

**CITY OF TIFTON**  
**COUNCIL WORKSHOP/SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES**  
**FEBRUARY 16, 2017**  
**5:30 PM**  
**TIFTON CITY HALL**

**Attendees**

Mayor Julie Smith  
Vice Mayor Wes Ehlers  
Council Member Jack Folk  
Council Member Johnny Terrell  
Council Member Frank Sayles

Pete Pyrzenski, City Manager  
Jessica Jones, City Clerk  
Rob Wilmot, City Attorney

**WORKSHOP**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Smith called the workshop to order at 5:30 PM.

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Workshop and Meeting Dates: City Manager Pete Pyrzenski proposed making changes to the workshop and regular meeting dates. He mentioned he would be developing a plan to present back to council for consideration, but suggested swapping the meeting dates to have the workshop at the beginning of the month and regular meeting at the end of the month. Mr. Pyrzenski expressed this option would allow for items to be adopted in the month they were introduced to Council.

Tifton Fire Department: Mr. Pyrzenski mentioned there have been discussions concerning rejoining the City and County Fire Departments. Based on the joint department proposal from Tift County, Mr. Pyrzenski mentioned a joint department would not be favorable for the City or city residents. The reasons for the recommendation included: longevity of the City of Tifton Fire Department, value of City equipment, ISO rating, and County wanting to directly supervise the department. Although rejoining the fire departments was not recommended he proposed other options to jointly work with the County. Proposed recommendations included entering into an automatic aid agreement, at an agreed upon cost to be determined, which would essentially reduce the County's ISO rating. He also recommended leasing the Southside Fire Station to the County, possibly sharing the Westside Fire Station, and allowing joint use of the City's Fire Training Facility. Mr. Pyrzenski requested Council's approval to respond to the County Manager's letter based on the presented facts, and work to reach an agreement with the County. Mr. Pyrzenski stated he would update the Fire Chief and department on the City's plans to not rejoin the Fire Departments. City Council jointly agreed for Mr. Pyrzenski to negotiate with the County on options proposed for the fire departments.

Equalizing Water Rates: Mr. Pyrzenski mentioned over the past 10 years the City and County have tried to work toward equalizing water and sewer rates for city and county residents. In 2005 an interlocal agreement was signed for the joint utility system and contained language to equalize water and sewer rates. Mr. Pyrzenski stated a utility rate study was recently completed, and the study conducted included options for equalizing rates. Based upon the study, Mr. Pyrzenski recommended adding the current base water rates for the city and county residents and dividing the sum by 2. This recommendation will increase the water rates for the city by \$1.39 per month and decrease the County rates by \$2.38. He stated further engineering studies need to be performed in order to determine equalizing sewer rates. He also proposed terminating the interlocal agreement which created the joint enterprise funds for water and wastewater. He stated this agreement is no longer needed since the operations are contracted with ESG Operations. He also pointed out that terminating this agreement will have no effect on the City and County residents. Mr. Pyrzenski stated he will work closely with the City Attorney and Council to move

forward with these recommendations. City Council briefly discussed the proposed water rate equalization and agreed to move forward with the recommendations.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Ordinance Amending the HPC Guidelines Chapter 2 Section IV, Part 1 (Electronic Graphic Display Signs): Mr. Houston Shultz, Environment Management Director, and Mr. Rob Wilmot requested additional time to meet with the sign committee and develop criteria for EGD signage in the historical district.

### Resolution Authorizing Tift County Tax Commissioner to Sell Property for Less Than Taxes Owed

Mr. Wilmot mentioned he has not heard back from the Tax Commissioner on the status from the County and School Board. This item will be presented back to Council once a response is received from the Tax Commissioner.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### Resolution Updating Authorized Signatories for City of Tifton Bank Accounts

Ms. Karen Sanders, Interim Finance Director, mentioned the resolution presented will update the banking account for the City of Tifton by adding Mr. Pete Pyrzenski as an authorized signee and user. Vice Mayor Ehlers suggested the City look into sending out an RFP for banking services since this has not been done in many years.

#### Resolution Updating Georgia Fund 1 Account

Ms. Karen Sanders, Interim Finance Director, mentioned the resolution presented will update the GA Fund 1 investment account for the City of Tifton by adding Mr. Pete Pyrzenski as an authorized signee and user.

#### Resolution Providing for Alcohol License at Ruby Tuesday Located at 1306 US Hwy 82 W

Ms. Jessica Jones mentioned Ruby Tuesday has a new manager. Application submitted on the new manager has been processed and staff is recommending approval of the application and issuance of the alcohol license.

#### Ordinance for Fire Protection and Suppression

Mr. Danny Wallace mentioned the presented ordinance will add a new chapter to the code of ordinances for fire protection and suppression. The chapter adopts the International Fire Codes, The Life Safety Code, and the Georgia Mandatory Minimum Fire Safety Standards. The ordinance also outlines the duties and responsibilities of the fire department, and violations for interference with the operations of the department. Mr. Wallace mentioned the ordinance also establishes a non-city resident vehicle accident recovery fee. This fee will be charged to non-residents who are at fault in a motor vehicle collision and receive support from the fire department. Schedules of the proposed fees are listed in the ordinance and will be billed to the insurance companies of at fault non-city residents. Discussion was held on the proposed ordinance with concerns of the accident recovery fee being billed to residents of the county and city business owners who are not city residents.

Vice Mayor Ehlers left the meeting.

#### Update on RDF Grant for Downtown Parking Area

Mr. Pyrzenski stated the project proposes to demo a couple of buildings on Commerce Way and construct a parking lot. Mr. Pyrzenski reviewed the project budget with the council and expressed concerns with the proposed cost. He mentioned he is currently trying to get an updated cost for the demolition and disposal to ensure we have accurate pricing before submitting the grant application. Once he receives the updated pricing he will update council on total cost and city obligation on the project.

**SPECIAL CALLED MEETING**

Mayor Smith called the Special Called Meeting to order at 6:12 PM.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mayor Smith called for a motion to go into executive session. Council Member Terrell made the first motion to go into executive session to discuss real estate matters, seconded by Folk, and unanimously approved by Smith and Sayles. Meeting closed to executive session.

Council Member Sayles made the first motion to go out of executive session, seconded by Terrell, and unanimously approved by Smith, and Folk. Meeting opened back into regular session.

**RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Council Member Terrell made the first motion for approval of the resolution, seconded by Folk, and unanimously approved.

There being no further business to discuss, meeting adjourned.

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Julie Smith, Mayor

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Jessica Jones, City Clerk