

CITY OF MABLETON, GEORGIA

Riverside EpiCenter
135 Riverside Pkwy, Austell, GA 30168
May 11, 2023 @ 6:30PM

Special Called **Transitional City Council Meeting Minutes**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Mayor Michael Owens called meeting to order.
2. **ROLL CALL** – Interim City Clerk Susan 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** – Pastor Boyd conducted.
4. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
5. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – Motion was made by Councilmember Ferguson to approve the agenda as presented and seconded by Councilmember Ron Davis. Motion was approved 7-0.
6. **PUBLIC COMMENTS (2- minute time limit per public comment card submitted)**

Prior to the Public Comment portion of the meeting, Mayor Owens recognized Cobb County Commissioner District 4 Monique Sheffield. She thanked Mayor and Council for running for office. She thanked the organizers of the event, especially Ms. Edwards. She shared her commitment to the City of Mableton. She expressed her commitment to make the transition as smooth as possible as there were a lot of steps to the start-up of a city. She expressed the County's support and encouraged Mableton residents to support the Mayor and Council. She asked the residents to give some grace to the Mableton Mayor and Council. She provided additional information about all the County would be doing to assist in the transition. She spoke about how her door of the County was always open to the City of Mableton.

Speakers and topic of their comments were:

- Tom Hunt of District 1 asked about what could be better provided by the City of Mableton than Cobb County. He asked why would residents need a City of Mableton. He would like more specifics.
- Leroy Tre Hutchins of Post 3 of the Cobb County Board of Education and Superintendent thanked Mayor and Council for their service and moving the community forward. He expressed support of the City.
- Angela Wynn of District 2 congratulated Mayor and Council. She wanted to see a policy change about eviction notices.
- Monica Delancy of District 2 congratulated Mayor and Council. She wanted a 90-day moratorium on evictions to evaluate eviction process and asked for ordinance changes.
- Corey Jiggetts of District 5 addressed strategic development and vision and affordable housing being a key component. He asked Mayor and Council to preserve the character of the Mableton community. He wanted teeth behind code enforcement. He will be attending upcoming meetings.
- Angela Aker of District 2 asked for clarification of the services such as code enforcement and sanitation to be implemented.
- Cassandra Brown of District 4 congratulated Mayor and Council. She expressed excitement about the new city and her wish for the Mayor and Council to do their utmost best to support, defend, and promote the well-being of the community. She spoke about the Mayor and Council's fiduciary responsibility.
- Sheila Edwards, congratulated Council for taking role of leadership and asked those that ran to stay involved. She spoke about working together and together to make the City the best it could be.

State Representative Terry Cummings congratulated Mayor and Council. She welcomed them to the other side. She expressed her support through the Legislature. She asked residents to support and pray for the Mayor and Council as they have a tremendous amount of work to do in the next months and years and to give them grace to make mistakes as they learn and become acclimated to their new office.

Mayor Owens recognized other elected and appointed officials in the room.

Cobb County District Attorney Flynn Broady congratulated the Mayor and Council. He thanked all that were present in the room. He commented about the potential of Mableton to grow and improve and expressed his excitement and thankfulness for the City of Mableton. He spoke about the City being the largest City in Cobb County. Cobb County was committed to the City.

7. ACTING APPOINTEES:

a. Approval of resolution appointing an interim city attorney

Motion was made by Councilmember Ferguson to approve RES 2023-05-01 appointing Emilia C. Walker Ashby, Esq. as interim City Attorney. Councilmember Ron Davis seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Approval of resolution appointing an interim city clerk

Motion was made by Councilmember Jeffcoat and seconded by Councilmember Oladapo to approve ES 2023-05-02 appointing Susan Hiott as Interim City Clerk. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Owens administered the Interim City Clerk Oath of Office to Susan Hiott.

8. **NEW BUSINESS:**

a. Approval of resolution formally adopting city charter

Interim Attorney Walker-Ashby provided background about the adoption of the Charter (HB839) for online codification. It was tradition in Georgia to formally adopt the Charter. The House Bill (Charter) created and incorporated the City and contains the rules for the City. Councilmember Herndon asked if the Charter could be reviewed and/or amended before adoption or after the adoption. Interim Attorney Walker-Ashby explained there were state legal requirements such as notice to the legal organ, and other processes for amending the Charter. Adopting the Charter does not change the ability to change the Charter later.

Motion was made by Councilmember Ron Davis and seconded by TJ Ferguson to approve RES 2023-05-03 to adopt the City Charter (HB 839). The motion carried unanimously.

b. Approval of resolution electing mayor pro tempore

Interim City Attorney Walker-Ashby provided background She explained the appointment would be until January 2024. The appointment for mayor pro tempore occurred every January.

Mayor Owens asked for nominations from the Council. Councilmember Auch nominated Councilmember Ferguson. No additional nominations followed. Motion was made by Ron Davis to approve Councilmember TJ Ferguson as Mayor Pro Tempore. Motion carried unanimously.

c. Approval of resolution appointing an interim finance consultant

Councilmember Auch made motion to defer the appointments of all further appointments. Councilmember Herndon seconded the motion.

Councilmember Auch expressed concern that she did not have enough information in adequate time to review.

Interim City Attorney explained the item to be considered was for the interim finance consultant. She explained there are certain deadlines and constraints requiring a financial consultant to crunch numbers and collaborate with the County and Tax Commissioner. If there were concerns of Council, the appointment could be deferred until after an executive session.

Question and discussion followed about the credentials, importance, and duties of the certified financial person. Mayor Owens clarified the motion that was made for tabling both item c and d. He noted the financial consultant was needed to collaborate with the County.

City Attorney recommended making motion for item c only. It was up to Councilmember Auck to amend her motion.

Motion was amended by Councilmember Auch to table the interim finance consultant appointment until after Executive Session. The motion was second by Councilmember Herndon. The motion passed unanimously.

d. Approval of resolution authorizing interim executive assistants

City Attorney provided background for two executive assistants, one assistant for the Mayor and one assistant for the Council. She explained how during the start-up phase there was not a money issue. It was a cash flow problem, and that the appointed interim positions would not receive compensation at this time.

Councilmember Herndon asked how the number of two was recommended. She asked if one could be sufficient. Councilmember Ferguson noted that one could be hired, and if needed, the second assistant could be hired at a later time. Discussion followed.

Mayor Owens reiterated how initial meetings were transitional and the interim appointments are made during the set-up period. The Mayor and Council are a working body and hold full-time jobs but want to be responsive to the needs and communications of the residents. The executive assistants would help meet those needs. He opined that having one or two executive assistants was within line for a City of Mableton's size.

Councilmember Jeffcoat explained how although the resolution was authorizing two, the decision would be considered as the City evolved during the start-up phase.

Motion was made by Councilmember Jeffcoat to approve RES 2023-05-06 authorizing interim executive assistants. Councilmember Ferguson seconded. The motion carried:

Yays: Mayor Owens, Councilmembers Davis, Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Ferguson

Nays: Councilmembers Herndon and Auch

Councilmembers Herndon and Auch pointed out that they voted no because they did not support having two executive assistants.

e. Approval of resolution establishing a city website domain – MabletonGA.gov
Motion was made by Councilmember Jeffcoat to approve RES 2023-05-07 and seconded by Councilmember Oladapo. The motion carried unanimously.

f. Approval of resolution authorizing discussions with Cobb County and Cobb County Tax Commissioner on intergovernmental tax collection agreement

Motion was made to defer RES 2023-05-08 until after Executive Session by Councilmember Ferguson. Mayor Owens commented about how the interim consultant would be important in the negotiations with the County and Tax Commissioner. Cobb County was waiting to hear from the City about whether the City would be establishing a millage rate. Until the resolution is adopted, the City couldn't notify the County of no millage rate. Councilmember Davis seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilmember Ferguson to approve RES 2023-05-08 and seconded by Councilmember Jeffcoat. The motion carried unanimously.

(Item f was approved after returning from Executive Session.)

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Interim City Attorney explained the only reasons that a governmental body can go into executive session. The reasons are:

- 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 to go into Executive Session to discuss item 8c (personnel) was made by Councilmember Jeffcoat. Councilmember Oladapo seconded. The motion was approved 7-0. Owens, Davis, Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Auch, Ferguson, Herndon

Mayor and Council went into Executive Session at 8:00 p.m.

Motion to close Executive Session was made by Councilmember Auch and seconded by Councilmember Davis. The Executive Session closed at 8:45 p.m.

Revisit of item 8c - Approval of resolution appointing an interim finance consultant

Motion to bring Item 8c back from being tabled was made by Councilmember Ferguson and seconded by Councilmember Herndon. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion to approve RES 2023-05-05 a resolution appointing Interim Financial Consultant Frank Milazi was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Oladapo. The motion carried unanimously.

10. **DISCUSSION:**

- a. **Temporary meeting location** – The EpiCenter has been gracious to offer a place for the City to meet. Mayor Owens thanked Pastor Boyd for offering the space.
- b. **Determination of next council meeting** – To be determined pending working with the financial consultant and Cobb County. Once there was more information, Mayor and Council would call another transitional special called meeting. There will be proper notice given to the Council and legal organ.

11. **PUBLIC COMMENT** – Mayor Owens opened floor per an additional request for public comment. Joyce Steele of District 4 asked about how the Mayor and Council would be communicating with the residents. She found out about the meeting while watching the news that day.

12. **CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS**

The Council expressed their appreciation for all that attended (standing room only). Council expressed how they were honored and humble and grateful to serve the residents of Mableton. They have learned a lot in a short time, and they have a lot of work to do. They encouraged residents to reach out to them.

Mayor Owens expressed gratitude to be at the point of having the first historic inaugural transitional meeting. He explained how there was no transitional committee assigned. Mayor and Council will strive to be fiscally responsible and do the best they can to communicate.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion was made to adjourn by Councilmember Jeffcoat and seconded by Councilmember Oladapo. The meeting adjourned.

Attest:


Susan Hiott, Interim City Clerk


Mayor Michael Owens