CITY OF MABLETON, GEORGIA
Riverside EpiCenter
135 Riverside Pkwy, Austell, GA 30168
June 26, 2024 @ 6:30PM

The Honorable Michael Owens, Mayor - Present
The Honorable Ron Davis, District 1 Councilmember - Present
The Honorable Dami Oladapo, District 2 Councilmember - Present
The Honorable Keisha Jeffcoat, Mayor Pro Tem/District 3 Councilmember - Present
The Honorable Patricia Auch, District 4 Councilmember - Present
The Honorable TJ Ferguson, District 5 Councilmember - Present
The Honorable Debora Herndon, District 6 Councilmember - Present

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CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Mayor Michael Owens

2. **ROLL CALL**

3. **INVOCATION -** Led by Council Member Ron Davis.

4. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE -** Led by Mayor Pro Tem Keisha Jeffcoat.

5. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

   Motion was made by Council Member Oladapo to move Items 12 c and Items 12 d to the top of the New Business and seconded by Council Member Jeffcoat. The motion passed unanimously.

6. **PRESENTATIONS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS/ PROCLAMATIONS -** Mayor Owens presented:
   a. Letter from Senator Jon Ossoff - First Anniversary of Cityhood (In packet)
   b. Letter from Senator Raphael Warnock - First Anniversary of Cityhood
   c. Proclamation - Mableton First Year Anniversary - Representative Terry Cummings
   d. Presentation to City Manager Bill Tanks Certificate of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion by Freddie Broome of Georgia Municipal Association
   e. Recognition and Congratulations of Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat - Completion of Senior Field Grade Officer Training, a eighteen month training program.

7. **APPOINTMENTS - NONE**

8. **PUBLIC HEARINGS - NONE**

9. **PUBLIC COMMENTS -** *2 minutes per speaker - no more than 30 minutes for all speakers. Anyone wishing to make a public comment should complete and submit the public comment card to the City Clerk prior to the start of the meeting.*

Monique Lester - Expressed complaints and concerns about Apartments at Silver Creek Crossing.
Angela Wynn - Spoke about renter problems and maintenance issues.
Bobbie Lughman - Spoke about fighting mold and water issues at her apartment.
Monica Delancy - Spoke about apartment issues and concerns.
Daniel Campos - Offered information about Poder Latinx's work including community events, civic engagement, and voter registration.

10. CONSENT AGENDA

a. June 5, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes
b. June 5, 2024 Work Session Minutes

Motion was made by Council Member Keisha Jeffcoat and seconded by Council Member Ferguson to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion passed 7-0.

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE

12. NEW BUSINESS

a. (Previously was Item d in Agenda Packet) Consideration and Approval of Resolution Authorizing the Georgia Municipal Employees Benefit System to move forward with an Ordinance and other official documents to establish City of Mableton's Defined Benefit Plan and a 457 Plan - City Clerk Susan Hiott

City Clerk Susan Hiott provided background information. Previously, there have been several meetings with GMA, research, and discussion about the type of retirement plan for the City of Mableton. Council had given direction for the variables to be considered for the retirement plan formula such as normal retirement age 62, officials 62, cost of living 5%, and vesting at five years. Once variables were directed, GMA's actuaries, Segal Company, ran a study. City Clerk Hiott recognized Michelle Warner, Director of Retirement Field Services and Defined Contribution Programs to come to the podium for additional information.

Discussion included:

- The cost study was done based on plan design elements agreed upon. Two different cost studies were run based on a 1.5% or 2.00% benefit formula.
- Ms. Warner explained the process to begin the retirement plan. Once the City nails down the plan design, the legal department would put together the plan documents with an ordinance for approval.
- A plan could be in place by October, and after the vote, would be started. There would be staff training and staff education.
- Mayor Owens addressed the employee count for the retirement plan. The cost study came out with an annual contribution. The plan would be valued once a year of the staff number and salaries.
- Right now the annual recommended contribution was 4.70% and 5.52% of payroll. As the City brings on people, the percentage of payroll would be roughly what looking at year to year.

City Clerk Susan Hiott later in the meeting explained the need to approve the resolution authorizing the Georgia Municipal Employees Benefit System to move forward with an Ordinance and other official documents to establish City of Mableton Defined Benefit Plan and a 457 Plan.

Motion was made by Council Member Oladapo and seconded by Council Member Herndon to approve the resolution authorizing the Georgia Municipal Employees Benefit System to move forward with an Ordinance and other official documents to establish the City of Mableton Defined Benefit Plan and a 457 Plan.

b. (Previously Item c in Agenda Packet) Consideration and Approval of Agreement with Grice Consulting Group to conduct services for the City of Mableton Comprehensive Plan 2045 and Mayor to negotiate and execute agreement in substantial form- City Manager Bill Tanks

Mayor Owens announced item and recognized City Manager Bill Tanks who provided background information. There was a four to three vote at the last meeting to approve the selection. The contract was prepared and there was a need for the vote on the contract. Mr. Funny of Grice Consulting was present if there were any questions. City Attorney Walker-Ashby confirmed the motion should be to negotiate and execute agreement in substantial form.

Motion was made by Council Member Ferguson to approve the Agreement with Grice Consulting Group to conduct services for the City of Mableton Comprehensive Plan 2045 and Mayor to negotiate and execute agreement in substantial form. Council Member Davis seconded the motion.

Council Member Herndon referenced the last Council meeting when there was concern expressed that there was a flaw in the selection process. She said she transmitted her vote and it was not tabulated due to technical issues. She thought it should be addressed so the process was more fair. She questioned if the Council was going to address this concern. Mayor Owens explained the Council was voting on the motion on the floor for approval of the Grice Consulting agreement. That should have been brought up at the last meeting, and there was a vote to select Grice at that meeting. Council Member Auch asked for discussion about the process. City Manager Tanks reiterated the motion and vote was for the agreement. City Attorney Walker-Ashby provided additional procedural explanation. Council Member Auch asked if Council could discuss the reason she could not vote on this agreement and why she felt this was not a fair assessment. Mayor Owens confirmed that a motion had been made and there was discussion. He called the question.

The vote was passed 5-2. **Yeas:** Davis, Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Ferguson, Owens **Nays:** Herndon and Auch.

a. **Second Read:** Ordinance Updating Chapter 7, Article 5, Hotel-Motel Excise Taxes of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances Pertaining to Hotel Motel Excise Tax - City Attorney Emilia Walker-Ashby

Mayor Owens announced the item and provided background information. Prior to cityhood, the hotel motel tax was 8%. When the City was established, the City approved the maximum amount of the hotel motel tax at 5%, which was the maximum the City could approve. The General Assembly reviewed the ordinance and gave the City capability to have 8% tax consistent to all of the other cities in Cobb County. This was the second reading. Attorney Walker Ashby added if the ordinance was approved, it would be effective August 1st.

Motion was made by Council Member Jeffcoat to approve updating Chapter 7, Article 5, Hotel-Motel Excise tax of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances. Council Member Oladapo seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.

b. Consideration and Approval of American Engineers Agreement for Design and Construction of 6116 Mableton Parkway and Mayor to negotiate and execute agreement - City Manager Bill Tanks

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized City Manager Tanks who provided background. Mr. Tanks stated this was an agreement to do construction management for 6116 Mableton Parkway for the City's Community Development Department. He recognized Kelly Brown of Turner and Townsend and Heery . Plans should be done by the end of August, permitting in September, and construction in October to the end of December. Concept plans were given to the Council. Mr. Tanks explained another suite had become available. Code enforcement, plan reviewers, and business licenses would take place in the suites. Mr. Tanks explained the suites could be connected. The break room was being shared so it made sense to have the areas connected. This was an operations building and not administrative. Questions and discussion followed. Mayor Owens asked about security. Mr. Tanks explained there will be options including door codes and badge access options to consider. Mayor Owens asked that the City look at a centralized badge system for secured entries. Council Member Ferguson inquired about cameras and discussion followed about hiring someone for installation of security cameras and badge systems. Questions followed about the outside of the building upkeep. Mr. Tanks stated that would be included in the lease. Council Member Ferguson asked additional questions about the front layout of the plan and Mr. Tanks explained there was a lobby area and kiosk for people that don't have a computer.

Mayor Owens affirmed the project management agreement is for the two suites with address at 6116 Mableton Parkway.

Motion was made by Council Member Jeffcoat to approve American Engineers Agreement for Design and Construction of 6116 Mableton Parkway, Suite 140 and

144, and Mayor to negotiate and execute agreement and seconded by Council Member Ferguson. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Consideration and Approval of Agreement with ChitChat Communications and for Mayor to negotiate and execute agreement - City Manager Bill Tanks

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Mr. Tanks who provided background. He commented about the need to be more active on social media and other communication needs for the City. He recognized Ms. Carla Morrison, Executive Director for ChitChat Communications, an innovative firm located in the City of Mableton. Ms. Morrison stated she was also a new resident of Mableton. She spoke about the service objectives ChitChat would provide for Mableton including to develop, implement and maintain a plan of action for an online newsletter, social media campaign, and website.

Questions and discussion followed:

- Mayor Owens commented the plan was to organically grow the City and looking to hire specific talent as the City moves forward. He supported consultants as a way to accelerate some areas, but does not go in contrast to bringing in full time staff. This was a matter to get some solid communications off the ground. The City would be going forth to hire a communications director.
- Mayor Owens addressed in consideration of momentum of service delivery agreements and how to define growth, the City wanted to grow its newsletter and email lists. He wanted to see how the firm would be touching people and working to set some goals toward that goal. Ms. Morrison stated she would commit to that goal.
- Council Member Herndon asked what would be ChitChat's advantage compared to what another company. Ms. Morrison explained they did not compare to other companies. ChitChat was great at amplifying messages and always exceeded expectations for their clients. She provided additional information about how her firm would provide information to subscribers. They do public relation campaigns.
- Mr. Tanks provided additional information about how the information was produced.
- There should be occasional updates to the website.
- Council Member Oladapo asked if press releases were included and are there any other services the City would pay for. Newsletter, social media, and websites were named. Press releases would be in a different category.
- Council Member Jeffcoat asked if the firm could provide a use case of another city. She explained how they worked with the City of Atlanta compiling a newsletter.
- Council Member Ferguson questioned the creation of an online newsletter. Ms. Morrison explained how they would get the contact information for sending out the newsletter to the residents.
- Council Member Herndon asked for samples of her newsletter work.

Questions and discussion continued about the services offered. Mayor Owens explained there were a lot of questions to be asked, and that there needed to be more discussion to occur as to what the actual output and price would be. There was a lot more of the contract to be flushed out.

Motion was made by Council Member Auch to defer the ChitChat Communications agreement and seconded by Council Member Ferguson. The motion passed unanimously.

d. Consideration and Approval of Amending the Council Meeting Calendar to reflect a Work Session meeting for July 22nd at 5:30 p.m. - City Manager Bill Tanks

Council deliberated the day for the work session. Mayor Owens recommended conducting a poll for dates after the meeting. There was not a quorum for July 22.

Motion was made by Council Member Ferguson to table the amendment of the Council Meeting Calendar for a Work Session meeting on July 22, 2024. Council Member Oladapo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

e. (Previously Item 12 b) Financial Report and Authorization of an Interim FY25 Spending Plan not to exceed 90 days. - Finance Consultant Frank Milazi and City Manager Bill Tanks

Mayor Owens noted the current approved Spending Plan expired on June 30th. Additional help has been brought on to build out the financial team. The City is not required to have a budget during the two year transitional period. The 90 day extension will provide time for the financial team to provide another Spending Plan. A handout of the recommended 90 day spending plan was given to the Mayor and council and a recommended resolution was sent to the Mayor and Council via email by Executive Assistant Lily Smith. The resolution documented an increase of the $5,000 to $10,000 spending threshold for City Manager and Mayor.

Financial Consultant Frank Milazi introduced Finance Consultant Chris Pike. Mr. Pike reported the bank reconciliations were caught up through May. The role of his firm was to lay a good foundation and groundwork for the upcoming hiring for the Finance Department team. He will be bringing some policies with questions to get the policies in place. He encouraged Mayor and Council to ask him any questions through the City Manager.

Mayor Owens asked if there were any questions for Mr. Pike. Council Member Auch asked for clarification on Item 1b of the resolution. She asked about the threshold increase from $5,000 to $10,000. Mr. Tanks explained how the lower limit of $5,000 would slow him down securing the purchases and construction needs to get the City operations set up and services established because he was against a tight timeline.

Council Member Auch opined that she preferred the spending limit for the Mayor to be $5,000 and $10,000 for City Manager and asked if different thresholds for different positions were practiced in other jurisdictions. Mr. Pike opined that $5,000 was a restrictive threshold. Discussion continued. Mr. Pike explained why $5,000 was too low, provided examples, and pointed out the need for the purchasing policy. He explained his interpretation of the Charter noting the threshold was set for the Mayor who was acting as City Manager. In most cases, the City Manager made the regular purchases. Anybody below City Manager, should be delegated by the City Manager. Council Member Jeffcoat asked what his recommendation was for a threshold. Mr. Pike answered for the size of Mableton, $50,000. If that caused concern, and since the City was new, the City could implement a policy of a purchase was to be over $25,000, to notify the Council. Discussion continued with examples of spending circumstances.

Council Member Davis expressed concern about the City being under a transitional timeline. He commented in consideration of the City running efficiently and economically, that if the $5000 threshold slowed the City Manager's tasks, than equip the City Manager so he could get things done to have the City transitioned in time. Mr. Pike noted the council positions took as much time as they wanted to give, but added that the Council should consider their time; and, whether it goes toward looking at the items between $5000 - $10000 or spending their time on zonings, community engagement, and bigger picture items.

Motion was made by Council Member Jeffcoat to approve the Resolution - Financial Report and Authorization of an Interim FY 25 Spending Plan not to exceed 90 days. The motion carried 7-0.

13. OTHER BUSINESS/DISCUSSION

14. CITY MANAGER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS - Mr. Tanks announced how proud he was of how the City was represented at the Georgia Municipal Association All learned a lot at the convention. He asked for an Executive Session for personnel and real estate.

15. CITY ATTORNEY/CITY CLERK/STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS - City Clerk announced the City Council was not meeting on July 10th. It was considered a summer break.

16. MAYOR AND COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS

- Council Member Davis congratulated the City Manager and the City for being designated as a City of Ethics. He congratulated Council Member Jeffcoat for her award and Barry Krebs for being Citizen of the Year. He spoke about the GMA Conference and how impressed he was of the level of educational classes, GMA, and people he had met. He admired how those that attended were there to learn more to serve their communities.
- Council Member Oladapo spoke about the concern of the apartment complexes in

District 2. It was heartbreaking to hear about the living conditions. She had visited the apartments and promises were made. She will revisit the issue. She was happy that the City would be setting up Code Enforcement to assist with this concern.

- Council Member Jeffocat spoke about working within the Federal level and Army, and now she was working at the local level. She wished Council Member Auch Happy Birthday and congratulated Barry Krebs. She spoke about the experience at the GMA Conference and the City being designated as City of Ethics. She spoke about the illiteracy problem.
- Council Member Ferguson spoke about being impressed with the GMA Conference and spoke about the keynote speaker that spoke about mental health.
- Council Member Herndon spoke about a class at GMA Conference on Human Sex and Labor Trafficking. Georgia ranked 7th in that area. Tips were given about being aware and noticing if circumstances seem unusual or odd in the community and to report.
- Mayor Owens announced the State of South Cobb was hosted last week. There was a great panel moderated by Dr. Boyd. The panel discussed how to move forward in unity. Mableton was the bridge between the other South Cobb cities. He looked forward to partnering with other cities. He spoke about how Mableton will be represented in meetings about the top end of 285 and how Mableton's corridors touched 285. He spoke about the South Cobb Traffic Hub importance and public transit and the upcoming South Cobb Health Annex. It was in the design phase. He wanted the building to look inviting. He reported on the GMA Conference and how he heard good ideas from other cities. He also reported he attended the US Conference of Mayors in Kansas City. He had good conversations from members of the White House and HUD. He addressed learning from HUD and the Department of Transportation about funding opportunities. He spoke about the efforts going on about the apartment complexes. He had conversations with the Apartment Association.

17. EXECUTIVE SESSION (IF NEEDED) FOR LITIGATION(O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (b)(1)(A); REAL ESTATE(O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (b)(1)); PERSONNEL (O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (b)(2)); AND MISC. EXEMPTIONS (O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (b)(4)&(5))

Motion was made by Council Member Oladapo and seconded by Council Member Jeffcoat to go into Executive Session for litigation, real estate, and personnel. The motion passed unanimously. Yeas: Davis, Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Auch, Ferguson, Herndon and Owens (9:18 p.m.)

Motion was made by Council Member Oladapo to close Executive Session and seconded by Council Member Herndon. The motion was carried unanimously. Yeas: Davis, Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Auch, Ferguson, Herndon and Owens (11:25 p.m.)

Motion was made by Council Member Jeffcoat to authorize the Mayor to finalize and execute, in substantial form, the agreement with Builders Capital Finance LLC for the purchase of property within the city located on or near Mableton Parkway, for a purchase price not to exceed $1,375,000. The motion passed 6-1. Nay: Auch

Motion was made by Council Member Jeffcoat to authorize the Mayor to finalize and execute, in substantial form, the agreement with KO Management Inc for the purchase of property within the city located on or near Puckett Drive, for a purchase price not to exceed $800,000. The motion passed 6-1. Nay: Auch

Motion was made by Council Member Ferguson to authorize the Mayor to finalize and execute an additional lease agreement for a second suite at 6116 Mableton Parkway, within the parameters of the approved spending plan. Council Member Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.

18. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Council Member Jeffcoat to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Oladapo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (11:30 p.m.)