



## **MINUTES**

### **PUBLIC HEARING (FY2022 PROPOSED BUDGET)**

**May 11, 2021, 6:15 PM**

### **REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

**May 11, 2021, 6:30 PM**

#### **PUBLIC HEARING:**

**Call to Order:** Mayor David L. Jordan opened the May 11, 2021 Public Hearing at 6:15 PM.

**Attendance:** Mayor David L. Jordan, Mayor Pro-Tem Keith Turman, Larry Bowen, Matt Fields, Kenneth Roach, Lee Strickland, Wayne Braswell, City Manager Ed Andrews, and City Clerk Sharleen Ayers. City Attorney Grant absent.

**A:** Presentation of FY2022 Proposed Budget: Ed Andrews: Ed made a short presentation for council for the Current Proposed Budget and answered questions.

**Invitation of Public Comment:** None.

**Response by Council:** None required.

**Close Public Hearing:** Wayne Braswell made a motion to close public hearing; Keith Turman seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0. Public hearing closed at 6:30 PM.

#### **REGULAR MEETING:**

**Call to Order:** The May 11, 2021 Regular Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor David L. Jordan at 6:31 PM.

**Attendance:** Mayor David L. Jordan, Mayor Pro-Tem Keith Turman, Larry Bowen, Matt Fields, Kenneth Roach, Lee Strickland, Wayne Braswell, City Manager Ed Andrews, and City Clerk Sharleen Ayers. City Attorney Andrea Grant, absent.

**Approval of All Outstanding Minutes:** Wayne Braswell made a motion to approve the following Minutes: March 9, 2021 Public Hearing & Regular Meeting Minutes, April 13, 2021 Work Session, April 14, 2021 Called Meeting Minutes, and April 20-21, 2021 Work Session Minutes. Larry Bowen seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0.

**Additions or Deletions to Agenda:** None.

**Approval of Agenda:** Keith Turman made a motion to approve agenda; Wayne Braswell seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0.

**Public Comment: Catherine Rotch: Chickens at Woodland Manor:** Mrs. Rotch was submitting a request for her daughter who has purchased a home in Woodland Manor. Mayor Jordan submitted if they were pets and did not bother the neighbors, he did not see a problem. The big concern is the neighbors finding it a nuisance. The City Manager related that the ordinance reads poultry or fowl are not allowed in city limits. It would require a Variance or change to the ordinance to allow the animals. Keith Turman recalled when this became an issue in the past and the ordinance was established. The City's experience is that this might become a problem, and although he is open to what the citizens have to say, there is a past to the ordinance. Council decided to reach out to City Attorney and review the current ordinance. The item will be revisited at the next council meeting possibly with a Public Hearing. No vote or decision made.

**Main Street Update – Michael Crump:** DDA MOU has been signed and submitted. Third Thursday will start next week in combination with the Artisan Walk. May is Historic Preservation Month so we will be including Historic Items into the event. Heritage Presbyterian has asked to set up some performances for citizens around 7PM after the 5-7 times of the event. Car Show is scheduled for May 22 with the Fire Department providing food as a fundraiser during the event. Council is asked to attend to help with presenting the awards. Farmer's Market will open the first Saturday in June here in the Library Parking Lot. There is a possibility to have a spot downtown for a 2 day a week schedule.

**Tree Council Update)-Michael Crump for Susan Russell:** April Workshop held on Apr 27<sup>th</sup> had 13 attendees with positive feedback. More workshops will be scheduled. Robbie from Parks reported one of the trees in front of the library had died. It will be replaced within the month. Firewise Program assessment has been completed by the Georgia Forestry Commission and the Plan will be presented at a Fire Department meeting soon for approval. This will help the City with ISO ratings among other things. An article about the Firewise program will be published in the paper in May. A Children's Nature Walk is in the works for June. Tree Sale is still planned for this Fall with the orders being due in September.

**Old Business:** Little League Field Donation made by Stewart Dove Sons Roofing. City Manager relayed Royston had not received a Little League Donation in quite some time. Mr. Andrews reported the donation is greatly appreciated to support the costs of the Little League Field upkeep. A sign will be made to thank the business for their support.

**New Business:**

- A. **FY2022 Proposed Budget: Ed Andrews:** Mr. Andrews stated the Budget was reviewed during the Public Hearing and encouraged the Committee members to reach out to their department heads after reviewing the numbers.

- B. Election of GMA’s District 2 Officers: Mayor Jordan:** A ballot was received from GMA with names. Keith Turman stated he knew all the officers and believed they would do well. Keith Turman made a motion to accept the District 2 Officers as given on the ballot. Matt Fields seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.
- C. GMRC Private Sector Appointee: Mayor Jordan:** No motion, delayed until changes are presented. Gerald Voyles resigned as Appointee. The City Manager reached out to the County for a replacement. Mr. Andrews asked Mayor Jordan to work with the County and Cities to find a replacement.
- D. Discussion of Purchase of Garbage Truck: Ed Andrews:** After a long search for a standard single axle rear load garbage truck, Mr. Andrews has received 3 quotes so far as follows:

1. **Sansome Equipment: \$173,485**
2. **Environmental Products Group - Leach: \$183,995**
3. **McNeilus: \$193,648**

Mr. Andrews is not satisfied with these prices and is looking further afield to find a better price. If not satisfied with the next proposals, he will go to the state to see if they can aid us in finding other options at a more reasonable price. Mayor Jordan asked if the old truck would have any resale value. Mr. Andrews said he did not know as market is unusual right now for used vehicles. Mr. Andrews pointed out that the Sanitation Department had finally gotten out of the hole a bit and was able to be supporting the general fund. He is proposing the General Fund purchasing the truck and give it to the Sanitation Fund rather than expecting a repayment from the Sanitation Fund for the purchase of this truck. Mayor Jordan asked if there was GEFA money available to borrow to purchase the truck. Mr. Andrews said there is possibly money, but a loan would be required to receive some forgiveness on the loan. The issue is this is an immediate need, and any loan would take some time to process. Lee Strickland mentioned that he had asked that we purchase 2 when the last one was bought a couple years ago. Mr. Andrews mentioned that an accident by a Sanitation Driver has caused the need to be immediate. Although there were no injuries and only minor damage, the vehicle not being available has caused issues with the trash pick up schedules. Keith Turman asked if we could do without the second truck should we decide not to fix it, and Mr. Andrews did not recommend it. Mayor Jordan said we needed to find something quickly before the prices continued to go up. Mr. Andrews said he did not want a piece of junk, but he did not want to put Royston in a bind as far as costs. Mr. Andrews asked the Council what they wanted to do as far as funding. Do we get a municipal loan, try to find a grant, borrow the money locally, or purchase using General Fund money and either repay to the General Fund or not expect it to be paid back? Mr. Andrews mentioned the Sanitation Fund still had \$70,000 of the prior truck purchase to pay back at this time. Mayor Jordan stated the purchase would be depreciated over the life of the truck, not expended all at once. Matt Fields asked if they could make a motion to allow the committee to decide. The Committee consists of Larry & Kenneth. Mayor Jordan said they just needed to find something, buy something.

**Discussion of Building Permit Fees: Ed Andrews:** Mr. Andrews stated this was a topic brought up at the Work Session. At this time, City of Royston has an ordinance in place that requires a building fee at .20 per sq foot. Permit shall be issued and fees charged according to the provision of the City of Royston Building codes. There is also a \$25 fee for Certificate of Occupancy. Options were discussed on making a provision for the fee portion be eliminated or reduced. Mr. Andrews recommended that a fee remain in place, because if you don't leave the fee there what does that tell a homeowner/contractor? They may believe it does not matter who they get to build there home. Council said they only needed to change the fee and not the ordinance. Ordinance specifies residential & commercial fees. Matt Fields wanted to have a flat fee like \$25 or \$50. A place his size would require about \$1,000 and that seemed ridiculous to him. Mr. Andrews wanted to emphasize we did not want to do away with the permit, just perhaps change the amounts. It is a precaution to be sure the builder is performing properly, for the safety of the citizens. The city needs to hold the builder/contractor responsible for what they are building and that they meet requirements. Matt Fields believes the prices may be a drawback to new business, and the city needs to get the ball rolling with growth. Mayor Jordan thinks we all agree we need to support development. He did not think we needed to eliminate it entirely. Lee Strickland did not think it needed to reach \$1,000 for a permit. Wayne Braswell asked what other local cities are doing, and Mr. Andrews responded that he did not know. Mr. Andrews pointed out that there is city time included in this process. The Code Enforcement Officer may have to make 5 visits and it costs the city for his time and gas. Matt Fields stated we would be getting that back in Utility bills and other billings. Lee Strickland suggested lowering it to .05 per sq foot. Mr. Andrews recommended a flat rate for the residential only, and the Zoning Board could get together with the City Manager to discuss the Commercial and Industrial rates. Matt Fields just replied they still just needed to lower it. Mayor Jordan asked who was on the committee for Building Permits. City Clerk responded that is Matt Fields & Larry Bowen. Mayor Jordan asked the committee meet to discuss and come back to the Council with a recommendation. Keith Turman mentioned he did not think \$300 or \$500 would stop someone from opening a business in Royston. Matt Fields said it all adds up from permitting to tap fees and other building costs and we need business so badly we should waive it all and say, "Welcome to Royston". Mayor Jordan asked again that the committee perform due diligence and look at the ordinance and the fees and come back with a plan.

Mayor Jordan mentioned the real issue is Property Taxes and the County Taxes being higher for citizens in the City Limits. All the council agreed this was a real issue. Mayor Jordan mentioned plans to go to a Franklin County meeting sometime to discuss it with the Commissioners. He has a plan to call Jason Macomson and Bobby Martin to talk about the taxes. The other council members mentioned they would like to City Attorney to work on whether the citizens are being taxed correctly or not.

**Other Business – City Manager Update:**

- a. Amphitheatre: Contractor is ready. He is waiting on the approved structural drawings for the footers to give the go ahead. The metal building has been ordered and paid. Keith Turman just stated they would like to get it going and show the citizens there is progress being made.
- b. Parking Lot: Patrick is working on lining up the paving. The curbing is scheduled for the next few weeks. The city is waiting to hear from Stratton's on a date.

- c. LMIG 2019 still has funds remaining. Patrick is working on a plan to use funds to fix sidewalks and we will see what else we can get done with that funding.

Keith Turman wanted to commend the new Code Enforcement Officer for the work he has been doing. He has seen some recent results and has been very pleased with the job being done. He tasked the Council to be mindful that we need to back up our Code Enforcement and if called by citizens just tell them that he is doing the job he was charged to do. Give him the support and backing of the City Council.

**Executive Session:** None.

**Adjourn:** Keith Turman made a motion to adjourn; Matt Fields seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:38 PM.

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**Mayor David L. Jordan**

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**Sharleen Ayers, City Clerk**

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