

**City of Locust Grove
 Council Workshop Meeting Minutes
 Public Safety Building – 3640 Highway 42 S.
 Locust Grove, GA 30248
 Monday, July 22, 2024
 6:00 PM**

Members Present:	Staff Present:
Vincent Williams -Councilman/Pro Tem	Tim Young – City Manager
Rod Shearouse – Councilman	Bert Foster – Assistant City Manager
Keith Boone – Councilman	Misty Spurling – City Clerk
Rudy Breedlove - Councilman	Daunte’ Gibbs – Community Development Director
Willie Taylor – Councilman	Jack Rose – Public Works Director
	Brandon Morris – Police Captain
	Colleen Cook – Main Street Manager
	Elizabeth Story – Parker Poe (attorney in retainer)
Members Present via Teleconference:	Staff Not Present:
Carlos Greer – Councilman	Andy Welch - Attorney
	Derrick Austin – Police Chief

Mayor Pro Tem Williams called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Invocation given by Assistant City Manager Bert Foster

Councilman Boone led the Pledge of Allegiance

APPROVAL OF AGENDA –

Mayor Pro Tem Williams asked for a motion. Councilman Taylor made the motion to approve the agenda.

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

PRESENTATIONS –

- **Proclamation – Bethune Height Recognition Program (NCNW)**

City Clerk Misty Spurling read the proclamation aloud and no one was present to accept.

- **FY 2023 Financial Audit Presentation – Rushton and Associates –**

Mr. Chris Hollifield stepped forward. Mr. Hollifield thanked Tim and Misty and all staff for helping provide everything they requested and said his team finished on time. We have provided an unmodified opinion, and everything looked very stated. Chris reviewed the [banded] slide presentation. This included review of net statement and statement of activity, restricted and unrestricted funds, general fund revenues and expenditures. The city is in a healthy position with a leverage of 6.7 months [of reserves]. Chris reviewed three comments related to internal controls [compliance] and recording of compensated absences as a new item for the upcoming FY Audit standards.

Pro Tem Williams asked if the city improved from the previous year. Chris said improvements were made with timeliness on getting the report done. There are the same number of suggestions but have decreased over the last three to four years. Part of what his team looks for are ways to strengthen the city and encourage ways of improvements but not as a slap on the wrist. Pro Tem Williams said a constant suggestion is segregation of duties and Chris said it is difficult to separate duties without hiring the proper staff.

Councilman Breedlove made a comment about Markeya's position since January has helped with separation of duties. Tim said yes and we are also going to hire additional accounting assistance [quarterly] to avoid having to crunch in at one time. Chris referenced (comment two), the employee that was in that position was only there a brief time so there was a large gap without that position filled. Chris said they see in a lot of cities that it's not feasible to hire a CPA and said Misty is doing a great job so don't take any of the comments as she is not.

Shearouse asked why it is suggested the City Manager or Assistant review bank reconciliations monthly. Chris said if Misty prepares the bank reconciliations, a different person should review to separate the duties and clarify Shearouse's question, that it can be within the accounting department.

Chris said if any further questions come up, please contact him at any time. Nothing further.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS –

1. Request to rezone property at the intersection of Indian Creek Road, Tanger Blvd., and Shoal Creek Road from RA (residential-agricultural) and R-2 (single-family residential) to R-3 (single-family residential) for a single-family residential development –

Councilman Breedlove read a letter recusing himself from any discussion or decision for this item due to having a business relationship with the presenter. Breedlove exited the meeting.

Daunté stepped forward to comment. Daunté said this is a request from Rob Franks, agent of the applicant to rezone property to R-3. Staff recommends denial of the request to rezone to R-3; however, staff recommends approving R-2 (CRSO), as zoning meets the intent of the LCI and is supported by the FLU designation with four conditions. Daunté read the four conditions aloud.

Pro Tem Williams said this is a public hearing and asked for comments from anyone opposed to the request.

Ms. Emma Jean Stewart of 359 Indian Creek Road stepped forward. Ms. Stewart said she was told a road will be put between her house and the entrance. Daunté reviewed the map on the overhead screen of lots one-four with a proposed entry road north of Ms. Stewart's property. If the entrance is large enough and can accommodate, a buffer will be required. Ms. Stewart referenced an entrance to the left at the convenient store and said she will be up against four different driveways when she tries to turn right out of her driveway. She said she does not approve of this. Tim said we can request access with a driveway to that new road.

Terry McMickle, 264 Indian Creek Road stepped forward to comment. Mr. McMickle said right now he isn't opposed or in favor until he hears more details but asked for the lot and house sizes. Pro Tem Williams said the builder will come up after comments. Tim confirmed Mr. McMickle will have time after the builder comments to add more comments.

Mr. Stewart Kingsley, 405 Louise Way stepped forward. Mr. Kingsley asked if the signs at Tanger Boulevard would be on the other side of the road and the council confirmed yes.

Ms. Mary Thompson, 168 Ridge Street, stepped forward to comment. Ms. Thompson asked if there will be an entrance at Shoal Creek. Tim said there will be an entrance at Shoal Creek and one at Indian Creek, but no lots are planned near her concern.

Ms. Maggie Cotton, 118 Ridge Street, stepped forward to comment. Ms. Cotton asked if any lots are intended on the access easement [to Ridge Street], and it was verified no lots are proposed on the access easement.

Pro Tem Williams noted the (opposed) comment portion of the hearing will remain open until after hearing comments in favor.

Pro Tem Williams asked for comments from anyone in favor of the request.

Mr. Rob Franks stepped forward to comment. Mr. Franks said he is representing the property and was requesting R-3 based on 12,000 sq. ft. lots and said now with the R-2 conservation, Mr. Franks said he is good. Mr. Franks said there will be disturbance for utility access [Ridge Street] but no ingress or egress. Also, Mr. Franks said if he needs to do a separate driveway for Ms. Stewart, he has no problem doing so. The house size will be 1,800 square feet minimum for single-family and 2,200 square feet for two-story (farmhouse style).

Pro Tem Williams asked Mr. Franks if he agrees to the staff recommendations/conditions. Mr. Franks said yes and is willing to do what is necessary based on the number of lots building.

Boone asked if this plat is R-2 or R-3. Mr. Franks said it should have been to R-2 but said the lot yield is greater than what he can do and said he will only get 65 lots. Tim said this is drawn to R-3 standards and currently RA and R-2, but this request is R-3. Boone asked if lot 14 will be developed. Mr. Franks said lot 14 will not be developed and confirmed that will be green space and discussion took place about the floodplain area.

Daunté said the minimum lot size for R-2 is 15,000 square feet. Mr. Franks said in that case he would like the council to consider R-3 and if he can use R-3 lot size but cap and will keep at a lower yield number to keep at low density.

Pro Tem Williams asked if blasting was needed. Mr. Franks said they didn't hit a lot of rock, especially in areas that mattered but yes, there is rock.

Boone asked if it is all wetland and Mr. Franks reviewed the wetland area which can't be developed (on the overhead screen) and said at least eight lots can't be developed. Daunte said they could put a walking trail in the flood zone, just not designated wetland. The wetland is designated by state/federal. Tim said we have a protection ordinance for wetland. Bert said the engineer would have to generate a wetland delineation report and staff reviews the property to determine accuracy. This is part of the process which the builder takes the risk. Mr. Franks said after further review there are ten to eleven lots for sure he can't build on. Mr. Franks said he can still proceed even with those lots not developed.

Shearouse said Mr. Franks is proposing R-3 with a cap of 65 lots. Daunté said the council can do what they choose, but said his job is to make recommendations based on the facts. Shearouse said if the council denies R-3, do we need to do anything. Daunté reviewed the recommendations again.

Pro Tem Williams asked Mr. Franks if he was willing to put a driveway for her and Mr. Franks said either a fence or driveway. Ms. Emma Jean said she is good with a fence. Boone asked if there are noise issues on Gwen Ellen. Mr. McMickle said no noise issues on Gwen Ellen, but yes on Indian creek and asked are there buffering requirements for RA. Daunté said yes, there typically are requirements.

Tim asked if there would be any access to Ridge Street and Mr. Franks said nothing other than use of utilities.

Ms. Maggie asked if there is anything in the future for Ridge Street and Mr. Franks said there is no intent for any roads or driveways on Ridge Street.

Mr. McMickle asked what the lot requirement for two entrances is and Daunté said 60 or 75. Mr. McMickle asked Mr. Franks if the lots drop below that requirement would he be willing to take away entrance on Indian Creek. Mr. Franks said the designer said he is required to have two entrances. Mr. Franks said they would prefer to have on Shoal Creek and not Indian creek. Mr. McMickle said Emma Gene would be in favor if so.

Mr. Franks said he will need R-3 zoning to get the lot size or could do as R-2 conservation but would be tough to work with. Boone asked when the council will know the total number of houses being proposed. Daunté said if the applicant asks his engineer to give a scale drawing, it will need to be two scaled.

Pro Tem Williams closed the public hearing for [in favor and opposed] comments.

Breedlove returned to the meeting.

2. Request to amend the Development Agreement between Tanger Partners, LLC and the City of Locust Grove to allow for a partial release from the Development Agreement specific to the Shops at Indian Creek located at the intersection of Highway 42 and Tanger Blvd. –

Daunté said this is to make sure the signalization occurs at the intersection. Staff recommends approval with exceptions that are recommended as conditions specific to the subject Shops at Indian Creek development. Daunté read the conditions aloud.

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

Pro Tem Williams asked for any comments from anyone opposed to the request. There were no comments and Pro Tem Williams closed the public hearing.

Pro Tem Williams asked for comments from the council.

Councilman Boone asked if there is a commitment and Daunté replied yes. Breedlove asked what the benefit is and Daunté said they want assurance. Nothing further.

3. Resolution to transmit the annual update of the Capital Improvements Element (CIE) for the City of Locust Grove to the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) for regional and state review –

Daunté said this is the annual update for submittal and staff recommends approval.

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

Pro Tem Williams asked for any comments from anyone opposed to the request. There were no comments and Pro Tem Williams closed the public hearing.

Pro Tem Williams asked for comments from the council. The council had no comments. Nothing further.

4. Ordinance to amend the subdivision ordinance to add a binder course to the residential street construction standards -

Bert stepped forward to comment. Bert said this is to align the residential road construction for paving standards. The proposed two-inch binder layer will prevent potholes and add stability. Bert said staff recommends approval.

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

Pro Tem Williams asked for any comments from anyone opposed to the request. There were no comments and Pro Tem Williams closed the public hearing.

Pro Tem Williams asked for comments from the council.

Councilman Breedlove asked if this would apply when we do our own roads and Bert said yes. The standard engineering practice is to include that binder and we will have to follow it for every road we build in future.

Councilman Boone asked if we put anything out for bid this will be included, and Bert said yes.

OLD BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS – NONE

NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS –

- 5. Special event request for the City of Locust Grove Police Department 3rd annual Breast Cancer Awareness 5K run on October 26, 2024 –**

Pro Tem Williams asked for a motion. Councilman Breedlove made the motion to approve the request.

RESULT	APPROVED
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN BREEDLOVE
2 ND MOTION	COUNCILMAN SHEAROUSE
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED - ALL IN-FAVOR.

CITY OPERATION REPORTS / WORKSHOP DISCUSSION ITEMS -

MAIN STREET OPERATIONS – COLLEEN COOK

Main Street Manager Colleen Cook said the DDA and HPC had a regular meeting this past month. Main Street, Inc will host Groving in the Grove next month. Colleen said she promised back in January to provide a mid-year evaluation of which she reviewed at the planning advance. Colleen reviewed for the public [4,000 people in attendance of events, three businesses closed, and two businesses opened]. The goal is to increase attendance downtown and eventually add public art. Nothing further.

PUBLIC SAFETY OPERATIONS –CAPTAIN BRANDON MORRIS FOR CHIEF AUSTIN (CHIEF CONFERENCE)

Captain Brandon Morris reviewed the monthly report and gave an update total collected in June 2024 was \$83,827.00. The department completed 235 training hours in June. We had 217 new cases (year to date) for investigation and cleared 175 of those cases, with 42 open cases remaining. Nothing further.

PUBLIC WORKS – JACK ROSE

Public Works Director Jack Rose said the Wastewater plant is operating well. We are doing regular maintenance including grass cutting and trimming ponds.

ADMINISTRATION –BERT FOSTER

Bert gave an update the city now has control of six [of the seven properties] for the Peeksville Road extension. The extra lane on Highway 42 from Market Place and Peeksville Road is still scheduled for completion in October 2024. Bert gave an update on the Bill Gardner Parkway modifications, the downtown corridor, and the Bethlehem Road interchange. The Scatter Garden/Veteran's Memorial bollard work is complete, and we are waiting for a quote on security cameras for the front and rear of City Hall. Staff provided the consultant items needed for the Development Impact Fees and we are searching for a consultant to take over sewer impact fees. The [Stormwater Improvement Plan] review should be completed in the coming weeks and ready to be presented by year end. Norfolk Southern is suggesting we hire an engineer to generate reports for each crossing with suggested upgrades [for the quiet zone concern]. The cost of that is \$12,000 total and asked if the council would like staff to pursue. Breedlove asked what costs would incur other than signs specifying "do not blow horn". Bert said bigger flashier lights to bring them to 2024 standards. Tim said we may have to have arms on both sides. Pro Tem Williams asked if we would be responsible for costs and Bert said yes. Breedlove said if the city approves, would we have to repair if damaged by a truck. Bert said he assumes they will repair it. Boone said this is very costly just for a study. Shearouse asked Bert if he could bring a formal request to the next meeting and Bert confirmed yes. Nothing further.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OPERATIONS – DAUNTÉ GIBBS

Mr. Gibbs gave an update that his department has issued a total of 718 permits for 2024 and 94 new housing permits. We have issued 135 COs [100 residential / 35 commercial] with 518 business licenses issued so far for 2024. Nothing further.

- **Ordinance to approve a final plat for Cedar Ridge, Phase 2 subdivision located on Locust Grove Griffin Road, Hosannah Road, and Tanger Blvd –**

Daunté said there is a grammatical error [not located on Hosannah Road]. This is for 87 single-family residential lots and is part of the old PR-4 zoning. Staff recommends approval and will be presented for action on August 5, 2024. Nothing further.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD (ARB) – NONE

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS –TIM YOUNG

- **Recap of Planning Advance from July 15-17, 2024** – Tim said the A/V equipment has been ordered and waiting for delivery. We will do an RFQ for the Heart of Locust Grove and a resolution for the GEFA for \$12 million.
- **FY 2025 Budget update** – Tim said this has been advertised for the August 5, 2024, meeting and will be one of three required hearings.
- **Emergency Capital (vehicle) items** - Tim said the Code Enforcement vehicle (F-150) is not salvageable, and we need to purchase new to replace that vehicle. We also discussed doing an in-house swap on the Fire Chief vehicle with the Police Department (Kia) and purchasing a new vehicle for the Fire Chief. The F-450 at Public Works has had transmission issues and the cost to keep in service is \$18,500 which is replacement of transmission versus \$79,000 to purchase new.

Further, Tim said he and Mayor Pro Tem will meet about SPLOST VI and will have a special called meeting the first of next week to review the tax to set the millage rate. We may need to have a CID millage rate but will need to verify.

Breedlove asked if the Code Enforcement truck is for an additional Code Enforcement officer. Tim said no, this is to replace the current truck from the engine blowing up. We will use money allocated to public works. Nothing further. Councilman Greer stated concern for using funds designated for Public Works.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – NONE

COUNCIL COMMENTS –

Boone what time will the 5K begin. Daunté said he thinks it will begin at 5pm. Colleen confirmed it was an evening event and said in prior years the Police Department partnered with Tanger; however, they can't do those events with us anymore. The Chief decided to host it downtown for an evening event.

Andy arrived at the meeting at 7:59 PM.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS –

Pro Tem Williams said June Wood reached out to him to announce the prayer movement at the schools. This Saturday, 9:00 AM at the school of your choice, we will be at every school for prayer in Henry County.

EXECUTIVE SESSION –

Motion to go into executive session to discuss property acquisition and litigation by Councilman Shearouse and seconded by Councilman Breedlove. Motion Carried All in favor 8:01 PM.

At 8:55 PM, motion to come back into regular session made by Councilman Taylor and seconded by Councilman Shearouse.

ADJOURNMENT-

Pro Tem Williams asked for a motion to adjourn. Councilman Shearouse made the motion to adjourn.

RESULT	ADOPTED
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN SHEAROUSE
2 ND MOTION	COUNCILMAN BREEDLOVE
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED - ALL IN-FAVOR MEETING ADJOURNED @ 8:55 PM.

Notes taken by:

Misty Spurling, City Clerk