

**City of Locust Grove
Council Workshop Meeting Minutes
Public Safety Building – 3640 Highway 42 S.
Locust Grove, GA 30248
Tuesday, June 20, 2023
6:00 PM**

Members Present:	Staff Present:
Robert Price – Mayor	Tim Young – City Manager
Keith Boone – Councilman/Pro Tem	Misty Spurling – City Clerk
Vincent Williams – Councilman	Jennifer Adkins – Assistant City Clerk
Willie Taylor – Councilman	Jack Rose – Public Works Director
Rudy Breedlove - Councilman	Daunté Gibbs – Community Development Director
	Colleen Watts – Main Street Manager
	Derrick Austin – Police Chief
	Brooke White –SWWW Attorney
Members not present:	Staff not present:
Rod Shearouse - Councilman	Bert Foster – Assistant City Manager
Carlos Greer – Councilman (Present via teleconference/phone)	Andy Welch – Attorney

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

Invocation given by Community Development Director Daunté Gibbs

Councilman Breedlove led the Pledge of Allegiance for Councilman Greer

APPROVAL OF AGENDA –

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Boone made the motion to approve the agenda.

RESULT	APPROVED AGENDA
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN BOONE
2 ND MOTION	COUNCILMAN TAYLOR
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED - ALL IN FAVOR

PUBLIC COMMENTS – NONE

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS –

1. Amendment to the City of Locust Grove Code of Ordinances in accordance with House Bill 1405 –

Daunté Gibbs, Community Development Director, stepped forward to comment. Daunté reviewed the changes and said this will be effective July 1, 2023. This is regarding public notices, hearings, and procedures for making zoning decisions. Daunté said the city attorney can explain further if needed.

Mayor Price said this is a public hearing and asked the public for comments from anyone in favor of the request. There were no comments.

Mayor Price asked for comments from anyone opposed to the request and there were no comments. Mayor Price closed the public hearing and asked for comments from the Council.

Councilman Williams asked how the process was before this amendment. Daunté reviewed the procedures that were previously in place and the new amendments which include requirements for advertising (15-day to 45-day public hearing notice) and notifications of the same to the applicant along with an mandated timeline for decisions by the ruling body. While additional requirements for notification apply to quasi-judicial bodies, none technically apply to the City with the Council handling all hearing decisions at this time. Nothing further.

2. Ordinance for annexation of 15.31 +/- acres located on Old Bethlehem Road west of Price Drive (Parcel ID: 111-01015001) in LL 235 of the 2nd district –

Mr. Gibbs reviewed the request and said this will be the 100 percent method and will remain RA from the county to the city. Staff recommends approval of the request.

Mayor Price said this is a public hearing and asked for comments from anyone in favor of the request and there were no comments.

Mayor Price asked for comments from anyone opposed to the request and there were no comments.

Mayor Price closed the public hearing and asked for comments from the Council.

Councilman Breedlove asked for clarity of the property location on the map provided and Daunté clarified. Tim said this property is next to the Church on Bethlehem Road, not in the city limits and its only use will be for a road.

3. Ordinance to rezone 15.31 +/- acres located on Old Bethlehem Road west of Price Drive (Parcel ID: 111-01015001) from unincorporated Henry County RA (residential agricultural) to incorporated City of Locust Grove RA (residential agricultural) –

Daunté said this is the rezoning request that is with a concurrent request for annexation of the subject property. Staff recommends approval of the request for rezoning.

Mayor Price said this is a public hearing and asked for comments from anyone in favor of the request and there were no comments.

Mayor Price asked for comments from anyone opposed to the request and there were no comments.

Mayor Price closed the public hearing and asked for comments from the Council.

Councilman Breedlove asked why the city needs to annex the property and Daunte' said mainly to keep it all in the city.

OLD BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS – NONE

NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS –

4. Ordinance to amend Pay Plan No. 701 of Personnel new salary schedule for allowance of cost-of-living adjustments for the last operating period –

City Manager Tim Young stepped forward to comment. Tim said this is to allow COLA for employees for the remainder of 2023 that was accounted for in the latest budget amendment. The recommendation is for a 5.4 percent proposed increase, which is the same as last year.

Councilman Greer asked what the estimated cost on payroll and Tim said it is about \$250,000-\$270,000 which is about 5.4% of the combined payroll (around \$4 million dollars).

Discussion took place about wage inflation and Councilman Williams asked how long it takes an employee to top out? Discussion took place on the current pay grade/step scale at 1.5% increments, and Tim said we will have the results of the pay study by Fall.

Councilman Breedlove relayed a question from Councilman Greer asking if this [pay increase] is sustainable and asked if this increase is a guaranteed rate set in the policy? Tim said yes, this should be sustainable, and added the percentage is not set in the policy. We try to meet and stay consistent with the CPI; however, we are still very conservative.

Councilman Greer said he has no concerns with employees getting increase; however, only concern is those of higher pay getting increase. Councilman Greer said he would like the lower paid employees to be increased to the \$15.85/hour.

Nothing further.

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Boone made the motion to approve the request by approving ordinance **#23-06-054**.

RESULT	APPROVED ORDINANCE # 23-06-054
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN BOONE
2 ND MOTION	COUNCILMAN WILLIAMS
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED - ALL IN FAVOR

5. Special Event permit request for the Locust Grove Fire Marshal and the Johnson Foundation school supply distribution on July 22, 2023 –

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Taylor made the motion to approve the request.

RESULT	APPROVED SPECIAL EVENT
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN TAYLOR
2 ND MOTION	COUNCILMAN BREEDLOVE
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED – ALL IN FAVOR

6. Special Event permit request to host a neighborhood block party at 104 Sims Street on August 5, 2023 -

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

RESULT	APPROVED SPECIAL EVENT
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN BREEDLOVE
2 ND MOTION	COUNCILMAN WILLIAMS
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED – ALL IN FAVOR

CITY OPERATION REPORTS / WORKSHOP DISCUSSION ITEMS -

MAIN STREET OPERATIONS – COLLEEN COOK

Ms. Cook gave an update that she attended accreditation training on a state level. Main Street, Inc. now has three members and the HPC had no COAs. We will have another Friday night on the lawn event coming up on July 7, 2023.

Councilman Williams said he would like to request the addition of vendors (crafts, arts) for the Friday night events next year to avoid a decline in public attendance. Nothing further.

PUBLIC SAFETY OPERATIONS – CHIEF AUSTIN

Chief Austin reviewed the monthly report and gave an update total collected in May 2023 was \$92,772.50. The department completed 104 training hours in May, and we had 47 new cases for investigation with 45 of those cases cleared. Chief Austin reviewed the crime analysis report and discussion took place about miles patrolled notably changed since our GPS system now “fences off” actual miles patrolled from commuting to work outside the fence area. Nothing further.

PUBLIC WORKS – JACK ROSE

Mr. Rose gave an update that the annual cleaning on the Highway 42 water tank is complete, and all other operations are normal. We are continuing with a regular schedule including cutting grass, normal maintenance, and cutting trees from storms. Discussion took place about the number of utility cut-offs for non-payment and nothing further.

ADMINISTRATION –TIM YOUNG FOR (BERT FOSTER -VACATION)

Tim gave an update the utility department is now relocated across the hall to [admin]. The new server has arrived and is scheduled for installation at its permanent location [Public Safety Building] so that renovation work can begin at City Hall. We are moving forward with the Veterans Memorial and waiting for the vendor to remove the trees. Tim gave an update on the Peeksville Road Extension and the traffic light at Bethlehem Road/Highway 42.

Councilman Williams asked about the status of Bill Gardner Parkway improvements. Tim said the issue was the Verizon cable was not initially installed correctly by the vendor; therefore, caused delays for proceeding. It has since been cleared and hopefully be moved and lowered within the next ten days. Nothing further.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OPERATIONS –DAUNTÉ GIBBS

Mr. Gibbs gave an update that the department has issued a total of eight 627 permits (including 84 new house permits) for 2023. We have issued 79 COs [43 residential, and 36 commercials] and 309 business licenses issued so far for 2023.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD (ARB) –

7. Resolution approving the architectural plans submitted for Arby’s to be located at 4939 Bill Gardner Parkway –

Daunté said this is a request from Jacob Lang for a proposed Arby’s fast-food restaurant east of Wendy’s restaurant. Daunté reviewed the requirements and said staff recommends approval. Nothing further.

8. Resolution approving the architectural plans submitted for a retail building to be located at 603 Market Place Blvd –

Daunté said this request is also from Jacob Lang for a proposed retail structure that will be located north of the express oil change. Staff recommends approval and nothing further.

CITY MANAGER’S COMMENTS –TIM YOUNG

Tim stepped forward to comment. Tim gave an update we will be requesting action for a previous discussion item [“The Cubes”] at the next meeting in July and if the council has any suggestions on renaming, please let us know. We have the retreat coming up July 16-19, 2023, and will be discussing budget items. We are expecting reimbursement of about 75% of [\$160,000] from FEMA for damages related to the tornado in January 2023. Further, Tim said we are the only city so far to commit to the SS4A and discussion took place.

9. Resolution – HCDA and Retail Strategies Consulting work –

Tim said the HCDA has been working with Retail Strategies Consulting to develop a strategy to market and reach out to various retail and service providers (primarily restaurants) to recruit the Henry County area. The work will not only focus on Henry County but also the submarkets of Locust Grove, McDonough, and Stockbridge; Hampton elected to *not* participate. The HCDA has agreed to fund 50% of Hampton’s share, leaving the remaining of \$11,000. We are now looking at \$10,500 annually for each city since Hampton opted out. Tim reviewed slides on the overhead screen and discussion took place. The total (\$10,500) will be paid from Hotel/Motel funding and will be an action item at the next meeting. Nothing further.

Discussion took place and Councilman Boone asked why Hampton opted out. Tim said they have their own development authority and that their mayor stated that they felt they could do a better job on this matter on their own. Due to this, they will not have access to the data from the consultant. Councilman Breedlove asked would it suffice for Locust Grove to do our own and Tim said no, it is better to work together and more cost effective to do so, as we would likely have to spend the full \$80,000 on our own.

COUNCIL COMMENTS - NONE

MAYOR’S COMMENTS – NONE

EXECUTIVE SESSION – NONE

ADJOURNMENT-

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

RESULT	ADOPTED
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN BOONE
2 ND MOTION	COUNCILMAN WILLIAMS
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED - ALL IN-FAVOR MEETING ADJOURNED @ 7:00PM.

Notes taken by:

Misty Spurling, City Clerk