

CITY OF CORNELIA
MINUTES OF MEETING
April 5, 2022

The Cornelia City Commission met in a Workshop Session on Tuesday, April 5, 2022, at 5 pm in the Cornelia Municipal Building Conference Room, 181 Larkin Street, Cornelia, GA. Mayor, John Borrow, called the meeting to order and the following Commissioners were present: Tony Cook and Don Bagwell. Mark Reed was present as he would be sworn in at the Commission meeting. Janice Griggs was unable to attend. Also, present: City Attorney, Steve Campbell, City Manager, Donald Anderson, Human Resource Director, Diane Feorino, IT Director, Jeremy Dundore, Community Development, Jessie Owensby and City Clerk, Debbie Turner.

Mary Beth Horton, President of the Habersham Chamber of Commerce, was present to give the first Quarter Hotel/Motel Tax Report for 2022. She spoke about the campaign “My Mountain Moment”. She explained that it is going very well. Mayor Borrow commented that the video was very well done. Mary Beth asked if anyone had any questions or suggestions for the crew that is coming back next week to gather more footage. Commissioner Bagwell asked about getting some of the walking trail and Mayor Borrow suggested the Rhododendron Trail. A copy is made an integral part of these minutes.

City Manager, Donald Anderson went over the items on the agenda and requesting that we need to add one thing to the agenda which is the Moss St Culvert. Mr. Anderson stated Reeves Trust is seeking 2 setback variances for construction of a Duplex. The planning board held a meeting in March and recommended voting for approval. Mr. Anderson said that to allow the Duplex to line up evenly, they are asking for 2 variances. The first is a reduction in the minimum setback from R-1 zoning district from 35 feet to 20 feet. The second is a reduction in the minimum natural buffer abutting a R - 1 zoning district from 25 feet to 6 feet. Mr. Anderson explained that Summit Street has an 80-foot Right-of-Way so the duplex will be far from the road. After comments made by City Attorney, Campbell, it was agreed that this is a unique situation due to the 80 ft. right of way. The other items were discussed as well as Ordinance 04-22-01, City Manager Anderson explained that there are a lot of other rescue operations than actual fires. Mr. Anderson stated that a lot of fire departments have starting charging Insurance companies for some rescue services due the amount of time that our firefighters are spending on some of the emergencies. There was a lot of discussion about how the charge would be made and who would determine that. Mr. Anderson explained that it is a private company that White County uses and that the fees are set by the State. He explained that no individual would be charged. Commissioner Reed ask what other cities are doing this and Mr. Anderson said that Baldwin and Habersham County has been doing it for years.

The Mayor and Commission adjourned the workshop at 6 pm.

Debbie Turner, City Clerk

John Borrow, Mayor

CITY OF CORNELIA
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The Cornelia City Commission met in Regular Session on Tuesday, April 05, 2022, at 6 pm in the Cornelia Municipal Building Courtroom, 181 Larkin Street, Cornelia, GA. Mayor, John Borrow, called the meeting to order and the following members were present: Commissioners Don Bagwell, Tony Cook, Mark Reed and Janice Griggs was absent. Also present: City Attorney, Steve Campbell, City Manager, Donald Anderson, Human Resource Director, Diane Feorino, IT Director, Jeremy Dundore, Jessie Owensby, Community Development, and City Clerk, Debbie Turner.

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

Commissioner Cook made the motion to Approve the Agenda with the addition item #13 Moss St. Culvert, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 3 -0

Honorable Judge Winslow Verdery swore Mark Reed in as Ward 1 Commissioner.

Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to approve the March 7th minutes as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 3 – 0

City Manager, Donald Anderson, gave his monthly report, Mr. Anderson stated that our new website was launched on March 14th and he said that there is an app that you can download. This app will give residents to be able to report any concerns they have. Mr. Anderson stated that Faith Bryan with Georgia Mountain Regional Commission has discovered that we have 1,935 more housing units in April 2020. At the Cities request, she will move forward with the challenge of population numbers that the Census reported. Garrett paving will begin the 2022 paving project which includes Berry St., Dover and Wells St. Part of this project will require the underpass to be closed. Chenocetah water tank was demolished, and the pad will be used for a new pump house for Chenocetah booster pumps. A copy of his report is made an integral part of the minutes.

Public Forum- No Comments Heard

Old Business- None

City Attorney, Steve Campbell opened the public hearing for a variance request from the Doris Reeves Trust. James Irvin, representing the family, came before the Mayor and Commission seeking approval for 2 setback variances. The first is a reduction in the minimum setback abutting a R-1 zoning district from 35 ft to 20 ft and the second one is a reduction of the

minimum natural buffer abutting a R-1 zoning district from 25 ft to 6 ft. City Attorney, Campbell said this is a unique situation because Summit Street has an 80 ft right-of-way. Commissioner Cook made the motion to approve with the acknowledgement that this variance request is a one of kind situation because of the existing right-of-way, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 3 - 0

Agreement with GMRC for Raise Grant Application- City Manager, Anderson said we are applying for funding from the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Grant. This grant will be for the Iron Ore Rd. project as well and the Rails to Trails project. The cost for preparing the application is \$500.00. If it is awarded, the funding cost to administer the grant will be \$30,000. Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to approve preparing the application, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 3 – 0

Consent Agenda- Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 3-0

New Business:

Georgia Downtown Renaissance Fellowship

Clark Stancil with the Carl Vinson Institute explained that they use the resources of GMA, Georgia Cities Foundation, and the Lyndhurst Foundation to revitalize communities in Georgia. Mr. Stancil said that he and one of his design colleagues had met with Community Development Manager, Jessie Owensby and City Manager, Donald Anderson downtown and toured the area. He gave a presentation of designs that would enhance the downtown. He said he was very impressed with what had been accomplished in just the last few years. He asked if anyone had any questions. Commissioner Bagwell asked if the design students are involved and what financial cost would there be? Mr. Stancil said it all depends on the information that they receive. Commissioner Cook asked about how often the murals would need to be replaced. Mr. Stancil said a lot of it depends on what kind of design you go with, but he would estimate about 10 years. Mayor Borrow asked how long the project was. Mr. Stancil said it is a 12-week program which will run this spring. Community Development Director, Jessie Owensby explained that the goal is to have these ideas so that when we update our comp plan, then we can decide on how and what we want to incorporate. Mayor Borrow thanked Mr. Stancil for coming. Commissioner made a motion to enter into the agreement at a cost of \$12,000 seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 3 - 0

Chenocetah Retaining Wall Bids – City Manager Anderson said that after having solicited bids from 13 contractors, we only received one bid from Higgins Construction in the amount of \$158,700. This bid is quite higher than was estimated when the budget was created. Mr. Anderson suggested we move forward with this project due to it being more than just constructing a wall. The project will run along Wyly street between Chenocetah and Cherry St. The fencing will be replaced with a black vinyl fence. \$42,000 was budgeted for the project and \$20,000 from savings with decommissioning the water tank would be added. The remainder would be paid through ARPA funds. Commissioner Reed made a motion to award the bid to Higgins Construction, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 3 – 0

Ordinance # 04-22-01 City Manager Anderson explained that we are doing more rescue operations than actual fire calls, so our calls have increased significantly. This has resulted in much higher cost, so a lot of cities and counties have started charging insurance companies for the cost. The city would make the submission to for some emergency and non-emergency services. This ordinance will establish a program to begin charging mitigation rates. Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to post the ordinance, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 3 - 0

Automatic Aid Agreement for the Airport- Habersham County has request that we consider entering into an Automatic Aid Agreement to respond to fires and aircraft emergencies. The agreement would require staff and a Fire Engine to respond according to NFPA 1500 standards. Commissioner Reed made the motion to enter into the agreement, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 3 – 0

Moss Street Culvert-City Manager explained the culvert is a 6.5' tall by 5' wide concrete box culvert. He said it has a concrete bottom. It has about 1-2 inches of soil, road base and asphalt on top of the culvert. The culvert is estimated to be around 30 to 50 years old. On February 9, 2022, a sinkhole formed behind the eastern wingwall on the upstream side of the culvert exposing a 10" PVC water main. City crews made repairs with GAB to stabilize the water main. On March 29, 2022, the sinkhole had started to form again, Mr. Anderson explained that the high-pressure water main is in danger of blowing out each time the sink hole gets exposed. Carter & Sloope evaluated the culvert and has suggested that the culvert be replaced. Mr. Anderson suggest that they approve Higgins Construction to complete the work for a budget to not exceed \$200,000 and to be paid for out of the R & E Fund. Commissioner Cook made the motion to award Higgins Construction the project, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 3 - 0

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Commissioner Cook made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 PM, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 3 - 0

The Mayor and Commission adjourned the regular meeting at 6:35 PM.

Debbie Turner, City Clerk

John Borrow, Mayor