

# **CITY OF MABLETON, GEORGIA**

Riverside EpiCenter  
135 Riverside Pkwy, Austell, GA 30168  
August 30, 2023 - 6:30PM

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## **SPECIAL CALLED**

### **TRANSITIONAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

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

2. **ROLL CALL - QUORUM PRESENT**

The Honorable Michael Owens, Mayor - Present  
The Honorable Ron Davis, District 1 Councilmember - Present  
The Honorable Dami Oladapo, District 2 Councilmember - Absent  
The Honorable Keisha Jeffcoat, 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

3. **INVOCATION** - Led by Councilmember Davis

4. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Led by Veteran and Councilmember Jeffcoat

5. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – No suggested changes and same as presented.

**Motion** was called by Mayor Owens to approve as presented. The motion to accept the agenda was approved by the council unanimously.

6. **CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Approval of July 14, 15 & 17, 2023 Special Called Transitional City Council Meeting Minutes (@ Georgia Municipal Association)*
- b. Approval of July 26, 2023 Special Called Transitional City Council Meeting Minutes*

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

7. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- Jeff Padgett of 971 Clay Road of Friends of Mableton and South Cobb Lions Club pointed out people need to attend. Having a positive attitude would help the City grow right. He asked what the people could do to help during the transition. He suggested

Welcome to Mableton signage and suggested conducting some beautification projects. He offered leading in a project.

- Angela Wynn of 6891 Shanandoah, District 2 spoke about the Riverside Renters Association Renters Bill of Rights. A handout was given to Mayor and Council and the City Clerk.
- Monica Delancy of Riverside Community, District 2, invited everyone to attend the Riverside Community Meeting, Wednesday, September 13 at the Premier Learning Academy at 5:30 p.m. The reason for the meeting was because of the Atlanta Journal Constitution report that listed eleven properties in Mableton as dangerous grounds. There will be an update about public safety and code enforcement. She named resources for rental assistance, security deposit, hotel.
- Cynthia Poselenzy of District 4 encouraged Mayor and Council to get a website and email address and to send something to all residents of the new city. If there was anything she could do, or help others such as businesses, then could send a postcard to everyone.
- Cassadra Brown spoke on behalf of Tre Hutchins of Cobb School Board to provide an update. The Betty Gray Middle School opened August 1<sup>st</sup> with completion of \$10 million of improvements and classroom additions. She asked everyone to please be on the lookout for information about a ribbon cutting event. There will be a town hall for the Betty Gray Middle School community. Pebblebrook High School will be celebrating 60 years of academic excellence at homecoming October 20-22. Please be on the lookout for invitations.
- Denny Wilson of District 2 spoke about her car ride in East Cobb. The right of ways was mowed and neat. When in South Cobb, there was grass overgrown and no mowing. She suggested calling or emailing GDOT and Commissioner Sheffield. She asked when the City would have a budget with line items.
- **Report from Cobb & Douglas Public Health** - Mayor Owens explained since there had been talk lately about the rising cases of COVID, and he now served on the Cobb County Board of Health, he asked Deputy Director Lisa Crossman to attend the meeting and give an update from the County. Ms. Crossman stated there was no cause for alarm. The hospitalizations continued to be low and there was not going to be another pandemic outbreak. She spoke about COVID prevention and testing opportunities, increase in opioid drug overdoses, dispose RX, Narcan, and planning for a new South Cobb Health Center to break ground in 2024, and completed by 2025.
- Mayor Owens thanked Ms. Crossman for attending the meeting and spoke about the need for access to public health and how the future South Cobb Health Center is important to the City of Mableton. He reminded everyone that there were free health items in the back of the room.

- Representative House District 39 Terry Cummings thanked everyone for attending the event the previous night at the Mableton House Art Center which was about HB520 and mental health. She specifically thanked Councilmembers Davis, Jeffcoat, Auch, and Herndon for coming out and supporting the event. She spoke about the bipartisan bill and others who attended. State Representative Sharon Cooper, 80 years old, and chair of the Mental Health Committee was present. Judge Ann Miller attended. There was a total of 80 people at the event.
- Representative Cummings spoke about the area being a bank desert and the mobile branch program that was being brought to the EpiCenter. Representative Cummings recognized Dr. Boyd. Dr. Boyd provided additional information about the EpiCenter being a resource with PNC Bank, twice a month, two hours each time present. The program starts October 8<sup>th</sup>. The mobile branch will occur at the same time of the Food Truck Village. Representative Cummings provided additional information, including a description that the bank was a 30-foot truck as a branch on wheels.

## 8. **NEW BUSINESS:**

### *a. FIRST READ: City of Mableton Purchasing Policy*

Mayor Owens explained why the Purchasing Policy was being addressed. Currently, the City was using the state contract pricing. The City will need a policy in the future for purchases when the state contract would not apply. Attorney Walker-Ashby explained the policy was one of the largest policies the City would be adopting. The policy needs a lot of attention and review before adopting the policy. She referenced Section 6.32 of the City Charter that stated during the transition period, the City would need to put in place a purchasing policy. She acknowledged it would not be realistic for Mayor and Council to give feedback at this point. Most cities have a purchasing policy. The policy presented was modeled after Johns Creek. The policy covers various provisions and laws for future staff to purchase items. She continued to explain the different procurement stipulations outlined in the policy.

Questions followed.

## 9. **DISCUSSION:**

### *a. Essential Administrative Needs (includes authorization for smart phones, cell, and data service, along with computing devices and related cybersecurity and productivity software)*

Questions by Councilmember Ferguson and Auch confirmed the amount was net 90, and the ten devices were for two executive assistants, city clerk, mayor, and council.

Mayor Owens made note that the process for payroll services included quotes from Paylocity and Paycom. No one has been paid yet, and for anyone to be paid, a payroll system must be in place. He thanked Finance Consultant Frank Milazi and City Clerk Susan Hiott for helping. Mayor Owens explained the total annual investment was around \$3500 with anticipated set up fees around \$350 to curtail the system for the City. The system pays based on when payroll was run and based on ten employees. He summarized the cost was around \$3500, monthly fee for two payrolls every two weeks \$230-270 and initial implementation fee of \$250- \$450. The Mayor and Council are considered employees of the City by the Internal Revenue Service. Per questions by Councilmember Ferguson, Mayor Owens explained the quotes were comparing apples to apples. Paycom is used by many cities in the area. Paycom is the preferred vendor. The Finance Consultant recommended Paycom as well. Per question by Councilmember Ferguson asked about hidden fees, and Mayor Owens noted if want to add other programs and HR features, the City can add later. The set-up fee for Paycom was \$263 and training was included. They also have a dedicated client service manager for the City.

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Ferguson to approve the expenditure and conversation and all essential administrative needs including authorization for smart phones, cell, and data service, along with computing devise and related cybersecurity and productivity software be approved. Councilmember Jeffcoat seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

***b. Preparation of City of Mableton Preliminary Classification and Compensation Plan (Georgia Department of Community Affairs data for reporting Cobb Cities is provided for comparison and reference)***

Mayor Owens explained the City would be needing a classification and compensation plan in place when the City starts to bring on staff. He recognized City Attorney Walker-Ashby who explained the item was brought to Council to begin preliminary discussions. Pursuant to Section 3.14 of the Mableton Charter, a position classification and pay plan should be submitted to the city council for approval. Once the positions and parameters are set, the salary will be formulized in a formal document including established positions. The feedback from council planning meetings will be tailored to start the classification and compensation (pay) plan. She opined Mableton's pay plan will be different because the City did not set a millage rate and because there would not be additional funding by ad valorem taxes. The City relied on revenues such as permitting, alcohol and business licenses, planning zoning and franchise fees. These services and revenues required and utilized specific staffing. The pay and class plan should focus on the items needed. This classification and compensation plan should occur when establish departments. The guidance and feedback from planning sessions will help set the plan.

Ms. Walker-Ashby explained the document in the agenda packet came from the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). Each year DCA asks jurisdictions to complete surveys. From the 2022 DCA document (survey) within the agenda packet, she pulled the salaries for Cobb

County cities for comparison. The chart (survey) is available on the DCA website. She referenced that Acworth salaries were low relative to other jurisdictions. Marietta was a good model to go by. It was more current. Ultimately, it will be the Council's decision to set the salaries. The Charter does not anticipate this immediately but will relax requirement during the two-year transitional period.

Ms. Walker-Ashby explained when the Council adopts a compensation and classification plan, the salaries will have ranges for the positions. The mayor, city manager or other designee, being a certain level of people, will negotiate the salary within the approved ranges according to the credentials of the applicant. She recommended this could be adopted sooner than the procurement policy because soon, the City will need some staff. She reminded the classification and compensation plan can be amended at Council's discretion.

Mayor Owens stated he was aware of two variables that would be considered when setting the salary ranges: (1) the City's population size and (2) how far away the City was from the City of Atlanta. The further away from Atlanta, the less salary. Also, the smaller population of a City affected the salary. He would keep in mind that the salaries of the cities comparable in size and near Atlanta would be considered.

Councilmember Herndon asked for clarification that the council adopted the salary ranges. Ms. Walker-Ashby confirmed yes. Councilmember Herndon asked if the executive assistant position was posted, and Mayor Owens replied yes. Councilmember Herndon stated there had been concern and discussion about the stated salary amount. Mayor Owens stated the salary range mentioned was not the salary. He posted the position at a commensurate rate. The rate would be approved under the same process as the city clerk and attorney. Now that the City had significant funds coming in, Council could look at hiring. The position was approved a couple of months ago. Mayor Owens replied he would negotiate the salary with the applicant. As the Council comes together, and brings someone on board, the same process will take place. The DCA chart can reflect the market rate for executive assistant positions.

*c. **Planning Retreat Scheduling** (retreat to include issues such as vision, mission, transition/staffing/service priorities and preliminary funding)*

Attorney Walker-Ashby recommended taking one-two days to focus on specific items, having a missions and visions facilitator/specialist to help council reach vision and mission for the City moving forward. It would be perfect opportunity to share constituents' feedback and resident recommendations to share and to place in a form that incorporates a unified mission and vision. She recommended having a discussion on the service priorities such as the ones suggested in the Feasibility Study anticipated at a minimum planning and zoning, code enforcement, sanitation as well as parks and recreation. Mayor and Council need to discuss the priorities for the services. It would be helpful to the attorney so that she would know what to bring before the council. Those priorities would have emphasis in the classification schedule and staffing order. Because money has come in over the past four months, it would be great to have a budget presentation and preliminary budget for future consideration and adoption. She asked to set a date.

Councilmember Jeffcoat spoke about tentative date set as September 14-16. She had been working on a draft agenda in coordination with the Georgia Municipal Association. The draft agenda would be finalized later. The retreat was local downtown at the Georgia Municipal Association on Pryor Street. She was thankful for the Georgia Municipal Association allowing the meeting. Councilmember Auch expressed she was surprised there was no cost. Councilmember Jeffcoat clarified there was a \$750 a day for two and half days, but the costs were deferred. Mayor Owens explained the meeting would be open meeting and there would be notice of the meeting. The audience asked questions about the meeting. Mayor Owens provided explanation about the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) and how they have been gracious to assist the new City of Mableton and have also deferred costs until the City was on solid ground. GMA has also waived the membership dues for Mableton's first year. Councilmember Auch commented that the discussion could be conducted in a work session. Mayor Owens was confident of what Mayor and Council could do, but it was good to have the expertise of Georgia Municipal Association. It is a work session but leveraging the expertise of the GMA staff to do it effectively and efficiently. Mayor Owens asked those residents interested to please contact the Mayor and Council. Councilmember Herndon asked for additional clarification on the costs and Councilmember Auch asked if there needed to be a vote. Attorney Walker-Ashby explained the reason there needed to be a vote and how a vision and mission statement are set in a 4-6-hour session with a moderator. Councilmember Auch expressed concern that the retreat was not local. Discussion followed.

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Ferguson to approve the planning retreat not to exceed \$2000, and commented he thought Council could do the mission and vision. Councilmember Jeffcoat seconded but commented about GMA could assist with the vision and mission portion. The vote carried 4-2. Yeas: Davis, Jeffcoat, Ferguson and Mayor Owens. Nays: Herndon and Auch

10. **CITY ATTORNEY COMMENTS - NONE**

11. **CITY CLERK COMMENTS – NONE**

12. **CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS -**

- Councilmember Davis expressed how he respected everyone's opinions, and at the end of the day, he wanted the City of Mableton to work. He was honored to be a council person and hear everyone's voices. He would do his best to help Mableton succeed.
- Mayor Owens read a statement from Councilmember Oladapo who sent happiness and gratitude to God for her new baby girl, Eden Oladapo, born August 14<sup>th</sup>. She expressed sincere appreciation for everyone's understanding and encouragement.
- Councilmember Jeffcoat congratulated Dami and David on the new council baby. She spoke about attending Pebblebrook High School's Open House. It was a great event. She invited everyone to check out the new facility being built. There is a theater and creative space. South Cobb was having a music festival. She attended the mental health

forum with Representative Cummings related to HB 520. She spoke about the importance of getting in front of providing support and resources for those suffering from mental health issues.

- Councilmember Auch stated she was in favor of discussing mission and vision statements, but if having, she preferred to have locally where Council could also have public input. She provided details about the upcoming South Cobb Music Festival.
- Councilmember Ferguson expressed congratulations to the council baby. He spoke about the history of celebrating Labor Day. He asked for a moment to celebrate those who labor for the country and the audience applauded. He commented about the importance of Mableton's small businesses, entrepreneurs, and churches. He saluted educators. He commented about how the Council was committed to working with the small businesses that call Mableton home. He encouraged others to attend the Economic Development Summit on September 22.
- Councilmember Herndon spoke about how creating vision and mission statements was important. She invited those who could attend. It requires a village to start the City. She mentioned there were people invested in Mableton's growth and evolution and from different places. There are many talents among the Council and Mableton. As a City, there are some things the Council can do.
- Mayor Owens referenced previous conversations about transportation and the value of input from citizens. He encouraged everyone to email [cityofmableton@gmail.com](mailto:cityofmableton@gmail.com) and let Council know what the people are thinking. There was a presentation GDOT did before Commissioners about upcoming SPLOST. He wants to make sure Mableton has projects on SPLOST referendum. He referred to the form to be filled out. If have specific talents and knowledge, please let the Council know. There will be opportunities to get involved in the City to help move forward on important authorities, committees, bureaus. He spoke about how he would like to have a Keep Mableton Beautiful program.
- Mayor Owens reported he got calls every day about mowing, illegal dumping, etc. He would often call someone. He also goes to Cobb County website; he opens a ticket on See Click Fix. He encouraged others to go to the Cobb website and fill out the form. He spoke about the budget process. The City was in the third month and working toward a preliminary transitional budget. He spoke about the need to get the message out to notify everyone that lives in Mableton, but it is a \$15,000 cost for postage, cards, etc. Everything the Council does is in the right spirit and for the right reasons to make Mableton a model city.

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)*

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Ferguson to go into Executive Session for the purpose of litigation, real estate, and personnel. Councilmember Jeffcoat seconded the motion. The motion passed. Yeas: Davis, Jeffcoat, Owens, Ferguson, Herndon and Auch



Council went into Executive Session at approximately 9:00 p.m.

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Jeffcoat to close the Executive Session and seconded by Councilmember Davis. Yeas: Councilmember Davis, Jeffcoat, Owens, Ferguson, Herndon, and Auch.

The Executive Session closed at 10:54 p.m.

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Ferguson to authorize the City Attorney to serve as Hotel Motel Tax Administrator alongside the City Clerk. Councilmember Jeffcoat seconded the motion. The vote passed. Yeas: Davis, Jeffcoat, Owens, Ferguson, Herndon and Auch

14. **ADJOURNMENT**

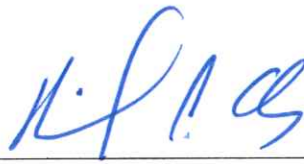
**Motion** was made by councilmember Jeffcoat to adjourn. Councilmember Auch seconded. The motion passed 6-0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:00 p.m.

Approved: 10/26/2023

Attest:

  
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Susan Hiott, Interim City Clerk

  
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Michael Owens, Mayor