

**ORGANIZATIONAL & REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY OF SKY VALLEY, GEORGIA  
JANUARY 21, 2014  
TUESDAY, 9:00 AM  
FELLOWSHIP HALL, 817 SKY VALLEY WAY**

**MINUTES**

Mayor Martindale called the organizational meeting to order.

Those present: Mayor Martindale, Council President Howard, Councilors Carr, Larsen, Platt, and Whatley, Mayor Elect Goodgame, Councilor Elect Greene, City Manager Lapeyrouse, City Clerk Cantrell, and Chief Dills. Attorney Allan Ramsay is filling in for Attorney Dickerson.

Pam Spears gave the invocation. Mayor Martindale led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

- Swearing in of Newly Elected Officials

City Clerk Cantrell administered the Oath of Office to Mayor Goodgame and Councilors Greene, Larsen, and Whatley.

- Passing of the Gavel

Jim Martindale presented Mayor Goodgame with the gavel.

- Special Presentation of Plaques

Council President Howard presented outgoing Mayor, Jim Martindale, and Councilor, Maureen Platt with plaques. He thanked Martindale for serving as mayor for six years and Platt for serving as a councilor for four years. Mayor Goodgame thanked Martindale for his help in making this a smooth transition.

- Nomination and Selection of 2014 Council President

Councilor Carr made a motion nominating Councilor Larsen, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Greene, unanimously approved.

- Set 2014 Regular Meeting Dates

Mayor Goodgame said he would like to plan to meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 10:00 AM. Council President Larsen made a motion to set the regular meetings for the fourth Tuesday of each month at 10:00 AM, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Carr, unanimously approved.

**REGULAR MEETING**

Councilor Howard made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2013 Regular Council Meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Greene, unanimously approved.

Councilor Carr made a motion to adopt the agenda, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Howard, unanimously approved.

- **MAYOR'S REMARKS**

Mayor Goodgame said he is excited about the turnout at the meeting today, and he hopes to see the good attendance continue. He introduced Attorney Allan Ramsay, who is attending in place of City Attorney John Dickerson. He asked him to also serve as parliamentarian at the meeting. Ramsay agreed. Goodgame said we will be closely following the City's Rules of Procedure Ordinance, 13-03 and briefly explained the meeting procedure. He said he hopes everyone will notice a friendlier city hall and being greeted when they come in the building. He said that when you call or visit city hall, you may not always immediately be able to speak to the person you want to, however the person who greets you or takes your call will take care of you and forward your message to the appropriate person who will get back with you in a timely manner.

Many things came up during the election campaign that he and the Council will be working to address. He added that they will be asking many people in the community to help by serving on committees and asked people to attend as many meetings as possible. We will also have town-hall style meetings for public input. Priorities include a cell tower, marketing, nuisance abatement on the old lodge, the city park, and sewer funding and grant research. It is important to get involved and have a greater presence with Rabun County. He said he was nominated by the County Commission to serve on the Board of the Rabun County Industrial Development Authority and also nominated to the Executive Committee of the Board to serve as Treasurer. He also thanked Councilor Whatley and past councilors, Ray Becker and Helen Kleiber, who are very involved in working with the county.

**COUNCIL REMARKS**

Councilor Carr thanked city staff for the water to drink at the meetings. She said people have asked her about being the only female councilor, but having six brothers, three sons, and being married to David Carr has given her the necessary experience to handle it.

Council President Larsen said the Club has a contract under works for a Club Manager. He said there is a trail at the top of Knob Drive that goes from Sky Valley to Rabun Bald. The trail connects to the Bartram Trail. His son and he have been working to keep the trail cleared out the last few years. He requested the City to help clean up at the trail entrance, and for trail markers to post on the trees.

Councilor Howard said that he is excited about the year ahead and said that Mayor Goodgame has some good ideas, and he encouraged the citizens to get involved to help move forward together.

Martin Greene said he wished he could thank everyone who voted for him, but he was unopposed. He said he wanted to serve because he loves Sky Valley and wants to work to make it a better community for everyone.

- **CITY MANAGER & DEPARTMENT REPORTS – EXCEPTIONS AND QUESTIONS**

Mayor Goodgame said that we will not be reporting on normal business activity, instead we will be reporting on exceptions and unusual transactions. We will also take any questions. Reports will be emailed and posted on the city's website along with the agenda before each meeting.

City Manager Lapeyrouse said that garbage collection will be on Monday only through Memorial Day.

City Manager Lapeyrouse said that if your primary residence is in Sky Valley, that you can file for a homestead exemption with Rabun County and Sky Valley to lower your ad valorem tax bill. Citizen Ed Morley asked how to apply for Sky Valley's homestead exemption. City Manager Lapeyrouse explained that you come to City Hall and fill out a form with the Tax Commissioner.

- **OLD BUSINESS**

- ❖ Approval of Mutual Aid Agreement with Macon County

Councilor Whatley made a motion to authorize Mayor Goodgame to sign the agreement once the amendments have been finalized and approved by Attorney Dickerson, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Howard. Councilor Whatley thanked Chief Dills for working on this since 2009. Once the attorneys are finished with it, it will be signed by the Mayor and then sent to North Carolina to be signed into their State Laws.

Clifford Bell asked specifically what this agreement does. Councilor Whatley said that this agreement allows our police to assist in emergencies that happen in Macon County.

Councilor Carr asked if the State of Georgia will also have to approve. Councilor Whatley and Attorney Ramsay said that Georgia's law gives the city authorization to enter into this agreement on its own. The motion passed unanimously.

- ❖ Update on Lodge – Nuisance Abatement

Mayor Goodgame said the attorneys have given more information to us regarding abatement of the nuisance, and it is being worked on. Council President Larsen asked if there was a timeframe. Mayor Goodgame said he estimates that we should have the documentation ready to proceed within 60 days. City Manager Lapeyrouse said that the city has to file a complaint and have a hearing in municipal court for the judge to make an order. Citizen Helen Kleiber asked if there had been discussions with Merrill regarding saving the bench and the bear carving for the City or the Club. Former Mayor, Jim Martindale, stated that he had discussed it with the demolition contractors but not Merrill.

- ❖ Update on cell phone tower

Mayor Goodgame said that about nine months ago, Verizon hired an independent contractor to locate the best site for a cell tower and to negotiate a lease agreement. Their top location was behind the old dairy barn, but some people spoke out against a cell tower being placed in the valley. Former Mayor, Jim Martindale, worked with them to find a second location, which is on the Pearson property on Bald Mountain Road. Now, they are working to negotiate a lease with the property owner. Mayor Goodgame reported that as per the contractor, the Bald Mountain site will not provide as good of service as their preferred location behind the barn. The proposed site on Bald Mountain will take approximately 13 months to complete. There is a temporary tower, referred to as a C.O.W., cell tower on wheels, by cell phone companies. It is not easy to get a temporary tower, especially for that length of time. Several influential people have written letters to Verizon to request the C.O.W. He has asked the contractor to delay signing the lease until the City has time to work on possible locations. Citizen Jackie Bell asked what a C.O.W. looks like. Mayor Goodgame explained that it is a tower on the back of a truck. Citizen David Carr said that he and Councilor Carr would like to offer the use of their lot on Driver Lane at no charge if that is an acceptable location for the C.O.W. Citizen Pam Spears said there is a cell tower in the middle of Buckhead that looks like a tree adding that she didn't know it was a cell tower until someone pointed it out to her. Mayor Goodgame said he asked the contractor about the towers that look like trees, and the contractor explained that it is more expensive technology, that it

takes community financial participation, and that it does not provide as good of coverage. He asked if, by a show of hands, the audience would like to have a Town Hall meeting to discuss the cell tower. Most audience members raised their hands. Mayor Goodgame asked staff to schedule a meeting. Councilor Howard asked if Mr. Sanders, the contractor, can be available for the Town Hall meeting. Councilor Whatley said that we will need several pieces of information for the meeting such as costs for tower options, the C.O.W., and what is included in the lease agreement.

- **NEW BUSINESS**

- ❖ Approval of 2014 Agreement with SV/Scaly Fire Department

Councilor Whatley made a motion to approve the agreement, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Greene. Councilor Whatley explained that this has to be renewed each year and when there are significant changes to the agreement. Councilor Howard asked if there were significant changes. Citizen Dee Moore asked if it is still funded with one mil. City Manager Lapeyrouse said that the contribution amount changes every year and is the main reason for the annual agreement. This year, it is equal to one mil. Last year, it was a little less than one mil. The motion to approve the agreement passed unanimously.

- ❖ Set Qualifying Fees for the 2014 General Election

City Manager Lapeyrouse explained that the qualifying fees must be set each year in January. The qualifying fee has been \$15 for the last few years. Council President Larsen made a motion to set the 2014 qualifying fee at \$15, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Carr, unanimously approved.

- ❖ Nomination & Selection of one P & Z member

Mayor Goodgame said that Mr. Bob MacNair's term is up and Mr. Will Gurley has volunteered to serve on the Planning & Zoning Commission. Mr. Gurley has been in commercial real estate and has experience in dealing with planning and zoning issues. Council President Larsen made a motion to nominate Will Gurley, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Carr, unanimously approved.

- ❖ Creation of 2014 Committees

Mayor Goodgame announced the committees and their council member liaisons. He encouraged participation in the city by serving on committees and being patient as we implement changes and pursue answers to our challenges.

- Mayor Advisory Committee – Council President Larsen and Councilor Howard
- Marketing Committee - Mayor Goodgame
- Beautification Committee - Councilor Carr
- Maintenance & Public Works Committee - Councilor Green
- Capital Projects Committee - Council President Larsen
- Public Safety, Emergency Response, & Crisis Management Committee - Councilor Whatley
- Special Projects Committee - Councilor Howard

Council President Larsen made a motion to approve these committees, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Carr, unanimously approved.

- ❖ Discussion of waiving building permit fees for new construction in 2014

City Manager Lapeyrouse explained that permit fees for new construction have been waived for the last two years and explained that if the Council wants to waive the fee, it must be re-approved. Council President Larsen made a motion to approve waiving permit fees on new construction for 2014,

2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Carr. Citizen Ray Brooker asked if this included the water tap-on fee. No, it does not. The motion passed unanimously.

❖ Approval of authorized signatures on bank accounts

Mayor Goodgame said that he would like to have himself and two Councilors authorized to sign checks so that there will always be someone available and recommended Councilor Greene and Council President Larsen. Councilor Whatley made a motion to authorize Mayor Goodgame and Councilors Greene and Larsen to be added to the checking accounts to sign checks, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Carr, unanimously approved. City Manager Lapeyrouse and City Clerk Cantrell are also signers on the account. The City requires one staff member and one elected official signature on all checks.

❖ Liability Insurance Re-evaluation

Mayor Goodgame said that based on the insurance reappraisal this year, our property values increased by almost \$500,000, potentially costing an additional \$1,500 based on our 2013 rates. City Manager Lapeyrouse said that we could remove the water storage tanks to help offset the rate increase. Councilor Whatley said that he does not believe it is worth the savings to remove the water tanks from our coverage. Citizen Debbie McAfee asked if the insurance agent did the appraisal or if it was an independent appraisal. She said that she supports having the water tanks on the insurance policy. City Manager Lapeyrouse said the appraisal was done by an independent appraiser. Councilor Whatley made a motion to insure the tanks, 2<sup>nd</sup> Larsen. City Manager Lapeyrouse explained that only two of the tanks were listed on the appraisal. The City owns six tanks. Councilor Howard asked which tanks were most important. City Manager Lapeyrouse explained that each tank serves a particular area. Councilor Whatley made a motion to authorize Mayor Goodgame and City Manager Lapeyrouse to add all of the City water tanks and make sure no other property had been left out, 2<sup>nd</sup> Larsen, unanimously approved.

• PUBLIC FORUM AND GENERAL COMMENTS

Jim Martindale said that he does not want the C.O.W. in his back yard, that he believes the C.O.W. should be by the barn. Mayor Goodgame said that Milt Gillespie told him there is a very visible tower in the golf community where he is in the winter and it has an American flag at the top of it.

Ray Brooker asked how high the tower is supposed to be. Mayor Goodgame said the C.O.W. is 75-80 feet, and the permanent tower will be 190 feet. Council President Larsen said that at the Town Hall meeting, we can discuss options. Councilor Whatley said he would like to see the terms of the lease agreement and have a copy available at the meeting.

Truman Barber said that he appreciates how this meeting has been conducted, and said that he believes the community will be supportive.

• EXECUTIVE SESSION

- ❖ Meetings when discussing or deliberating upon the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer. O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(6).

Councilor Whatley made a motion to move into executive session, 2<sup>nd</sup> Council President Larsen, unanimously approved.

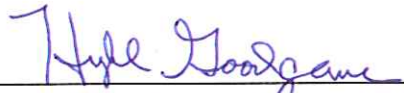
Councilor Whatley made a motion to reconvene regular session, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Howard, unanimously approved.

Councilor Whatley made a motion to keep employee Byron Godwin on payroll as our licensed water operator through the end of February, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Howard, unanimously approved.

City Manager Lapeyrouse asked if the Council wanted to authorize Chief Dills to acquire the Federal Government surplus Hummer that is mentioned on the Chief's monthly report. Councilor Whatley made a motion to accept the Hummer and not spend any money for repairs, maintenance, or to add to the insurance until its uses can be determined, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Greene, unanimously approved.


Councilor Whatley made a motion to adjourn, 2<sup>nd</sup> Councilor Howard, unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted:



Hughel Goodgame, Mayor

Attested:

  
Mandi Cantrell, City Clerk