

CITY OF MABLETON, GEORGIA

Riverside EpiCenter
135 Riverside Pkwy, Austell, GA 30168
October 26, 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 - Absent
The Honorable Patricia Auch, District 4 Councilmember - Present
The Honorable TJ Ferguson, District 5 Councilmember - Absent
The Honorable Debora Herndon, District 6 Councilmember – Present

SPECIAL CALLED

TRANSITIONAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Mayor Michael Owens
2. **ROLL CALL** - Quorum present
3. **INVOCATION** - Led by Dr. Boyd (Pastor Boyd)
4. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Led by Dr. Boyd
5. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion was called by Councilmember Auch to approve as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Herndon. The motion to accept the agenda was approved by the council unanimously.

6. **CONSENT AGENDA:**
 - a. *Approval of August 30, 2023 Special Called Transitional City Council Meeting Minutes*
 - b. *Approval of September 14, 15, & 16, 2023 City Council Transitional Planning Retreat Meeting Minutes*

Motion was made by Councilmember Auch to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

7. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**
 - Monica Delancey thanked the Mayor and Council for posting meetings and allowing the community to take part. She addressed the Cobb County Board of Commissioners' list of priorities being sent to State Legislatures. One priority was to not have people's personal items be removed when evicted. She asked the City to

have an ordinance. She addressed rental inspections and other matters related to apartment complexes' maintenance neglect.

- Selenia Alexander, guest of Monica Delancey, expressed how she also would like to see the changes mentioned by Monica Delancey.
- Gladys Head of District 2 addressed the lack of resources to assist with eviction crisis. There was a hold and freeze on funds. There were hundreds of families being evicted.
- Angela Wynn of District 2 addressed the sad evictions, lack of people to work the eviction process, and asked if there was something to do to help the people.
- Nate Smith provided the educational report on behalf of Cobb County Board of Education Post 3, Tre Hutchins.
- Nate Smith spoke on behalf of the Mableton Improvement Coalition (M.I.C.) regarding the ordinance on the agenda pertaining to occupation taxes. M.I.C has experience related to the ordinance. He asked how their comments could be submitted before the ordinances were passed.
- Dante Philpot of District 1, representing Austell Community Task Force, thanked Mayor and Council for all their hard work and dedication. He thanked the staff. He explained how the Task Force focused on zoning and noted there was a record number of zoning proposals for District 4, now including the new City of Mableton. He asked Mayor and Council to be partners and to help shape the City of Mableton to be the diamond instead of the diamond in the rough.

Mayor Owens thanked everyone for their comments and commented the Mayor and Council always welcome feedback. He encouraged everyone to send their comments to cityofmableton@gmail.com.

8. **NEW BUSINESS:**

a. FIRST READ: Ordinance Amending Chapter 7, Taxes, Fees and Assessments, of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances Pertaining to Occupation Taxes

Mayor Owens announced the item and commented on how the ordinance would shape what the City would look like and establish laws about the businesses operating in the City. This would be one of the major revenues of the City. This ordinance goes through the two-read process. There would not be a vote that evening. The first read was to review and discuss. He encouraged everyone to look at the ordinance and to read and provide input to him and the councilmembers. He recognized City Attorney Walker-Ashby to provide additional information.

Attorney Walker-Ashby stated this was not a new tax as the businesses pay the tax to the County already. There would not be a monetary change. The money coming in will be used specifically for the City of Mableton instead of throughout the County. This is a typical tax and a critical component of the Feasibility Study that was generated for guidelines of the transition. This ordinance would be one of the major department transitions with hiring of employees or outsourcing and was a major step in the two-year transition process.

The most logical set up of the ordinance, per the feedback at the retreat, was to stay consistent with Cobb County provisions. If Mableton mirrors Cobb County's ordinance, the businesses would know what to expect and it would provide continuity. The ordinance was a substantial size. However, it was not required to be adopted that night. She recommended having two more reads. She explained how the ordinance was a living document, and that there would be evolution and changes. She explained how she had taken the County's code and made technical changes and minor adjustments. She explained the County's numbering structure and how the Mableton Code would be restructured. She named and addressed the special business categories. The business licenses already held with the County would be considered a renewal by the City. She commented about the features of the software that would be used for the occupation taxes. She and the mayor, acting as City Manager per the Charter, have been discussing and considering the software GOVPILOT. She explained that before the City could begin collection of occupation taxes, a 30-day notice must be given to the County which would also require a discussion about the hiring of employees to administer the collection. She recommended that the employee hiring discussion be conducted in an executive session.

Questions and discussion followed.

- Mayor Owens asked about how a new business would estimate and anticipate their gross receipts. Attorney Walker Ashby provided an explanation of the mechanism to request reimbursement. She stated there were provisions in the current code for auditing.
- Councilmember Herndon asked how soon it would be to get a revised copy of the ordinance. Attorney Walker-Ashby projected next week and recommended having additional meetings for two more reads. Discussion continued about the feedback process.

b. FIRST READ: Preliminary Compensation Schedule

Mayor Owens announced the item and provided background information. He explained as they look forward to providing services, the City would have to grow and begin hiring people. He addressed looking at the Charter, the Department of Community Affairs survey of salaries, and looking at other cities' pay ranges as being cities offering similar positions as Mableton. The City would be competing for work force. Mableton wants to have the best talent possible. He clarified there was no vote at that time. He encouraged everyone to look at the schedule.

Attorney Walker-Ashby explained the schedule and organizational chart resulted from a combination of meetings and discussions at the retreat. She asked Council to give their feedback and discuss any salary changes or other changes in executive session. After feedback and changes, she would give them an amended compensation schedule. Mayor and Council have successfully collected the revenue and could actually have the budget and money to transition the departments and make the hires. The first hires would include the City Manager, Executive Assistants, City Clerk, Finance Director, Human Resource Director, Community Development Director, Building License Specialist, Building Inspector, Code Enforcement Officer, IT Director, IT Systems Administrator and Communications and Community staff.

Mayor Owens asked if there were any comments from Council. There was none.

9. **DISCUSSION:**

a. FIRST READ: Transitional Spending Plan

Mayor Owens announced the item and provided background. He noted there was a lot to the spending plan. So far, he had heard from constituents asking about how much money had been brought into the City and how much had been spent. To have transparency and get feedback, Council and staff would take time with the spending plan. That night would the year to date incurred and spending and what had been brought into the City would be shown. There will be a public hearing in a couple of weeks and a couple of more weeks and have another meeting for final review and consideration for a vote. The spending plan would be through June 30th. In January 2024, council and staff will start the July 1st – June 30th budget. He recognized the Interim Finance Director Frank Milazi to provide the presentation of the first part of the spending plan.

Highlights of the presentation:

Revenues received (-Franchises and Hotels) - \$1,414,465.89

Expenses paid out – \$101,637.20

Deferred Expenses - \$35,474.64

Questions and discussion followed.

- Mayor Owens pointed out the \$964,298.73 was from vehicle ad valorem taxes. This revenue did go to the County, but now Mableton collects the taxes and the funds stay in Mableton and not county-wide.
- The hospitality business names were revenue from the hotels.
- The revenues were from January 1st to October 26.
- The GMA expenses included the GMA Conference, Orientation, and the retreat.
- The Interdev cost was for the cybersecurity suite to keep devices safe and the Adobe Pro.
- The AT&T expenditure would have a \$2400 credit in the third and fourth billing cycle.
- Additional questions followed about the deferred GMA expenditures.
- Mayor Owens noted the Georgia Municipal Association waived the first-year membership fee.
- Mayor Owens noted there was still additional revenue to be collected.
- Councilmember Herndon asked for additional explanation of the Paycom expenditure.
- The City was saving a substantial amount of money by using the Paycom software.
- The mayor makes \$30,000 a year, and Council make \$20,000 a year. There was catch-up pay for the Mayor and Council and staff over the past six months in the first payroll run.
- Mayor Owens announced this was the first section of the spending plan. There will be a public hearing and hopefully the council can adopt something by the end of November.

10. **CITY ATTORNEY COMMENTS – NONE**

11. **CITY CLERK COMMENTS – NONE**

12. **CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS**

- Councilmember Davis commented about how proud he was to serve with the Mayor and Council. He expressed how hopeful and confidently he was due to the progress made. He encouraged everyone to send him an email if have any questions.
- Councilmember Oladapo announced her baby girl was welcomed into the world on August 14th. She thanked the incredible community for well wishes and understanding. She thanked the Mayor and Council for being so accommodating. She thanked Mayor and Council, City Clerk, and City Attorney for the surprise baby shower.
- Councilwoman Herndon thanked everyone for attending the meeting.
- Mayor Owens related comments from Councilwoman Jeffcoat and Councilman Ferguson.
- Mayor Owens thanked Councilmember Jeffcoat and Councilmember Ferguson and Councilmember Oladapo for staying engaged although they were not at the meetings.
- Mayor Owens addressed evictions. The City in conjunction with Cobb County Court and other non-profits hosted a legal pop-up. State Representative Cummings held a meeting with members who had been talking about evictions. Mayor and Council are listening but are bound of what the City can do. He commented additionally about Betty Gray Middle School. He was excited to see professors and scholars doing so well.
- The website was built in-house by the Council in efforts to save money. It will be launched in a couple of weeks. The City has computers and cell phones, but there was a little more security to be put in place before being released for use. The City was closer to rolling out enhanced communications.
- Mayor Owens commented about how there would be a huge opportunity for residents to be engaged by volunteering for Mableton's authorities, boards, and commissions.

13. **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)

Councilmember Oladapo made a motion to go into Executive Session for litigation, real estate, personnel, and exemptions. Councilmember Herndon seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Yeas: Davis, Oladapo, Owens, Auch, and Herndon (8:14 p.m.)

Mayor Owens commented that the spending year to date has provided confidence in the Mayor and Council. The City was financially healthy, in the black, and the City had no debt.

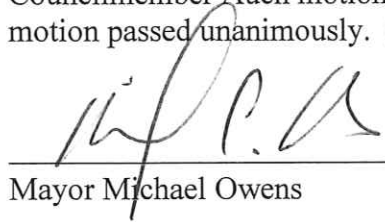
The Mayor and Council went into Executive Session.

Councilmember Auch motioned to close the Executive Session. Councilmember Oladapo seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. **Yeas:** Davis, Oladapo, Owens, Auch, and Herndon

Councilmember Oladapo made a motion to have meetings on November 2nd, 9th, and 30th. Councilmember Davis seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

14. **ADJOURNMENT**

Councilmember Auch motioned to adjourn. Councilmember Herndon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (at 10:14 p.m.)



Mayor Michael Owens

ATTEST:



Interim City Clerk Susan Hiott