per day and 300 positive cases in a 28 day period per 100,000. They have been tracking those numbers and December eclipsed the threshold. He will be implementing the haz pay policy for the month of December. The numbers we have seen since the end of December and into the first of January are actually higher. He anticipates they will implement haz pay for January as well. Just as a reminder the hazardous pay is based on the fact employees are working in hazardous environments and having to take precautions themselves and for the customers they are providing services for safely. It equates to \$400 per employee per month. This is an additional hazardous pay stipend per month per employee. It does not require Council action but he wanted to make them aware he would be approving this for employees in December and January as well. The December threshold was 7 new cases per day and right now through the 11<sup>th</sup> of January it is 10 per day, which is double the threshold. He then reviewed the COVID report in detail.
3. The last item is a proposal for public Wi-Fi hotspots, which he received after he sent the packet out. As previously shared one of the projects he would like to roll-out for the community are hot spots that will especially affect kids who are being schooled at home right now or who don't have access to public internet at home for school based activities. They identified 3 locations in town, open to the public, that people can go to, gain public

### **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT (cont.)**

access, and connect to the internet. One of the 3 locations is the pavilion at the end of The Depot which is a covered area open to the public. The second is Toombs Park and is basically the whole area. The third location is the Boys and Girls Club which is owned by the City and open to the public. He received a proposal that he shared with the Mayor and presented options: the Council gives him a green light and he will order the materials and have the hot spots up and available to the public within 7 to 8 weeks. There is lead time because the equipment is highly sought after and everybody is doing the same thing. The price is \$22,500.00 for all 3 locations and gives them flexibility to go up to 8 locations in the future without the same cost per location amount. Right now it averages \$7,500.00 per location and in the future they could add each new location for around \$5,000.00. The source of funding would be CNS funds and funds are available to install if they are ready. He thinks they should limit locations right now to those three but in the future he could come back with additional locations. This will be part of our CNS system and we own the equipment and monitor and govern access to the equipment. He does not recommend they charge for use but recommends they put in filters to safeguard the type of information since children will have access to. Other than that he would say if the Council is okay with moving forward he can begin ordering equipment to have these installed. If there is any interest in waiting they can come back with information at the February meeting. Mayor Owens asked him to briefly go over the monthly cost for the initial setup. City Manager Sykes responded the monthly cost is \$100.00 per circuit and there are 3 circuits. Each location will have a dedicated circuit so every time you add another location you have \$100.00 per month for that location. Mayor Owens stated the cost is \$22,500.00 to get the three sites up and the ability to expand to eight. It will also come with \$3,600.00 per year for the three initial sites. What he explained to the City Manager is he wanted to give them [the Council] an opportunity to think about it or bring back for the February Council Meeting. It is a sole source setup and considering the amount of \$22,500.00, prior to him pulling the trigger, is there any councilmember who wants to wait until February or is everyone good to go. Councilman Twitty stated he would make a motion to accept the proposal. Mayor Owens stated what he was looking for is unanimous consent and asked if any councilmember objects to the City Manager moving forward with the contract. No one objected. Mayor Owens stated they have unanimous consent for the City Manager to move forward. Councilman Pollard stated it will benefit our citizens and with kids being out of school it definitely needs to move forward. Mayor Owens commented the City Manager has the green light to move forward. City Manager Sykes stated one thing he wanted to add on is a big piece of the project is installing a camera at each location. He asked Mayor Owens to comment on the benefit of having cameras at each Wi-Fi location. Mayor Owens commented they will be able to record on-site and remotely everything happening at the locations. It is a continuous recording and over a certain period of time will record over itself if we needed that type of information. Overall, it is a tremendous benefit to the community as a whole if we ever need the specs of the camera system. Councilman Pollard asked the benefit of the camera system and if it was legal and what is behind the cameras. City Manager Sykes stated these are public locations where we will have equipment. If you think about the fact there will be kids at these locations, he thinks it is good to have a



### **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT (cont.)**

camera system should there be any incidents. They can go back and roll the video tape and provide law enforcement with footage that could be helpful to resolve any concerns. They want parents of kids to feel their kids are safe and secure at these locations so the fact it is being monitored should provide a higher level of safety and security. Councilman Pollard asked if it was just confined to these locations and how far it reached out in the community. City Manager Sykes stated the Wi-Fi system will give coverage of about 300 feet and outside of that it starts to drop off. At Toombs Park they will have equipment mounted near the basketball courts and will also have a camera mounted at that location. More than 150' to 200' it is not effective at all and we can decide the spots to survey and have the camera. It is not a rotating camera, is fixed, and limited in how far you can see. Councilman Pollard commented he wanted to make sure they are not violating citizen's rights. Mayor Owens stated the City Manager mentioned the camera system and monitoring but there is no live monitoring of the cameras. City Manager Sykes stated that was correct and if an incident happens tomorrow at The Depot pavilion area they could pull the video for the time it happened and provide to law enforcement. They will not have someone watching while it happened since we don't have the staff or a monitoring center that could do that. It is similar to what is at convenience stores where it is being recorded and held for a certain period of time but then eventually gets recorded over. Councilman Campbell asked if the \$22,500.00 included the cameras and City Manager Sykes stated it did. The \$5,000.00 he quoted for future locations includes Wi-Fi and the camera. Mayor Owens asked if any councilmember wanted to have further discussion on this at the February committee meeting. This is not a must do tonight and the primary purpose is we have the number in and a sole source and can go ahead and get the equipment in. Hearing none, Mayor Owens stated the City Manager has the green light to move forward. City Manager Sykes stated he would keep them updated weekly as the project rolls out.

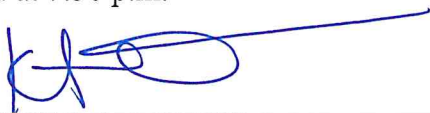
### **MAYOR'S COMMENTS**

Mayor Owens stated one of his duties as Mayor is to appoint members to the Housing Authority Board. He spoke with the Executive Director and talked about the City's partnership with regard to Toombs Park and his plans to be an active participant in helping improve resident participation and identifying future residents and citizens willing to serve on the Board. He is reappointing Bonita White to the Board with her term ending December 31, 2025 and Maggie Harris with her term ending December 31, 2021. He thanked them both for their willingness to serve and looks forward to working with the Board this year.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

On motion by Councilman Pollard, seconded by Councilman Campbell, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

BY:

  
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KELVIN M. OWENS, MAYOR

ATTEST:

  
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CHERYL FORD, CLERK