

**City of Locust Grove  
Council Meeting Minutes  
Monday, October 5, 2020  
3640 Highway 42 – Public Safety Building  
Locust Grove, GA 30248  
6:00 PM**

<b>Members Present:</b>	<b>Staff Present:</b>
Robert Price - Mayor	Tim Young – City Manager
Rod Shearouse – Councilman	Bert Foster – Assistant City Manager
Willie Taylor – Councilman	Misty Spurling – City Clerk
Randy Gardner – Councilman	Jennifer Adkins – Assistant City Clerk
Rudy Breedlove – Councilman	Daunte’ Gibbs- Community Development Director
Carlos Greer – Councilman/Mayor Pro Tem	Jesse Patton – Police Chief
Keith Boone – Councilman	Andy Welch – City Attorney
	Brooke White - SWWW
	<b>Staff Not Present:</b>
	Jack Rose – Public Works Director (Illness)
	Anna Ogg – Main Street Director (DDA Meeting)

Mayor Price called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

Invocation given by Assistant City Manager Bert Foster

Councilman Breedlove led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA** –

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Greer made the motion to approve the October 5, 2020 meeting agenda.

RESULT	APPROVED AGENDA
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN GREER
2 <sup>ND</sup> MOTION	COUNCILMAN BOONE
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED - ALL IN FAVOR

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** –

- **Proclamation – Retired Educators Day – November 1, 2020**

City Clerk Misty Spurling read the proclamation aloud and no one present to accept. Nothing further.

**PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS** – NONE

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** -

**1. SEPTEMBER 1, 2020- REGULAR MEETING MINUTES –**

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Boone made the motion to approve the September 1, 2020 regular meeting minutes.

RESULT	APPROVED SEPTEMBER 1, 2020 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN BOONE
2 <sup>ND</sup> MOTION	COUNCILMAN GREER
FAVOR	MOTION CARRIED – ALL IN FAVOR

**2. SEPTEMBER 1, 2020- EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING MINUTES –**

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Boone made the motion to approve the September 1, 2020 executive session meeting minutes.

RESULT	APPROVED SEPTEMBER 1, 2020 EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING MINUTES
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN BOONE
2 <sup>ND</sup> MOTION	COUNCILMAN BREEDLOVE
FAVOR	MOTION CARRIED – ALL IN FAVOR

**3. SEPTEMBER 21, 2020- WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES –**

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Taylor made the motion to approve the September 21, 2020 workshop meeting minutes.

RESULT	APPROVED SEPTEMBER 21, 2020 WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN TAYLOR
2 <sup>ND</sup> MOTION	COUNCILMAN BOONE
FAVOR	MOTION CARRIED – ALL IN FAVOR

**ACCEPTANCE OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT –**

**4. AUGUST 2020 - Financial Statement –**

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Greer made the motion to approve the August 2020 Financial Statement

RESULT	APPROVED AUGUST 2020 FINANCIAL STATEMENT
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN GREER
2 <sup>ND</sup> MOTION	COUNCILMAN TAYLOR
FAVOR	MOTION CARRIED – ALL IN FAVOR

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS –**

- 5. An ordinance to amend Title 17, Chapter 17.04.055, PR-5 (Urban Infill/Active Adult Planned Residential) of the City of Locust Grove Code of Ordinances, which provides for zoning regulations; to provide for conditional uses for senior adult housing and age targeted and continuum of care developments–**

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Greer made the motion to deny the request.

RESULT	REQUEST DENIED
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN GREER
2 <sup>ND</sup> MOTION	COUNCILMAN BOONE
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED – ALL IN FAVOR

- 6. An ordinance to rezone 21.9 +/- acres located at 162 Indian Creek Road (Parcel ID- 129-01047000 & 129-01046005) in LL 168 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> district.**

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Shearouse made the motion to deny the request.

RESULT	REQUEST DENIED
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN SHEAROUSE
2 <sup>ND</sup> MOTION	COUNCILMAN BOONE
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED – ALL IN FAVOR

- 7. An ordinance requesting a conditional use for a senior housing development for property located at 162 Indian Creek Road (Parcel ID - 129-01047000 & 129-01046005) in Land Lot 168 of the 2nd District**

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Breedlove made the motion to deny the request.

RESULT	REQUEST DENIED
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN BREEDLOVE
2 <sup>ND</sup> MOTION	COUNCILMAN GREER
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED – ALL IN FAVOR

- 8. A resolution to accept an agreement with Blue Line Solutions “BLS” implementing a Photo Speed Enforcement Program –**

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Greer made the motion to approve the request by approving resolution #20-10-045.

RESULT	APPROVED RESOLUTION #20-10-045
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN GREER
2 <sup>ND</sup> MOTION	COUNCILMAN BOONE
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED – ALL IN FAVOR

**9. A resolution authorizing the City of Locust Grove to extend an existing Water Tank Maintenance Services agreement with American Tank Maintenance**

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Boone made the motion to approve the request by approving resolution #20-10-046.

RESULT	APPROVED RESOLUTION #20-10-046
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN BOONE
2 <sup>ND</sup> MOTION	COUNCILMAN BREEDLOVE
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED – ALL IN FAVOR

**10. An ordinance to approve a sanitation contract with Advanced Disposal –**

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Greer made the motion to approve the request by approving ordinance #20-10-047.

RESULT	APPROVED ORDINANCE #20-10-047
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN GREER
2 <sup>ND</sup> MOTION	COUNCILMAN BREEDLOVE
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED – ALL IN FAVOR

**NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS –**

Mayor Price asked Mrs. Tew to step forward for public comment.

Mrs. Darlene Tew; resident at 325 Courtney Court, stepped forward to comment about Item eleven (Crossing Closure). Mrs. Tew said Locust Grove has a Facebook page; however, this item is not posted. Mrs. Tew said she does not agree with the crossing closure because this will cause the traffic to back up on Peeksville Road. Mrs. Tew asked if a study has been done on how many vehicles use the Bowden Street crossing. Discussion took place. Mrs. Tew said she is concerned this closure will deter people to use the Warren Holder ballpark for a pass through causing a high risk for children who utilize that park. Further, Mrs. Tew said she is hoping Council will consider this before closing and think about the citizens of Locust Grove versus the revenue the city will receive from Norfolk Southern for closing this crossing. Nothing further.

**11. Possible closure of Norfolk Southern Railroad Crossings –**

Attorney Andy Welch stepped forward and led discussion the city was approached by Norfolk Southern several times in the last several weeks regarding the crossings at Bowden Street and Pine Grove Road. The concern is the city has experienced multiple tractor trailer trucks stalled on the Bowden Street crossing which causes long delays in traffic in the city. The city has added signs to redirect truck traffic off Bowden St; however, the signs have not been effective. Attorney Andy Welch said a train hit a truck (full of candy) about a year and half ago at this crossing and thankfully no one was hurt. The downside is the next truck could be a fuel truck or hauling hazardous material versus candy which could be life threatening to many. In these cases, we must notify Norfolk Southern to slow the train so it can stop in time.

Further, Attorney Andy Welch said NS (Norfolk Southern) can appeal to GDOT (Georgia Department of Transportation) to close the crossing independent of us; therefore, our

recommendation is to close the crossings at Bowden Street and Pine Grove Road. If we move forward this agreement will allow for Bowden Street be permanently blocked and not allow another crossing at that area. This will approve the addition of two additional crossings [ overpass or underpass] to allow access to that area. Discussion took place.

Mayor Price said this is a start to decrease the chance of lives being lost or damages being done and will help traffic flow for 30 more years.

Attorney Andy Welch made a comment the frequency will continue if we do not act now.

Councilman Shearouse asked how long it will take to get an overpass or underpass if we proceed with this agreement. Mr. Young replied the process could take up to five years. Attorney Andy Welch replied we will have to do a study first. The immediacy of this request makes urgent the city works with GDOT and NS to work on a new underpass or overpass; however, not sure how long this process will be.

City Manager Tim Young said we talked to representatives with NS and GPS about trucks being redirected; however, they offered no solutions. Discussion took place on upcoming transportation projects.

Councilman Greer said Tim made a comment a new underpass or overpass could take up to five years. Attorney Andy Welch replied yes, Norfolk Southern has a legal way to seek that closure with GDOT. This agreement negotiates a closure with revenue, safety value, and permission to add two additional crossings in the future. Councilman Greer asked if we have any input on speeding up the process. Mr. Young said the process is going to be a lot of work and we will do whatever we can to see faster results.

Councilman Breedlove asked if we could put a deadline on completion versus leaving it open ended as stated in the closing agreement under number five. Attorney Andy Welch said we are not sure how long this will take and the concern if we put a time frame, we would then have an issue with the agreement expiring before the crossings were installed. This keeps the agreement in place until those crossings are installed.

Councilman Boone asked how many trucks have been stuck on this crossing to date. Chief Patton said he does not have that information with him. City Manager Tim Young said approximately 20-25 trucks (based on data from a neighboring resident in the past two years).

Councilman Boone asked what the cost is to stop a train. Mayor Price replied the cost is one million dollars. Councilman Boone asked if closing this crossing will add more space to do road improvements and asked if an underpass would accommodate tractor trailers. Mr. Young replied with discussion on road improvements. Attorney Andy Welch said underpasses do not normally accommodate tractor trailers; however, would depend on the nature of the engineering of the project.

Councilman Greer asked why Pine Grove Road crossing is being suggested for closure. Attorney Andy Welch replied Norfolk Southern has requested for this closure. They did not indicate any safety concerns.

Councilman Shearouse said the problem is related to GPS guidance that we or Norfolk Southern can remedy; however, this says if we close the crossing it would be removed from GPS immediately and asked how that is possible? Mr. Young replied with reporting by drivers, but that we cannot

“spoof” the report due to the fact that someone else would state that it was indeed open and thereby keep in on GPS.

Councilman Taylor made a comment that this is not the same Locust Grove from even recent history and that we are continuing to grow and change. In that regard, we must make changes to accommodate the needs of the city at the time and now is the time. Nothing further.

No further comments from Council.

Mayor Price opened for public comments.

Mr. Michael Brackett, resident at 55 Bowden Street, stepped forward to comment. Mr. Brackett asked if we could use the closure as leverage for NS to incur some of the costs for the study. Mr. Brackett said he is not opposed to the closure but if we close two crossings and add two crossings that are not tractor trailer accessible, where will these trucks go? Attorney Andy Welch replied we are receiving \$100,000 from Norfolk Southern but we do not know where future crossings will go at this time. The study will assist in determining where those locations will be sufficient. It may not be feasible for tractor trailers to cross and discussion took place if we can create a direct access point, we could enhance accessibility. Nothing further.

Mrs. Tootsie Upchurch stepped forward to comment. Mrs. Upchurch suggested the city opening Club Drive crossing back up for vehicles only and suggested barriers be added to deter people from driving through the ballpark if they do not have a purpose for being there. Nothing further.

Mrs. Tammy Boone stepped forward to comment. Mrs. Boone suggested a flashing stop sign that says “No Trucks” be added at the crossing. Attorney Andy Welch said we have posted signs, but the signs are being ignored. Nothing further.

Councilman Boone said he would like the study to include space for tractor trailers to cross. Nothing further.

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Greer made the motion to sign the Crossing Closure Agreement with Norfolk Southern.

RESULT	APPROVED
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN GREER
2 <sup>ND</sup> MOTION	COUNCILMAN SHEAROUSE
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED – ALL IN FAVOR

Mr. Young said the resolution for the elimination of a grade crossing will need to be approved as well.

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Boone made the motion to amend the resolution to include Pine Grove Road crossing but subject to Norfolk Southern approving agreement tonight and approving resolution **#20-10-048**

RESULT	APPROVED AS AMENDED RESOLUTION #20-10-048
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN BOONE
2 <sup>ND</sup> MOTION	COUNCILMAN SHEAROUSE

VOTE	MOTION CARRIED – ALL IN FAVOR
------	-------------------------------

**CITY MANAGER’S COMMENTS –**

City Manager Tim Young stepped forward and said we are working on the 2021 budget. Also, received our new insurance renewal and the proposal with current provider [Blue Cross Blue Shield] would be a 40 percent increase. Cigna Healthcare proposed only a ten percent increase and will be our new provider. Nothing further.

**MAYOR’S COMMENTS –**

Mayor Price said Jack Rose is having some health issues which may lead to him being out from work several months. We are asking for you to direct any questions to us.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION – NONE**

**ADJOURNMENT –**

Mayor Price asked for a motion to adjourn. Councilman Greer made the motion to adjourn.

RESULT	APPROVED – ADJOURN MEETING
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN GREER
2 <sup>ND</sup> MOTION	COUNCILMAN SHEAROUSE
FAVOR	MOTION CARRIED MEETING ADJOURNED @ 7:19 PM.

Notes taken by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Misty Spurling, City Clerk