

CITY OF MABLETON, GEORGIA

Riverside EpiCenter
135 Riverside Pkwy, Austell, GA 30168
December 11, 2023 @ 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, District 3 Councilmember - Present
The Honorable Patricia Auch, District 4 Councilmember - Absent
The Honorable TJ Ferguson, District 5 Councilmember - Present
The Honorable Debora Herndon, District 6 Councilmember - Present

SPECIAL CALLED

TRANSITIONAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER** - Mayor Michael Owens called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m. Mayor Owens thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

2. **ROLL CALL** - City Clerk Susan Hiott conducted the roll call. A quorum was present.

Mayor Owens commented that Councilmember Auch was not present for the meeting due to a medical issue. He and the Council hoped she would be better soon.

3. **INVOCATION**- Led by Dr. Boyd

4. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - Led by Councilmember Keisha Jeffcoat.

5. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion was made by Councilmember Herndon to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Ferguson. The motion to accept the agenda was approved by the Council (6-0).

6. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

City Clerk Hiott announced guidelines about the time limit and asked those who spoke to announce their address and district. Those who spoke were:

- Ray Thomas, President of Mableton Improvement Coalition, expressed appreciation on behalf of M.I.C. for the remarkable work the Council and staff have done. He congratulated Mayor Owens for being selected as one of 27 newly elected U.S. mayors to participate in the Bloomberg Center for Cities at Harvard University's Program for New Mayors. He commended the Mayor and Council for conducting themselves with civility and professional manner. He wished all continued success and asked for support for the 2024 Taste of Mableton.

- Leroy Tre Hutchins of Cobb County School Board District 3 provided a report on happenings in the school district. The State School Superintendent presented literacy awards to schools in Cobb County. Riverside Elementary and Austell Elementary won. Other educational updates followed.
- Monica Delancy of District 2 - spoke about the article in the Atlanta Journal Constitution about dangerous dwellings in the area. She asked Council to review and address an eviction ordinance. She addressed how landlords are refusing to do maintenance but continually ask for rent. She asked the Council to do a renter's rights summit.
- Denny Wilson of District 2 thanked the Council for standing up for the community a few weeks ago at the Cobb County Board of Commissioners meeting. The Tunnels to Towers project was using the name of Atlanta Veterans Village. The name did not reflect the community. She spoke about the importance of the City taking over zoning. She announced details of an upcoming light show on December 20th.

7. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. Authorization for Mayor to Execute a Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service, for Citizenship and Immigration Status Verification*

Mayor Owens announced the item and provided background. He explained how the SAVE (Systematic Alien Verification of Entitlement) program was a statute by law. City Clerk Hiott added the law required public agencies to use the Systematic Alien Verification of Entitlement (SAVE) program to confirm that persons who are seeking public benefits, such as business licenses, are legally eligible for such benefits. Those who receive benefits should complete an affidavit indicating they use the E-Verify system. The City is required to report all affidavit information by December 31st to the Department of Audits and Accounts. Public agencies must obtain affidavits (to check compliance with E-Verify) from businesses that obtain/renew licenses.

Motion was made by Councilmember Ferguson to approve for the mayor to execute a Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service, for Citizenship and Immigration Status Verification. Councilmember Herndon seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

- b. Resolution Authorizing the City's Membership in the Georgia Municipal Association Workers' Compensation Self-Insurance Fund*

Mayor Owens announced the item and provided background. GMA had stepped forward to assist and explain their self-insurance fund during the Council's retreat. City Clerk Hiott added GMA was willing to work with the City with hiring estimates since the City did not know definite hires at this time. Councilmember Herndon inquired if there had been a comparison of quotes. City Attorney Walker-Ashby and Finance Consultant Frank Milazi explained how the premium was derived by a scale consisting of the type of risk of the

positions. Discussion followed about how the premium was set. City Clerk Hiott noted there were not any other quotes received. Mayor Owens stated the rates were consistent from company to company; it was the type of employee that carries the risk that made the rates fluctuate. City Clerk Hiott added most of the cities in Georgia had their workers compensation insurance with Georgia Municipal Association.

Motion was made by Councilmember Jeffcoat to approve the resolution authorizing the City's Membership in the Georgia Municipal Association Workers' Compensation Self-Insurance Fund. Councilmember Davis second the motion. The motion passed 6-0.

8. **DISCUSSION:**

a. City Benefits and Insurance Plans

Mayor Owens announced the item and noted the city was beginning to look at hiring and one of the key items needed other than workers compensation, was other insurance plans. City Clerk Hiott explained the need to obtain insurance ASAP in order to get benefits in place for the upcoming hiring. The Georgia Municipal Association has quoted 23 different health insurance plans. She and the Executive Assistant checked with other cities in the area to compare their plans. Because it was December and the fast pace of hiring, a consultant was asked to get quotes. The consultant reported at 4 p.m. that day that he could not get any interest from other providers or quotes due to the uncertainty and start-up circumstances the City was in at this time. One company was quoting the following day, but in order to get a good quote, that company required at least 50 employees. All the other cities' information about their plans and premium amounts have been given to the Mayor and Council for their review. She recommended that the Mayor and Council discuss additional matters in executive session.

Mayor Owens thanked City Clerk Hiott and Executive Assistant Smith for their work gathering all the information. He explained he was aware and thankful for GMA providing the quotes. He stated it was a reality of where the City was at this time with a low number of employees. Questions and discussion followed. If the City goes with GMA, it would be locked in for a year. City Clerk Hiott explained GMA requests the application and resolution be approved by December 13th to have an effective date of February 1st. If after the 13th, the effective date would be March 1st. Employees would want insurance as soon as possible.

b. Regular Meeting Schedule

Mayor Owens explained until the City could lock down a meeting site to have a contract with the EpiCenter, Mayor and Council will have to decide what day of the month the Council would prefer to meet, such as first and third Thursday or 2nd or 4th Thursday, or another day of the month. The City should consider next year's holiday schedule as well. City Attorney Walker-Ashby added the 2nd and 4th gives administration and staff more time to sure up items. Councilmember Jeffcoat inquired if could have separate days and Mayor Owens explained the importance of consistency for planning and calendaring. Special meetings could still be called on occasion. Councilmember Herndon asked if

Council could entertain having the meetings at another more central location after this year. Mayor Owens stated that could be reevaluated.

9. CITY ATTORNEY COMMENTS – NONE

10. CITY CLERK COMMENTS - NONE

11. CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS (SUMMARY BELOW):

- The Mayor and Council expressed appreciation for everyone who attended the meeting and wished everyone happy holidays.
- Councilmember Davis expressed concern and well wishes for Councilmember Auch's recovery.
- Councilmember Oladapo expressed excitement about the milestones already reached for the City.
- Councilmember Jeffcoat recognized Trey Hutchins for receiving the Unsung Hero Award by Morehouse School of Medicine. She expressed appreciation for all Mr. Hutchins service and his updates.
- Councilmember Jeffcoat expressed concern, thoughts and prayers for Councilmember Auch.
- Councilmember Ferguson spoke about how amazing it was to have all of the accomplishments setting up the City. He recognized and commended staff, mayor, and council. He expressed appreciation for the Mableton Improvement Coalition and the Austell Community Taskforce (A.C.T.).
- Councilmember Herndon commented about how fast the meeting had been. She wished everyone safety and happy holidays to all.
- Councilmember Davis announced the Austell Community Taskforce's (A.C.T.) was having the Toys for Tots event December 16th 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. South Cobb Recreation Center. He encouraged everyone to attend.
- Mayor Owens spoke about the well-established community and how although the City was now in place, the work was building on the work of what many organizations had already done. He spoke about attending the Bloomberg Center for Cities at Harvard University's Program for New Mayors. He commented on how the eyes of the nation were on the City of Mableton as Mableton was the newest city in the country. He was honored and humbled to attend the program and learn. As a City, Mableton was on the map. He reminded everyone to reach out to their council person and ask how they can be engaged. The Mayor and Council need the help of the community.

12. 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)
Exemptions O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (b)(4) & (5)

Motion was made by Councilmember Jeffcoat to go into executive session for litigation, real estate, personnel, and any exemptions related matters. Councilmember Ron Davis seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously. **Yeas:** Davis, Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Owens, and Ferguson and Herndon (7:38 p.m.)

Motion was made to close the executive session by Councilmember Herndon and seconded by Councilmember Ferguson. The motion was carried unanimously. **Yeas:** Davis, Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Owens, and Ferguson and Herndon (9:45 p.m.)

City Benefits and Insurance Plans - From previous discussion -Item 8a

Motion was made by Councilmember Oladapo to authorize the Mayor to execute and approve city benefits with the Georgia Municipal Association for medical, life, dental, and vision insurance, at an amount not to exceed the anticipated monthly cost under the spending plan. Councilmember Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember Jeffcoat and seconded by Councilmember Oladapo to adjourn. The motion was carried unanimously.

Mayor Michael Owens

Attest:

Interim City Clerk Susan Hiott