

**MINUTES – 3<sup>rd</sup> BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING  
CALLED MEETING  
CITY OF CAMILLA, GEORGIA  
SEPTEMBER 21, 2022 ~ 5:00 P.M.**

Mayor Owens announced this is a combination of the third and final budget public hearing for the 2022/2023 budget and after the public hearing they will go to the Called Meeting. The primary purpose of the Called Meeting is for the Council to decide to adopt the budget as presented.

**BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING**

City Manager Stroud stated the budget and position and classification pay plan go together. In the position and classification plan he made two small changes, one to change the title from Main Street Director to Downtown Camilla. He updated the customer service managers to bring both managers on par with one another and corrected the title change in the pay classification. Mayor Owens asked if they would also be adopting the position and classification plan as presented with the budget. City Manager Stroud replied yes. He stated in their packet the numbers changed about six million dollars from last time they met to account for the four million pulled down from MEAG and the \$1.5 million drawn down for the sprayfields. Mayor Owens stated the \$1.5 is inside of the four million in terms of the transfer. In terms of accounting the \$1.5 went to the general fund. Financial Consultant Roberts replied the \$1.5 is for the GEFA fund and the other four million is the drawdown. Mayor Owens stated when talking about the \$1.5 million it will be a little short of that and somewhere around nine hundred thousand to one million, not quite minus seven hundred thousand. What they are talking about is the anticipated GEFA sprayfield money. City Manager Stroud stated as they were building the budget they realized the top budget priority was to include a level of funding sufficient to pay our outstanding debt obligations, maintain the current level of service, and fund future projects. That meant providing funds for street resurfacing, water and sewer projects, and a retention incentive for all employees. The formula used is in their packet. Another priority for the budget was to retain sufficient funds for 'just in case' projects such as the reserves. On page 3, Funding Summary, they will see the increases from last time. The General Fund was about nine or ten million and we are now at about twelve million dollars and includes overdrafts, audits, and everything we possibly missed last time. They just went through a big audit and had items that were over and made sure they accounted for all those funds and this season will not have that issue. Water and sewer stayed the same with a slight increase. The biggest hiccup for this budget cycle is utilities and where we were hit the hardest. That is where we get the audits and tried to be careful. Utility rates continue to soar and we saw prices in gasoline and diesel go down slightly but per Council he made sure we were covered. Some of the budgets were getting really close in the fourth quarter so they went ahead and made sure everything was covered. The Airport budget had a slight increase and they continue to fund and keep the operation going. CNS will remain the same with some increase because of overruns from last year. Mayor Owens commented he wanted to make sure when the public is hearing this they understand what you are saying. When he is talking about prices in terms of the utility rates and electric rates he is talking about the

City's cost, not the customers cost. City Manager Stroud replied it is the City's cost. Mayor Owens stated for our customers listening we are talking about what the City pays and has not passed on to the customer. City Manager Stroud stated we are at \$47,504,320 and they are also working on policy updates which be come back with after the budget hearing. He commented he also increased the Fire Department by two members. The chief had been asking for three but they could not stretch it and he is happy with two. The Police Chief got another vehicle he needed a couple of weeks ago and he is continuing to improve police officers. Mayor Owens commented he saw the increase in Planning and Zoning by 1.25 and happy to see that. City Manager Stroud commented the department has a director, an admin, and a couple other people in the field. If they intend to really enforce our code there needs to be another body to do that. Mayor Owens stated he really appreciates that and the way this city is trying to grow they are going to need more folks in the field, making sure the buildings and roads, all of this stuff, are in good working order so we can actually grow. Councilman Morgan asked about the policy pieces mentioned. City Manager Stroud replied he thinks we need to have a bona fide travel policy and debt policy. He has started some of the policies but wanted to get past the budget before bring the policies.

Mayor Owens opened the floor to the public for questions. There were no questions or comments from the public.

He recognized Lisa Rigsby, executive director of our local library, and part of the budget hearing. He stated he made some recommended changes regarding the budget as it relates to the library. Ms. Rigsby addressed the Mayor and Council and stated she came to let them know what is going on at the library. She was asked to explain where the money is going and even though she can't tell them precisely where the money is going, she can tell them what they do with local money. They have three local funders: City of Camilla, the County, and the Board of Education. They check out books and currently have 4,080 patrons in Camilla and does not include users in Sale City or Pelham. They put on a lot of programs for children and families during the year. During the past fiscal year, which ends June 30<sup>th</sup>, they had sixty-seven program between July of last year and June 30<sup>th</sup> of this year. They had 971 children and parents attend and does not include their summer program. The summer program is separate and they have two programs per week for eight weeks. They had an average of 125 people per program on Wednesdays and an average of 10 for story hour on Thursdays. They had four programs that were offered off site and will do that if people call and ask. They started a monthly program to read to children at Head Start and will do off site for the Mitchell County Training Center. They offer off site for any not-for-profit group that requests and put on programs or read to the children. Computer usage for this past fiscal year was 5,497. Anytime help is provided to someone verbally or otherwise it is counted as reference and that number is a little over 14,000 per year. They have 24 public computers with fast internet access and 3 dedicated computers for children. The majority of the money given to them locally is spent on the service desk, which is local staff. The reason they asked for an increase this year is because they did not give the staff any raises for fiscal year 22 and they want to give everyone a 4% raise. The Board of Education committed to it so they gave a 2% raise the first of July. No one else has confirmed and they are waiting for the Mitchell County Board of Commissioners and the City to meet. If they get more money they are going to

give an additional 2% increase in January, a total of 4% for the year. If they get a third one they will get another 2% raise in July because they don't necessarily get that money until the last part of the year. Local money also pays the light bill and if they did not have the local money they would not have lights or air. They would not have anything because the state primarily sends them technology, give them money for the full-time salaries since they are a three county system, and send money for materials. That money is tracked very easily because it three specific areas and the rest is all local money.

Mayor Owens commented he hopes everyone understands why he asked Lisa to be here and he recommended they do not include the \$3,000 increase. He believes the work, and in his position as Mayor sits on the Board, sees firsthand the good work the library does. The City of Camilla, right now, gives \$40,000 per year to the library. Some of the stuff we are doing is transitioning to STEAM type products for our youth and direct technology with our overall population is the reason he is recommending to the Council not to commit to the full \$3,000 per year as a permanent deal. Instead of \$3,000 this year, grant the library \$5,000.00 in ARPA funds to help with programming and what is done with the balance is up to her. This this time next year they will probably have another conversation to see where they are. So everyone understands, the library is asking for a \$3,000 increase from \$40,000 to \$43,000 this year and beyond. Because the City of Camilla is currently engaged in a few different things as it relates to our youth. They had a conversation about STEAM and a new resource center for the Boys and Girls Club, enhancing those products locally for our youth and general public is something the City is working on. He wants to make sure the library has the resources it needs for FY 23. Instead of \$3,000 he is recommending they use \$5,000.00 in ARPA funds this year and this time next year have another conversation.

Susan Jamerson from Stitches addressed the Mayor and Council and stated she came to give a report on the animals. For Camilla they had a slight uptick in the number of grown dogs and the numbers have gone up, but not nearly as much as elsewhere in the county. She thanked the Camilla Police Department, commenting they are really good about trying to find the owner when they see a dog. The problem in Camilla is cats and two healthy cats can make over 200,000 cats in seven years and it has the potential of getting completely out of control. The money the City gives goes to food and vet bills, their two biggest expenditures. They stay with the medium range dog food which solves a lot of the vet problems. The Department of Agriculture stays on them constantly about the facility. They want it to look like Moultrie or Thomasville and she tries to explain our county does not have plantations or the industry so they have fundraisers because they can't take it out of money the City gives to update the building. Each time the Department of Ag inspects they can say they have done this and with the support of the community they put in new lighting, new plumbing, new wiring, and new doors. With their next fundraiser they will be trying to put heating and cooling in the main building for small breed dogs and dogs with puppies. They are all over the place picking up animals. She commended Camilla for their ordinances regarding animal welfare and a lot of what their law enforcement agency, working together with them, are on top of it except for the cats and she does not know of any way to control the cats. The City funds go towards gas for animal control trucks, food for the animals, and vet bills. They try to save money by vetting the animals as much as they can and

allowed to by law. They can give some of the vaccinations and do the worming but there are things that have to be done because it is registered with the State. She thanked them for their support over the years they have been doing this and stated they have been awesome to work with. Mayor Owens commented he asked the city manager to reach out to Susan to come and talk to them for a couple of reasons. The City of Camilla contributes about \$25,000 per year to Stitches for this service and his concern is the enforcement side of the house in terms of the animals being picked up. As mentioned, the bulk of what they contribute goes toward maintaining the facility and the animals. Susan was asked in terms of their current mission and picking up aggressive dogs and that type of thing, where they were. She replied with regard to truly aggressive dogs, if the police department shows up and are apprehensive, they call them. They go there and if the dog does not need to be loose in the public the Correctional Institute is called to pick up the dog. She cannot have aggressive dogs at the shelter where the public comes in and out. It is just too much of a liability. If she catches a dog in the trap she takes it back to the shelter and if it turns out to be aggressive she will keep it because the less you handle them the less risk you have of somebody getting hurt. They are left in a kennel with food and water and after a while you do what you have to. You can't put that dog in a home, especially with a child, and she is not going to. They try to vet the animals and their first mission is getting them in a home, either through adoption or to a rescue that will take the dog to another part of the country. Every rescue in the south is packed out and are not taking anymore. Dogs in the south have been sent as far as New York, Canada and California. People will not spay and neuter and sort of heartbreaking when you are working as hard as you can to get them in a home and there is no home for them to go to. Mayor Owens stated that is one of the concerns for him. We have law enforcement officers, to a certain degree, augmented to this particular mission to some degree. Ms. Jamerson stated she does not think law enforcement (police officers) are aware of things they can charge homeowners with. They can be charged for not having a rabies vaccination tag, which is a state law. Every animal, cat or dog, is supposed to have a rabies tag. If females are roaming and in heat, they can be charged and is our ordinance. You can take the owners to task because she believes it is the only way to stop what is going on, hitting them in the pocketbook. City Manager Stroud asked if she was saying the animals being collected many have tags and we are not following up and charging them. She replied a lot of what they pick up people never claim. By law she has five days but Health Director Jeffrey Avery asked her to keep them for 10 days just to make sure they don't break with rabies. Normally they are kept for 10 days before she starts trying to get them rescued and out to homes. After additional discussion, Mayor Owens commented his concern is on the enforcement side, that the calls are increasing for the aggressive or other type dogs that roam the community, and space is becoming an issue where they are housed. What he is suggesting in about six months to have a larger conversation about what they are going to do to help on the enforcement side. Ms. Jamerson asked if they could include in the ordinance if a female dog is in heat and roaming the owner can be charged a fee and should apply to male dogs also. People breeding dogs need a business license and if they do not meet the requirements and not zoned for that they don't get the license. She is trying to put options before them so they can sort of bring this under control. City Manager Stroud stated he would give her a call and together strategize. Councilman Burley thanked her and commented they appreciate her efforts and work with Stitches and working with the City of Camilla. His concern

is rabies and vicious dogs. He knows nine out of ten times if a dog is vicious something is wrong and may have rabies. He asked her how they detect if these dogs or cats have rabies. Ms. Jamerson replied that is why they hold them for so many days because immediately you may not know but in ten days you would see the signs and symptoms. When they see it they are instructed to take the animal straight to the vets office and they will put the animal, remove the head, and send to the State's vet office. At least they will know and can put out information if someone was near the dog. All it takes is a scratch and she did not realize how many bites are reported to our health department. There are usually 2 to 3 bites per week. As a county and a city we have the possibility of somebody's child getting bit. Mom is going to say it is just a little bite and ten days later the child dies. If a human exhibits the symptoms there is nothing they can do. They keep a separate area at the shelter where stray dogs are put for 10 days to make sure and if they pass and do not show signs or symptoms of rabies they are placed in the general population. Mayor Owens stated he liked the idea of the city manager meeting up with her in the next week or so. He wants to make sure it gets on the record six months from now and will ask the city manager. The Board of Health meets quarterly but the bites and these types of things are reported daily or weekly, to integrate the bite information directly from the Board of Health on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. In addition they are covered under the police department report as it relates to dog calls and start tracking that over the course of the next six months. Year over year it is becoming an issue and thinks at some point for the general safety of the public they may have to do something that we may have to do something about dogs on the street bothering folks. If our police officers are responding to multiple calls that way, they will have to change course. Around March they can start tracking and in October come back and see what we are looking like. Whatever conversations the city manager has with Susan can be incorporated.

Mayor Owens asked if there were any questions or comments related to this year's budget. There being none, the public hearing for the FY 2022/2023 budget was closed.

**MINUTES – CALLED MEETING  
CITY OF CAMILLA, GEORGIA  
SEPTEMBER 21, 2022**

Mayor Owens called the Called Meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

Present at Rollcall: Councilmember Tucker, Councilman Burley, Councilman Morgan, Councilman Collins and Councilman Palmer (via phone). Councilman Pollard was absent.

City Manager Stroud and Clerk Ford were also present.

**OPENING PRAYER AND PLEDGE**

City Manager Stroud gave the invocation and the Mayor and Council led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

## CITIZENS AND GUESTS

Sign-In Sheet Attached.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion by Councilman Burley, seconded by Councilman Morgan, the motion to approve the Called Meeting agenda for September 21, 2022 passed by a 5-0.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 2022-09-21-1 – ADOPTION OF 2022/2023 FY BUDGET**

Mayor Owens stated the item for today is consideration for adoption of fiscal year 2022-2023 budget. He read Resolution No. 2022-09-21-1 and asked for a motion to adopt the 2022-2023 fiscal year budget at departmental levels with authorization for the Mayor to sign the Resolution. Councilmember Tucker stated she would like to make a motion to table in consideration they received the budget twelve minutes before the meeting today. She feels it is her responsibility as a city councilmember to review it thoroughly and would like to make a motion to table it. She is open to any date they need to meet before October 1<sup>st</sup>. Mayor Owens stated they have a motion to table the item to until a date to be determined. Councilman Collins seconded the motion. He asked if there was any discussion. Councilman Morgan asked if any member of Council had sat down with the city manager to go over the budget. City Manager Stroud replied yes, that he and Councilmember Tucker went through the budget almost line by line. Councilmember Tucker stated there were a number of areas where she was concerned that they were over in expenses from last fiscal year but under budget in terms of this fiscal year. Since the meeting she sees there are a number of them changed. She personally feels it is her responsibility, realizing we are about to adopt a budget that is over 9 million dollars higher than last year, to review the changes whether it is 24 or 48 hours to review the changes. Mayor Owens asked the city manager to correct him if wrong, beyond the four million drawdown the majority, if not all, of the changes were discussed in the second public hearing and what we are dealing with. He is not sure the concept of receiving it 12 minutes ago and this is the same budget addressed for about a month now, minus some of the minor changes. He pointed out and stated he thinks the record will reflect no questions were relayed to the city manager from the folks making this motion, seconding it, or discussing it. If there were any questions related to the budget itself surely there would have been questions for the city manager and the chief financial consultant. Councilmember Palmer stated he asked for a copy after the first meeting of the changes since they were changed all the way through and you could not tell what was changed or not changed and he has not received that. Mayor Owens commented they are operating off the same budget that they have had hearings about for the last month or so. As the city manager has mentioned the councilmember that made the motion sat down with the city manager and had conversations directly related to this budget.

The motion on the table is to table this item and it is properly seconded. After further comments and discussion, voting in favor of tabling the item: Councilmember Tucker and Councilmen Collins and Palmer. Voting in opposition: Councilmen Burley and Morgan. With a 3-2 vote, Mayor Owens stated it takes four votes to pass and the motion failed.

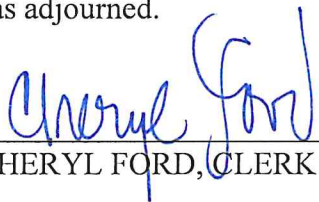
**RESOLUTION NO. 2022-09-21-1 – ADOPTION OF 2022/2023 FY BUDGET (cont.)**

The original motion is to approve Resolution No. 2020-09-14-1 adopting the 2022-2023 fiscal year budget. A motion was made by Councilman Morgan and seconded by Councilman Burley. Voting in favor of the motion: Councilmen Burley and Morgan. Voting in opposition: Councilmember Tucker and Councilmen Collins and Palmer. With a 2-3 vote the motion failed. Mayor Owens stated at this time we will schedule a meeting to get this back on the agenda and notify the public when that will happen. The way our charter is designed is if we do not meet again before the 1<sup>st</sup> (of October) to get this done, we will continue to operate off the budget we had last year. He wants the people to understand the City of Camilla will continue to run and use the budget they have. They will be working hard between now and October 1<sup>st</sup> to get this started.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Councilman Morgan and the meeting was adjourned.

BY:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
KELVIN M. OWENS, MAYOR

ATTEST:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
CHERYL FORD, CLERK

**RESOLUTION NO. 2022-09-21-1**

**RESOLUTION SETTING THE BUDGET  
FOR THE 2022-2023 FISCAL YEAR**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Camilla, by and through its Mayor and Council, has duly advertised Notice of Public Hearings; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has further held such hearings as required by law; and

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Council have received public input on the Budget for 2022-2023 fiscal year, and upon due consideration and deliberation, the City hereby resolves to set its Budget for said 2022-2023 fiscal year in the amount of \$47,504,320.

**SO RESOLVED**, this 21<sup>st</sup> day of September, 2022.

CITY OF CAMILLA

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kelvin Owens, Mayor

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cheryl Ford, City Clerk

(SEAL)