

CITY OF MABLETON, GEORGIA

Riverside EpiCenter
135 Riverside Pkwy, Austell, GA 30168
June 21, 2023 @ 6:30PM

SPECIAL CALLED

TRANSITIONAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Mayor Michael Owens
2. **ROLL CALL** – Interim City Clerk Hiott conducted. There was a quorum.

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 - Present
The Honorable TJ Ferguson, District 5 Councilmember - Present
The Honorable Debora Herndon, District 6 Councilmember – Present
3. **INVOCATION** – Dr. Williams conducted.
4. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
5. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Motion** was made by Councilmember Oladapo to move the Executive Session to the end of the agenda after the City Council Comment Section and move Item 8e (Resolution authorizing deferred costs for Council to participate in the Georgia Municipal Association training) to be Item 8a and approve the agenda as amended. Councilmember Ron Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.
6. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** (2-minute time limit) - Mayor Owens recognized Mayor Khalid Kamau, Mayor of South Fulton. Interim City Clerk Susan Hiott asked those who submitted public comment cards to speak. Those who spoke were:
 - Tre Hutchins of District 3 and Post 3 of the Cobb County Board of Education and Superintendent provided an education update. The School District approved the annual operating budget of \$1.5 billion. Being sensitive to higher property assessments, the millage rate was rolled back by .2 for some relief. He provided a report on the E-SPLOST projects and other updates.
 - Mayor Owens recognized Cobb County Chief of Police Stuart VanHoozer. Chief VanHoozer commented about his ties to the community, including attending South Cobb High School and Floyd Middle School. He expressed his support and dedication for Mableton. He recognized Deputy Chief Ben Cohen and Commander of Precinct 2, Matt Hurst.

- Brenda Nash of District 3 thanked the Mayor and Council for all their work. She expressed how she was looking forward to Mableton having a website to keep citizens up to-date. She encouraged the Mayor and Council to get involved in the County's zoning matters.
- Ann Marie Winters of District 4 commended the Mayor and Council for all they were doing. She spoke about the importance of carefully reading the ordinances and recommended that someone pay special attention to definitions and limitations. She provided an example of the definition for *banking*.
- Mayor Owens recognized Mayor Khalid who approached the podium and commended and congratulated the Mayor and Council for being democratic and diplomatic. He encouraged the Mayor and Council to understand the will of their constituents.

7. **OLD BUSINESS: N/A**

8. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. *Approval of Resolution Authorizing Deferred Costs for Mableton City Councilmembers to Participate in Statewide Georgia Municipal Association Training*

Interim City Attorney Walker-Ashby explained the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) Annual Convention was occurring in Savannah, Georgia. It was a local government retreat for cities all over Georgia. The convention (retreat) provided unrivaled training, networking, exhibitors, and tradeshow designed for municipalities, all benefiting the Mayor and Council. Although there would be basic training to be held by GMA for Council in a few weeks, the convention training provided extensive training and real time engagement with other elected officials. GMA was a non-profit and offers additional services such as local government insurance, counsel defense work, tax services, and assistance to municipalities. She reported GMA had agreed to give Mableton a voice in participation of officers of GMA. The convention costs were not unreasonable. GMA was willing to defer the cost. Mayor Owens added that GMA was not charging the city any membership fees for the first year. Attorney Walker-Ashby addressed the Charter's allowance for expenditures. She explained how expenses would be deferred until the City had a budget and obtained monies. Discussion followed about the amount of the deferred costs (approximately \$850 per council person, Questions and discussion followed.

Councilmember Ferguson asked about the timeline for paying GMA. Mayor Owens stated there was no specific time. Councilmember Herndon asked for additional explanation of the \$815 and the prices per course. Councilmember Herndon expressed concern that GMA had already offered one on one training for the council to occur three weeks after the conference. She was thinking about the bottom line

the City would be responsible for paying. She did not understand the goal for attending the Convention.

Councilmember Jeffcoat expressed her appreciation for Councilmember Herndon's perspective. She explained she had spoken with GMA. There was a distinct difference between the two training opportunities. The convention was more in depth and gave Mableton Council the opportunity to meet other experienced officials. It was paramount to get the necessary training to make tough decisions. Councilmember Jeffcoat read a statement by GMA representative that explained how the convention training was taught by experts of specific topics and goes far more in depth than the planned orientation training retreat. The conference offered a good number of topics, vendors, networking and other offerings that were mentioned by attorney Walker-Ashby. At the convention, the Mayor and Council have the opportunity to collaborate and meet with experienced officials. The orientation retreat would focus on team building, basic training, core areas and planning. She explained the two offers were completely different. She commented priorities were set by the council, training was invaluable, and training was good debt, and Council would get return in investment long term.

Councilmember Herndon referenced that Mr. Hanson of GMA stated attending the conference should not be a priority based on the City's financial situation. GMA offered a less expensive alternative in addition to offering their assistance. There would be mandatory training also in January. She explained how she was not sure focusing on the conference should be a priority. It was not that she did not see the value of a conference, but as a new city, she expressed she was not sure focusing on the conference should be a priority. Next year Mableton would have a budget, revenue, and numbers and all could attend.

Discussion followed. Councilmember Auch commented about going to the convention was expensive such as including hotels. She recognized there could be a benefit of networking, but she thought the City would get better bang for the buck to wait until next month's training. Councilmember Auch commented about the resolution not mentioning the training for next month. She thought there needed to be more forethought for training budget.

Councilmember Oladapo asked about the board and travel costs. Councilmember Jeffcoat distributed an estimate among the Council. Mayor Owens reviewed the conference fees. He commented about the allowed expenses for Mayor and Council were already stipulated in the Charter. He reviewed the specific costs. Councilmember Jeffcoat addressed the lodging costs that were gotten at a lesser rate. Councilmember Jeffcoat added she was staying with family. Councilmember Oladapo expressed that she could not justify the costs, there would be training by GMA at the orientation retreat. She asked if GMA could offer special training sessions. Councilmember Ferguson opined the need for the Mayor and Council to focus on every single opportunity to be trained by those who know what they are

doing. He pointed out the entire council were not going. There will be four attending. Councilmember Auch stated she was not attending because it was not pre-approved. She opined the item should have been on the agenda last month. Councilmember Ferguson acknowledged unfortunately it had been a hurried situation, but the entire election/race had been, and unfortunately the decision was being done on the fly. He spoke about and recommended training the trainer. Council should bring back information and share the knowledge that was key. Councilmember Auch stated it was an annual retreat and the City was starting up and Council could grow the education as the City grew.

Per Councilmember Auch's question, discussion followed about the type and number of classes offered. Mayor Owens clarified the training was optional, not mandatory. Attorney Walker-Ashby reported if four councilmembers go, the cost of deferral was \$3,300 and if seven go, the cost was \$5,775. The resolution did not include next month's training. The resolution did not include the Council's expense allowance.

Councilmember Herndon explained GMA was offering the courses they need at an orientation retreat next month. The courses offered at the convention included other items to focus on. She pointed out that the Council had two opportunities for training and GMA offered an open door to Council to accommodate what training the City needed. She opined at this juncture, considering so many things they needed to accomplish, it was an unnecessary expense. She did not think the conference/convention was a wise use of resources and funding. Councilmember Auch added that GMA partners with Carl Vinson Institute and there were online options that did not include hotel, food, and travel costs.

Councilmember Davis expressed how he understood both sides of the argument. He reported as a former banker he believed in cost savings and being fiscally responsible. He commented on how the talk about next month's class was and that it gave basics. He opined the Council was trying to start a city. As a soldier, one would not want to go on a dangerous mission with basic training. He wanted to be efficient, and the Council were at a critical junction starting the city. He spoke about how the Council needed to do as necessary so could do City business as efficiently as possible. He was a strong believer in training. He commented further about for a city and a business to be successful, training was needed. He pointed out that being efficient took more than learning the basics.

Councilmember Jeffcoat clarified that because the discussion was focusing on training, Council was cognitive of the other needs of the City. Councilmember Auch added she was not suggesting to not having training, but to have something in the future when the entire council could have training.

Motion made by Councilmember Ferguson to approve Resolution authorizing deferred costs for Mableton City Councilmembers to participate in statewide

Georgia Municipal Association Training. Councilmember Jeffcoat seconded. The motion passed 4-3. Nays: Oladapo Herndon, and Auch

b. FIRST READ: Ordinance Creating Chapter 1, General Government, Article 1, General Provisions, of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances

Attorney Walker-Ashby clarified the first read was first time presented to Council. She explained the next four items were first reads, meaning first time to be presented. The Charter required two reads. She provided an overview. The ordinance was a basic component in all ordinances. The ordinance provided definitions and explanations. It was a basic ordinance. Questions and discussion followed.

c. FIRST READ: Ordinance Creating Chapter 2, Administration, Article 1, In General, of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances

Attorney Walker-Ashby provided an overview of the ordinance. She addressed the reimbursements of expenditures process. Councilmember Auch asked that Section 2.1.5 have the reference of Charter Section 2.13 included. Mayor Owens asked if the \$5,000 for Mayor and \$3,000 was not limited to training or travel. Attorney Walker-Ashby stated it was not limited to travel and training. Additional explanation was provided.

d. FIRST READ: Ordinance Creating Chapter 7, Taxes, Fees, and Assessments, of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances

Attorney Walker-Ashby reported the ordinance came after a lot of discussion and coordination with the County, Chairwoman, staff, collaboration with the tax commissioner. There were meetings with multiple utilities. She explained this was the seed for initial revenue. The finance director would quantify. A good amount of revenue will start coming in July. The ordinances put in place components for the initial revenue. The ordinance provides the basic franchise fee component for franchises, such as power, cable, and natural gas franchises. The City encourages and wants to have a franchise agreement. There had been a lot of feedback from the franchises. Georgia Power was one of the utilities to give money. Georgia Power had offered to give six months in advance. The representative from Graystone Power was present as well. If there was not an agreement, a franchise defaults to the ordinance. If one was in place, default to the agreement. Additional fees and taxes were noted. She suggested a second meeting to adopt these ordinances prior to July 1st. Mayor Owens reiterated the ordinance was a basic catch all, but the City was working with the franchises to have an agreement. Councilmember Ferguson noted Austell Gas was not included.

e. FIRST READ: ORDINANCES GRANTING FRANCHISES:

1. Ordinance Granting Franchise to Georgia Power Company

2. *Ordinance Granting Franchise to Cobb Electric Membership Corporation*
3. *Ordinance Granting Franchise to Greystone*
4. *Ordinance Granting Franchise to Comcast Cable*
5. *Ordinance Granting Franchise to AT&T*
6. *Ordinance Granting Franchise to Spectrum*
7. *Ordinance Granting Franchise to Scana Energy*
8. *Ordinance Granting Franchise to Atlanta Gas Light*
9. *Ordinance Granting Franchise to Georgia Natural Gas*
10. *Ordinance Granting Franchise to Gas South*

Attorney Walker-Ashby noted they had begun initial contact, but when do finalize and in a form that the Council was o.k. with, it would be available for adoption since have already had the first read. The hope was to solidify the agreements. There would be transitional council meetings to adopt the second read.

9. **DISCUSSION: N/A**

10. **CITY ATTORNEY COMMENTS**

- Councilmember Ferguson commented about how the council continued to grow and was pleased to be a member of the council.
- Mayor Owens thanked all that continued to attend the council meetings. The ability to be able to connect and have dialogue was important. He thanked Pastor Boyd for allowing the Council to meet at the EpiCenter. He thanked James Hammond with IKON Filmworks. The work was conducted free of charge as a commitment to the City and community. Mableton continues to make this work because of the gratitude of people and business owners of the community supporting the City of Mableton. He expressed thanks and appreciation.

11. **CITY CLERK COMMENTS**

12. **CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS**

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 Jeffcoat to go into executive session for personnel, litigation, and real estate. The motion carried unanimously. Yeas: Davis, Jeffcoat, Oladapo, Auch, Ferguson, Herndon, and Owens (8:03 p.m.)

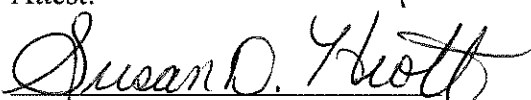
Motion was made by Councilmember Oladapo to close the Executive Session. Councilmember Herndon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Yeas: Davis, Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Ferguson, Herndon, and Owens

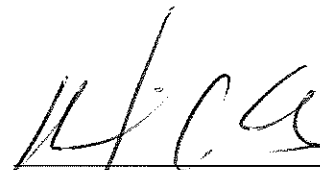
14. **ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:33 p.m.

Attest:


Susan D. Hiott, Interim City Clerk


Michael Owens, Mayor

