

MINUTES OF THE CITY OF SKY VALLEY REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING ON A TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2024, AT 10:00 AM, HELD AT 3608 HWY 246 (CITY HALL) & VIA TELECONFERENCE (ZOOM) SKY VALLEY, GEORGIA

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Steil, Councilors Allred, McAfee, Turner, Oliver, and Curtis

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Streetman, City Clerk Fleming, Deputy Clerk Murphy, Communication Specialist Van Camp, City Attorney Kidd, Interim Chief of Police Edwards, Building Inspector Pyburn, Public Works Superintendent Shope with Staff

1. Call to Order

Mayor Steil called the meeting to order.

2. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance

Councilor Allred led the Invocation /Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of Minutes

July 16, 2024 – Regular Council Meeting

Councilor McAfee made a motion to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Councilor Oliver, unanimously approved.

4. Adoption of Agenda

Councilor Curtis made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Councilor Turner, unanimously approved.

5. Mayoral/Council Remarks

Mayor Steil stated that her thoughts and prayers are for the recent hurricane victims. She introduced Mr. and Mrs. Darren Gillett who are the coordinators at the Sky Valley-Scaly Mountain Fire Department. Mr. Gillett expressed his thankfulness for the residents of Sky Valley, generously giving supplies for the hurricane victims. There were 1,000 residents of the Scaly Community without power and the Fire Department stepped in by providing three hot meals a day and a place to take hot showers. The left over supplies were taken to Swannanoa NC to help the victims in that area.

Mayor Steil also stated that many residents remarked on how thankful they were for the efforts of the City after the storm, (the public works staff along with City Manager Streetman). She stated that the Garden Club had done an amazing job of decorating for Fall with all the different displays at the corners of the City.

Councilor Oliver stated that the Public Works staff needed a round of applause.

Councilor Turner stated that due to storm damage the CBC Building (Old Lodge), it would no longer be habitable.

6. City Manager Report

City Manager Streetman also thanked the Public Works Department along with the Police Department for the long hours worked after the storm. He also went over the following items: *Looking into possibly getting some reimbursement for the storm's expenses from the County's Emergency Management Office *The City is aware of how much of an inconvenience that the recent water breaks have caused. Engineering Management, Inc., believes that a lot of the breaks are due to the City's pressure reducing valves that may need to be replaced. The Water Department will order rebuild kits for the valves and will start replacing as as needed. *The 5-year Comp. Plan is underway and must be finalized by the 31st of this month. This a joint plan with the rest of the municipalities in the county. *The EPD lead survey has been completed and he thanked the residents for their cooperation with the staff in order to get the information needed. * Re-surfacing of Ridgepole has been completed. *A planning retreat has been scheduled for the 25th of this month at the GRMC building in Gainesville. The 2025 proposed budget will be presented at that time. *LMIG and EEE applications being submitted. *He went over the General Fund financials which reflects

expenses are at approximately 90% but revenues have exceeded at approximately 112%.

Councilor Oliver asked if the Revenues would exceed a 100,000+ and City Manager Streetman answered yes.

Councilor McAfee asked if there were any issues with the lead pipe survey and City Manager Streetman answered that there were none.

7. Departmental Reports

Jim Pyburn, Building Inspector, stated the warning citations that were issued had been taken care of promptly. There are currently five new homes under construction and three new homes pending. There have been three hundred thirty-one permits as of date issued.

Jerry Shope, Public Works Superintendent, thanked the Fire Department and Police Department for their help after the storm. Evergreen Lane was hit the worst but has been cleaned up. Road damage that occurred during the storm will be patched shortly. Jerry thanked his crew for all of their hard work. He stated that the bucket truck is operable again and they will be using it for cutting back the ROW tree canopy. He introduced his new staff member, Joseph Stinchcomb. He also stated that the hydro vac would be used on the pressure reducing valve pits during the repairs/replacement. He also thanked Don Rice for his help during the storm cleanup.

David Edwards, Interim Chief of Police, stated that he had just finished taking classes for his position. He also is underway with the application concerning the renewing of DOT permit to operate on the side of the Hwy. 246.

8. Committee Reports

Councilor Turner, Special Projects Chairman, stated that 30 vendors have signed up for this year's Fallfest. Volunteers are needed along with four tables and chairs for a cake walk.

Gordon Brand, Marketing Committee, shared a video produced by Nelson Hicks for WSB-TV. This video is titled "Explore Sky Valley this Fall" and features former Fallfests, golf, pickleball, hiking, croquette, and short-term rentals here at Sky Valley. This video will be an amazing marketing tool.

NEW BUSINESS

9. Consider approval to amend the Sky Valley Tree Ordinance – 1st Reading and Introduction

Mayor Steil stated that the P&Z Commission has presented a draft ordinance that has been worked on for months and per our charter there must be two readings before coming to a vote. Don Rice has given some suggestions to consider as he was unable to attend the P&Z meetings on said topic(s). Councilor McAfee, P&Z Chairman, suggested that Mr. Rice's recommendations should be considered, and the ordinance should be amended once again, before being considered by the Council. He went on to say that an ordinance addressing trees will never be perfect for everybody/every situation but the commission hopes to get a little closer. Councilor Turner asked a question concerning his property. He wanted to know if a variance could be obtained to allow a tree to be cut and left due to the area in which the tree is located. Councilor McAfee stated that trees left, create fire hazards, but a variance could be applied for under the circumstances. Councilor Curtis stated that he thinks the ordinance is going in the right direction but stiffer fines might help to keep the violators at bay. He went on to say that new construction should have more define guidelines before clearing off for the house's footprint.

Councilor McAfee made a motion to take the ordinance back to the P&Z Commission before the 1st reading, seconded by Councilor Oliver, unanimously approved.

Mayor Steil asked if Mr. Rice could get together with Jim Pyburn and Councilor McAfee to make some

changes, an edited draft of the tree ordinance, then present it back to the P&Z Commission? They stated that yes, they could do that.

10. Consider approval to amend the Sky Valley Zoning Ordinance (Solar) – 1st Reading and Introduction

Mayor Steil stated that the P&Z Commission has done their research and also conferred with Chief Sigler concerning safety aspects with solar panels in the event of a fire. She asked Councilor McAfee, also chairman of the P&Z Commission, to go over the need for such regulations. Councilor McAfee stated that several residents or potential residents had asked if any regulations were in place, so the Commission is just trying to get ahead of a situation. Several things were considered: structure, first responders, aesthetics, keeping out of roadways/prohibiting ground mounted solar panels. The Solar Energy Systems (SES) was incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Don Rice also had some suggestions on this topic and after reviewing his suggestions, Councilor McAfee saw a need for a couple more changes: 1. Under permitted uses, 1 (b) 3., the place holder [?]% , should read 50% and same section, 2.(c), “zoning district” should be deleted as this ordinance applies to all of Sky Valley. Don Rice, 1824 Ridgepole, commented on the easement portion. he stated that the Georgia Code 44-9-20 states that a homeowner could get a solar easement from their neighbor and he questioned if Sky Valley’s ordinance would trump the state’s statute code. City Attorney Kidd stated that he would look up the statute code and get back with the Council. Mr. Rice went on to say that the proposed ordinance would be discriminatory due to allowing panels only on the South side that wouldn’t be facing the street side. Only approximately 15% of residents would be eligible. The Council talked about the aesthetics of having solar panels street-facing and also the possibility of glares from them, which is address under 2(e). Mayor Steil suggested adding to the permit requirements, a form from the solar panel installer/company showing the glare/reflectiveness at the jobsite, that they are required to be checked by the FAA.

Larry Randolph, 452 E. Sugarbush, asked about future development plans within Sky Valley. Mayor Steil stated that she would get back with him to answer any questions that he may have.

City Attorney Kidd asked if the ordinance could be sent to him so he could put it in proper form. He stated with the minor changes the presented format would be fine for the 1st reading.

Councilor McAfee made a motion to approve the solar panel portion, with the minor changes, of the Sky Valley Zoning Ordinance, seconded by Councilor Curtis, unanimously approved. This will be recorded as the first reading.

11. Ratification of IGA (Intergovernmental Agreement) with Rabun County and all other municipalities within Rabun County for hazard mitigation update.

City Manager Streetman stated that this agreement is a lot like the Comp Plan for the County. The agreement is aspirational but is needed if going after any FEMA type monies. Due to time restraints, as the County needed a signed Resolution before the next scheduled meeting. The Council agreed to the IGA and the next step is to formally adopt it.

Councilor Turner made a motion to formally adopt the IGA Resolution, seconded by Councilor McAfee, unanimously approved.

12. Consider approval or Resolution to declare city owned equipment as surplus for liquidation.

- **2002 Ford F350**
- **2007 Hustler Zero Turn Mower**
- **2004 John Deere Zero Turn Mower**

City Manager Streetman stated that the listed City owned property is no longer viable and needs to be surplus. The equipment would be listed on GovDeals.

Councilor Curtis made a motion to surplus out the said property, seconded by Councilor Turner, unanimously approved.

13. Executive Session

Mayor Steil stated that there was a need to discuss two items: personnel and property.

Councilor Curtis made a motion to close the meeting, seconded by Councilor Turner, unanimously approved.

Councilor Curtis made a motion to open the meeting, seconded by Councilor McAfee, unanimously approved.

Mayor Steil stated no action was taken.

OTHER BUSINESS

14. Public Forum and General Comments

No further comments were made.

15. Adjournment

As there being no further business to come before Mayor and Council, Councilor Allred made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilor Turner, unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Hollie Steil, Mayor

Attest:



Karen Fleming, City Clerk

**SKY VALLEY CITY COUNCIL
MEMORANDUM AND AFFIDAVIT OF CLOSED MEETING
PURSANT TO O.C.G.A. §50-14-4**

October 15, 2024
Date

Motion to Close Meeting:

[Signature]
Signature of Councilor Jim

Seconded:

[Signature]
Signature of Councilor Bruce

Motion to Open Meeting:

[Signature]
Signature of Councilor Jim

Seconded:

[Signature]
Signature of Councilor Dan

Topic: (Please check one)

- To discuss the future acquisition of real estate;
(O.C.G.A. §50-14-3 (4))
- To discuss or deliberate upon the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a city official or employee;
(O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3 (6))
- To consult and meet with legal counsel pertaining to pending or potential litigation, settlement, claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions brought or to be brought by or against the city or a city official or employee or in which the official or employee may be directly involved.
(O.C.G.A. § 50-14-2)

Each of the undersigned, under oath, certifies that at a meeting of the city council held on 10/15/24, the council closed its meeting as permitted by the Georgia Open Meetings Act. The only matter(s) considered or discussed during the closed portion of its meeting is as checked above.

[Signature]
Mayor Steil

[Signature]
Councilor Allred

[Signature]
Council President Oliver

[Signature]
Councilor Curtis

[Signature]
Councilor McAfee

[Signature]
Councilor Turner

Sworn to and subscribed before me on the above indicated date:

[Signature]
Notary Public, State of Georgia
My Commission Expires: 3/13/28

