

CITY OF CORNELIA
MINUTES OF MEETING
APRIL 21, 2020

The Cornelia City Commission met in a Workshop Session on Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 5 PM at the Cornelia City Hall, 181 Larkin Street, Cornelia, GA. Mayor John Borrow called the meeting to order and the following members were present: Commissioners Don Bagwell, Tony Cook, Wesley Dodd, Jr., and Janice Griggs. Also present: City Attorney Steve Campbell, City Manager Donald Anderson, Community Development Manager Jessie Owensby, Human Resource Manager Diane Feorino, and City Clerk Janie N. Henderson.

City Manager Anderson went over each item on the agenda and asked if they had any questions.

Agreement between the City and Town of Mount Airy – He explained they contract with us for Fire Protection and this is the same as last year. He noted last year we added the fire inspections by Fire Marshal at a cost of \$50 per inspection and it is included in this year. Commissioner Dodd asked approximately how many fire calls do we run in a year? Mr. Anderson stated less than 25 calls per year.

Appreciation Bonus – City Manager Anderson some cities are giving an hourly rate increase and others are giving a flat bonus. He said he is for giving it to all employees not just public safety like some cities. Commissioner Bagwell said he's in favor of the bonus, but it might be something we need to revisit later. Mayor Borrow, Commissioners Cook, Dodd and Griggs were in favor of the \$500 bonus to all employees.

Chenocetah Infrastructure Project – City Manager Anderson explained that Griffin Brothers, Inc. was low bidder for \$1,207,737.10. However, our Financial Policies state that if a local bidder is within 5% of the low bid the City is authorized to negotiate with them on their bid. Based on this rule we were able to negotiate with Higgins Construction with a lowered bid of \$1,306,968. He said and we have encountered issues with Griffin Brothers on 3 prior projects. Carter & Sloop are recommending that we award this project to Higgins Construction.

Ordinance 04-20-01, Amendment to Chapter 38 – City Manager Anderson explained that this amendment will prohibit the disposal of human waste in residential garbage cans. The exception to this will be the disposal of diapers if they are placed in sealed garbage bags. It will also prohibit the disposal of pet waste unless it is placed in a sealed garbage bag. He said he even checked with the Health Department to see if they had any specific requirements and the do not. This will give code enforcement an ordinance to enforce and it would go to court and the judge would determine the fine.

SPLOST – Mayor Borrow he said he and City Manager Anderson have been working on this matter for at least 8 hours a week for months. He said if the County and 50% of the cities are in favor of the breakdown of the SPLOST Revenue then it will be voted on for a 6-year time frame for the 1% tax, if it's strictly based on population then it would be for 5 years. The county proposed 2 different methods and we have been working on what we feel is the fairest option for all. A couple of the cities

didn't like option 2 and it doesn't affect the amount they would receive. Last night the County voted to go strictly by population. Commissioners Hall and Crawford voted in favor of our method and the other 3 voted against, including Dustin Mealar who lives in Cornelia and is supposed to be our representative on the Commission for this section of the County. He explained that under our proposed method Baldwin would receive 40% more and Clarkesville, Demorest and Tallulah Falls would receive approximately 25% more. The City of Cornelia stands to lose 25% from \$7. mil to \$5.7 mil. City Manager Anderson said he had spent most of the day on the phone discussing the issue and Baldwin seems to be the only city against us. He said we have most of the sales in the County and we provide the city parks for the south end of the County, which no one else provides. He said he has another phone call scheduled for Thursday with Mr. Sutton. Commissioner Dodd asked if there is any way we can do to do our own sales tax. City Manager Anderson said it's been talked about for years, but the legislation never went anywhere.

The Mayor and Commission took a 5-minute break prior to the Regular Meeting starting.

Janie N. Henderson, City Clerk/Secretary
to the City Commission

John Borrow, Mayor

CITY OF CORNELIA
MINUTES OF MEETING
APRIL 21, 2020

The Cornelia City Commission met in Regular Session on Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 6 PM at the Cornelia City Hall, 181 Larkin Street, Cornelia, GA. Mayor John Borrow called the meeting to order and the following members were present: Commissioners Don Bagwell, Tony Cook, Wesley Dodd, Jr., (were present online through Zoom) and Janice Griggs. Also, present: City Attorney Steve Campbell, City Manager Donald Anderson, City Development Manager Jessie Owensby and Human Resource Manager Diane Feorino (were present online through Zoom), and City Clerk Janie N. Henderson.

Mayor Borrow gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to approve the April 21, 2020 Agenda as submitted; seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 – 0.

Commissioner Dodd made the motion to approve the March 3, 2020 Minutes as submitted; seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 4 -0.

Community Development Report – Community Development Manager Jessie Owensby submitted her report and was available online for any questions. A copy of her report is made an integral part of these minutes.

City Manager’s Month Report – City Manager Anderson presented his March Report. A copy of his report is made an integral part of these minutes.

Public Forum – Anna Ferguson wanted to speak about the recent actions the city has taken regarding garbage overflow. Mayor Borrow asked that comments be kept to 3 minutes to give time for all to speak. Ms. Ferguson said last week the garbage men were putting an orange sticker on her garbage can and were getting ready to leave when she went out and confronted them. She said she admitted that she was not happy, and she called the Mayor. The Mayor told her he was going to City Hall shortly and would find out what’s going on. Mayor Borrow said he was in the wrong also. He stated he appreciates that service and he has already requested an additional roller cart. Ms. Ferguson stated we already pay \$19.48 and she finds out after talking to Janie Henderson and Dee Anderson that she can get an additional can \$15 or buy purple bags from the city for \$1 each (they probably cost the city 5 cents). She said she thinks it’s just poor timing with the long weekend and the tornado that weekend and the kids being out of school there’s going to be extra garbage. She said people are already struggling to pay their bills and where is this money going to come from their food reserve? If people can’t pay it are, they going to start dumping illegally or use a dumpster that belongs to someone else. She said this is just a very stressful time and she understands as an educator what these parents and kids are going through and her concern is for them. Commissioner Bagwell asked Ms. Ferguson if she participated in recycling? She said no not right now with home schooling 3 and all the other requirements with her other students she doesn’t have time. He said he and his wife take advantage of the Recycling Center located on Old Cleveland Road it is very convenient. He said they

have reduced their garbage by 50%. Ms. Ferguson help if you had a place to store the items, away from animals and pest until you had time to take it to the center. Commissioner Bagwell said we are problem solvers and we need to find a solution without adding additional cost to our citizens. Mayor Borrow thanked Ms. Ferguson that it's evident that she has a heart of compassion and he echoed what Commissioner Bagwell said we are here to serve our citizens and he said it was just poor communication on his part. He said, "I am sorry I will do a better job". He said we did put the information in the water bill, but he doesn't even look at his bill it's automatically drafted each month, "lesson learned". He agreed he doesn't like the timing either. He said he's a habitual offender they would go to Lowe's and purchase the contractor bags and just place them beside the can. We have been the beneficiary of the free service and are grateful for the service. He said they will start recycling and he said stop by her house and pick hers up if she wants him to. He said we are problem solvers and are open to ideas. Ms. Ferguson said why don't you check to see what other cities do. Mayor Borrow said we have, and the other cities charges are: Alto-\$11; Baldwin-\$13.95; Clarkesville-\$9.50; and Mount Airy-\$15. City Manager Anderson said the cities that we spoke to have a similar policy and assess the additional fee. He said currently if there are any bags outside the can they are not picking it up out of fear of the Coronavirus. The City collects \$360,000 per year in garbage fees and our Sanitation Budget is \$428,247.

Ms. Sonja Crawford stated they are elderly, and they appreciate them coming down and getting their can, dumping it and bringing it back. She said if you are going to do recycling you are going to have to provide an extra container and thinks it will cause more problems with a lot of our residents. Mayor thanked Ms. Crawford that she taught him school and she brought logic and reason to his life. He said we will investigate this more and find a better solution.

City Manager Anderson said he has another matter to bring to them. He said Ms. Kathryn Ballard, lives at the corner of Foster and Edwards Streets and she has a concern about people running the stops sign and how fast the cars drive. Mr. Anderson read her letter into the record. She urged the Commission to consider putting a speed table between Foster and Edwards Streets and one between Woods and Foster Streets. Mr. Anderson said before the virus issue arose that he had received a petition from the residents in that area concerning a speed hump. He said he originally scheduled a Public Hearing, but since the public couldn't attend this meeting in person, he decided to postpone the hearing. It will probably be at the June Meeting. He said we have put the speed connectors down and the police are spending more time in the area trying to slow people down. He said the Police Chief has been made aware of the situation. No further comments were heard from the public.

Ordinance 03-20-01- Amendment to Chapter 24 – City Manager Anderson stated that this creates a fine for false alarm calls. There was a change made to the fine section and that will be addressed by Section 1-12 of the Code after the 3rd False Alarm Warning. The ordinance has been posted and we've received no comments from the Public. Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to adopt Ordinance 03-20-01, An amendment to Chapter 24 creating a fine for false alarm responses; seconded by Commissioner Dodd. Approved 4 – 0.

Public Hearings – None

Commissioner Cook made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda which included: (1) A Proposal from Duncan & Kitchens for CY 2019 Audit. The audit will not exceed \$19,500. and (2) An Intergovernmental Agreement with Mount Airy for Fire Protection. Amount is same \$88.43 per resident and Fire Marshal Inspection Fee of \$50 per inspection.; seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 – 0.

Employee Appreciation Bonus – City Manager Anderson explained that some cities have begun paying their essential employees a monthly stipend because of the enhanced risk that they face while dealing with COVID19 Virus. He said he believes that this is a good idea in order to maintain employee morale and to let our employees know how much we appreciate their sacrifice and commitment. He doesn't feel like it should be limited to our "essential" employees. All our employees have continued to show up and do their jobs every day despite the risk of getting sick or bringing the virus home to their families. He proposed that we give each of our employees a onetime bonus of \$500. City Manager Anderson said this was not budgeted so we will look at a budget adjustment later in the year. Commissioner Dodd made the motion to give our 85 employees a onetime \$500 bonus to show our appreciation for their dedication to making sure that the services offered to our citizens are not compromised during this pandemic; seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 4 – 0.

Chenocetah Infrastructure Project – Mr. Anderson stated we received 4 bids for this project. The low bidder was Griffin Brothers, Inc. in the amount of \$1,307,737.10. However, our Financial Policy states that if a local bidder is within 5% of the low bid the City is authorized to negotiate with them on their bid. Based on this rule we were able to negotiate with Higgins Construction and they have lowered their bid to \$1,306,968. Carter & Sloope, our engineers, are recommending that you award this project to Higgins Construction. The City had issues with Griffin Brothers on 3 prior jobs, so this is another consideration. Commissioner Dodd made a motion to award the bid for the Chenocetah Infrastructure Project to Higgins Construction for \$1,306,968; seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 4 – 0.

Ordinance 04-20-01, Amendment to Chapter 38 of the Code – City Manager Anderson stated this ordinance change will prohibit the disposal of human waste in residential garbage cans; the exception will be the disposal of diapers must be placed in sealed garbage bags. It will also prohibit the disposal of pet waste unless it is placed in a sealed garbage bag. Commissioner Cook made the motion to post Ordinance 04-20-01, Amendment to Chapter 38 of the Code; seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 – 0.

Mayor Borrow thanked everyone that joined the meeting and thanked them for their patience.

Commissioner Cook made the motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 6:55 PM; seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 – 0.

Janie N. Henderson, City Clerk/Secretary to
City Commission

John Borrow, Mayor

STATE OF GEORGIA COUNTY HABERSHAM
CITY OF CORNELIA, GEORGIA

AFFIDAVIT OF PRESIDING OFFICIAL(S) FOR A CLOSED PUBLIC MEETING

While in Regular Session, the motion was made to enter into an Executive Session to discuss certain matters in a closed session.

() To discuss with council pending and/or potential litigation, settlement claims, administrative proceedings or other judicial actions, which is exempt from the Open Meetings Act pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-2(1).

(X) A meeting to discuss the purchase, disposal of, or lease of property; authorize the ordering of an appraisal related to the acquisition or disposal of real estate; enter into a contract to purchase, dispose of, or lease property subject to approval in a subsequent public vote; or enter into an option to purchase, dispose of, or lease real estate subject to approval in subsequent public vote, which is excluded from the Open Meetings Act pursuant to Section 50-14-3(b)(1)(C).

() A meeting discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or employee, which is excluded pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-3(b)(2).

