



CITY OF MABLETON, GEORGIA

Riverside EpiCenter
135 Riverside Pkwy, Austell, GA 30168
September 25, 2024 at 6:30 PM

The Honorable Michael Owens, Mayor
The Honorable Ron Davis, District 1 Councilmember
The Honorable Dami Oladapo, District 2 Councilmember
The Honorable Keisha Jeffcoat, Mayor Pro Tem/District 3 Councilmember
The Honorable Patricia Auch, District 4 Councilmember
The Honorable TJ Ferguson, District 5 Councilmember
The Honorable Debora Herndon, District 6 Councilmember

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Executive Assistant to Council, Alison Benson, conducted the roll call and a quorum was present.

2. ROLL CALL

Mayor Owens called the meeting to order. City Clerk Hiott as well as Executive Assistant Lily Smith were out due to illness. Executive Assistant to Council Alison Benson was present to assist with the meeting.

3. INVOCATION

Invocation was led by Councilmember Davis.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Councilmember Jeffcoat and seconded by Councilmember Ferguson to approve the agenda. The motion carried 7-0.

6. PRESENTATIONS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS/PROCLAMATIONS

a. Report from Georgia Power - Britt Fleck, Regional Executive and David Williams, District Manager

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized and welcomed Georgia Power representatives who were present. Mayor Owens commented about the City's partnership with Georgia Power.

Britt Fleck, Regional Metro West Executive, Al Martin, Area Manager, and David Williams, Distribution Manager were present. Ms. Fleck thanked the City for inviting Georgia Power to the meeting. She recognized Mr. Martin who expressed how pleased he

was to be in partnership with the City of Mableton. He spoke about the free services, including Economic Development Department services such as free renderings, maps, and other services. Distribution Manager David Williams spoke about storm preparation. He presented a PowerPoint and addressed Georgia Power's actions before the storm, during the storm, customer engagement, and hurricane response. The presentation is available within the record.

Questions and answers followed. Mayor Owens thanked them for their time and attending the meeting.

7. APPOINTMENTS

None.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion was made by Councilmember Auch and seconded by Councilmember Jeffcoat to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried 7-0.

- a. Approval of Lease Agreement for 1245 Veterans Memorial Highway, Suite 20 for Administrative Offices**
- b. Approval of September 11, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes**
- c. Approval of September 9, 2024 Work Session Minutes**

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS - 2 minutes per speaker - no more than 30 minutes for all speakers. Anyone wishing to make a public comment should complete and submit the public comment card to the City Clerk prior to the start of the meeting.

Michael Murphy of District 4 spoke about the flood of 2009, an experience to remember. He spoke about being on the Board of Star-C and that day was recognition of the ten-year anniversary. Star-C is a

Non-profit providing affordable apartment community residents with health and educational programs for residents. He spoke about the Statford Ridge project, affordable housing, and how stable housing creates healthy communities. He asked the Council to consider a pitch day to help provide opportunities to receive additional revenue enhancements.

Denny Wilson of District 2 spoke about the problems with the apartments near Six Flags. The city is just getting off of the ground and has inherited those problems. The resolution is not going to happen overnight. There will be some tough decisions. She asked if the Council could please meet and speak with some of the people and try to come up with some type of solution.

Sam Culbreth of District 6 spoke on behalf of the Austell Community Task Force. He stated he was the chair, and he was one of the many empowered citizens who wanted to make change in the community. Their area was Cobb County District 4. He extended an invitation to the Council to attend meetings held on the first Monday of every month, at 7 am at South Cobb Recreation Center. He spoke about the community gardens.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

11. PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Owens announced the item and asked for a motion to open the public hearing. The public hearing would be 30 minutes long. There was a three-minute time limit.

Motion was made by Councilmember Oladapo and seconded by Councilmember Davis to to open public hearing . The motion carried 7-0.

Comments:

- Nick Dominion of District 4 stated he voted for the City of Mableton. As far as budgets, the spending plan seemed conservative. He wanted to know more details about the contracting and consulting line items.
- Denny Wilson inquired about the salaries, and asked if there would be an executive assistant to each of council members. She asked if the \$83,200 executive salary was for one or two people. She liked the format of the spending plan.

Mayor Owens closed the public hearing.

a. FY 2025 Spending Plan

Mayor Owens recognized City Manager Bill Tanks who provided background information:

- Mr. Tanks offered to answer any questions if anyone contacted him. Being in a transitional phase, the City did not have to make a budget, but the Council wanted to prepare the Spending Plan for transparency to the residents.
- There was a first reading previously, and this was the second hearing. The current 90-day Spending Plan will expire October 1st.
- The City will be in real budget season early next year.
- Based on the feasibility study and spending trends, the staff were conservative about predicting revenues, and overstated expenditures.
- Mayor Owens added the City was in a transitional phase, and both for transparency and acting in a fiducial way, the City was putting up guard rails. The City has some historical data, and does have 8 months of real data, but it is still hard to know exactly what departments will need. There will be amendments as the City is bringing in staff. Mayor Owens stated he was in support of the Spending Plan.

Mr. Tanks reviewed the presentation and noted some of the changes since the first read. The presentation is available within the record. Highlights of the presentation:

- Mr. Tanks noted the corrections in the Office of the City Manager. There were some double stating of salaries and the Excel spreadsheet was corrected.
- The overstatement to the City Manager's Office gave \$300,000 surplus. The City Manager's budget includes an economic development director, special project manager, and administrative assistant.
- Discretionary spending was added to the Mayor and Council's budgets as a line item. It was broken out from miscellaneous Other Costs.

- Legal was stated at \$500,000, and added \$100,000 to external legal for contingency fund for some legal challenges.
- Attorney Walker-Ashby explained the \$100,000 was for the litigation challenging the constitution prevailed by the Superior Court that was now being appealed.
- Mr. Tanks provided additional explanation of the proposed spending plan. There are contingencies in contractual services in Community Development other than the Comp Plan.
- The Debt Service URA Bond -was estimated at \$550,000 Annual Debt Service but was still negotiating the rate for the bond.
- Capital Spending - \$950,000.

Questions and discussion followed. Highlights:

- Councilmember Auch asked for an explanation of the difference between miscellaneous and discretionary (allowance). Mr. Tanks explained the Charter states allowances and are assigned to individuals. Miscellaneous is assigned to a department.
- The Charter refers to the funds as "allowance". Council's allowance is \$3,000 each and the mayor's allowance is \$5,000. .
- Councilmember Auch asked who directs how miscellaneous funds are spent in the City Council Department. Mr. Tanks explained how the City Manager is responsible for the budget. He would approve the expenditures for that section. Discussion and examples continued.
- Mr. Tanks explained the salaries were in the Spending Plan with a very conservative approach. The highest amount in the pay range was in the Spending Plan. That number was not what the employee makes.
- He reiterated staff understated revenues and overstated expenses.
- Mr. Tanks explained that often a new city must use consultants and contractors during star-up. He stated Mableton should get a star report card because most new cities get a transition team and have contractors come in and set up the city. Mableton Mayor and Council ran the city with a council and staff. However, now at this phase, to get things going quickly, the City needed some contracted services such as financial and HR contracts. As payroll and hiring go up, contracted services will go down. The City was in transition, and some of these services were required. The City has had contingency funds and professional services designated that the City has been able to utilize. A portion of the Comp Plan expenditure was in the previous spending plan. The Comp Plan is a state and DCA requirement. Those funds have to be spent.
- The reason for the \$83,200 executive assistant line item was because the projected salary was at the top of the pay range. The salary expenditure was an overstated expense, taking a conservative approach to budgeting. It does not mean what the City actually would pay. He clarified there would not be an executive assistant for each council; it was budgeted as only one executive assistant for the council.
- Mayor Owens clarified that the Spending Plan was not setting any salaries. The City's pay plan was approved by the council, and any change of salaries has to go back to passing a resolution and amending the pay plan.

12. NEW BUSINESS

a. **Consideration and Approval of FY 2025 Spending Plan - October 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 - City Manager Bill Tanks**

Motion was made by Councilmember Auch to approve the FY 2025 Spending Plan October 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024 (stating incorrect dates) and with an amendment changing the name of the "miscellaneous" line item to be changed to contingency. The motion was not voted on due to the date stated in the motion.

Mr. Tanks provided an explanation of an undesignated contingency fund. The City Manager, Mayor and Council deliberated the name and type of purchases in the category/type of expenditures for miscellaneous, allowance, and contingency categories. Councilmember Oladapo opined the name of the item should be kept uniform. Councilmember Auch stated "miscellaneous" may be a workaround to add to a discretionary fund of the mayor and council. She wasn't concerned with miscellaneous in the other departments. The Charter set a cap but did not define it. By having a "miscellaneous" and "discretionary" fund could cause additional spending. Mayor Owens reiterated the allowance was for the mayor and council and miscellaneous was for the department. . Councilmember Herndon asked for a way to clarify the "miscellaneous" fund. Councilmember Ferguson added that expenditures go through the city manager and finance departments and staff would approve any expenditures. Mr. Tanks explained how no one can predict every expenditure. Discussion continued.

Mayor Owens made a point of order that the motion was inaccurate, stating the incorrect dates.

Motion was made by Councilmember Auch to approve the FY 2025 Spending Plan, October 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 with the name of the "miscellaneous" line item being changed to the name of "contingency."

Councilmember Auch explained how the item named as "contingency" would be clear so when there was a report, mayor and council could see what the expenditure was. Questions and discussion continued about the wording of "contingency". Councilmember Jeffcoat expressed how there should be trust in the mayor and council to be good stewards and fiscally responsible. Audits will be conducted. She recommended allowing the "miscellaneous" item to stand in all the departments. Councilmember Auch commented that there was supposed to be an audit in June, and that did not happen.

The motion failed due to lack of a second.

Motion was made by Councilmember Jeffcoat and seconded by Councilmember Davis to approve FY 2025 Spending Plan - October 1, 2024 to June 30 2025. The motion carried 7-0.

Mayor Owens asked Mr. Tanks to report if there has been an audit of the City. Mr. Tanks explained there has not been an external audit as the City does not have a year of financial reports. Mayor Owens stated that since the City was in transition, the City did not require an external auditor. Mr. Tanks reported the City did have an internal auditor, Rausch, that has been checking everything to get the City ready for an external audit, and they have not found any issues. There were some re-classifications. The Internal Audit is occurring, but

not an external audit.

b. Second Read - An Ordinance and Adoption Agreement for City of Mableton Georgia Municipal Employees Benefit System (GMEBS) Retirement Plan - City Clerk Susan Hiott

Mayor Owens announced the item. He noted the City Clerk has worked diligently on this. The GMA reps have come to several meetings. He was not aware of any changes since the first read.

Motion was made by Councilmember Oladapo and seconded by Councilmember Ferguson to to approve an Ordinance and Adoption Agreement for the City of Mableton Georgia Municipal Employees Benefit System (GMEBS) Retirement Plan. The motion carried 7-0.

c. Consideration of Resolution and Adoption Agreement for the Georgia Municipal Association 457 (b) Deferred Compensation Plan - City Clerk Susan Hiott

Mayor Owens announced the item and provided background. Mr. Tanks clarified that the 457 Deferred Plan was optional for employees to participate. If an employee wants to contribute, there is no city match and the employee is not required to participate.

Motion was made by Councilmember Ferguson and was seconded to approve the Resolution and Adoption Agreement for the Georgia Municipal Association 457 (b) Deferred . The motion carried 7-0.

d. Consideration and Approval of Resolution Establishing A City Holiday Schedule for 2025 and for Other Lawful Purposes - City Clerk Susan Hiott

Mayor Owens announced the item and said the resolution had been shared with everyone. The only notable change, was that the holiday of Good Friday, was removed, and a floating holiday for staff was added.

Motion was made by Councilmember Davis and seconded by Councilmember Jeffcoat to approve Resolution Establishing a City Holiday Schedule for 2025. The motion carried 7-0.

13. OTHER BUSINESS/DISCUSSION

None.

14. CITY MANAGER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS

Mr. Tanks said good job to acting city clerk Alison Benson. He wished speedy recovery to Susan and Lily who had been with the city since the beginning. He reported they interviewed a community development director last week. There will be continued hiring. He was looking at starting hiring. There should be a recommendation by next council meeting. Upcoming hires include a special projects manager, a community development clerk, and a HR specialist. He commended the mayor for a recent competition where he who won first place.

15. CITY ATTORNEY/CITY CLERK/STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS

No reports.

16. MAYOR AND COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS

Mayor and Council provided their announcements and comments. Highlights:

- Councilmember Davis announced details of the Be Bold Empowerment Awards Ceremony. He asked everyone to be safe with the hurricane coming.
- Councilmember Oladapo announced details about the District 2 Seniors Brunch event, and asked any senior needing assistance to reach out to her. She was partnered with Pure Hope Church.
- Councilmember Jeffcoat reported on hosting a group of special needs students from Pebblebrook at the EpiCenter, the Girl Scouts Centennial Celebration at Timber Ridge event, and other happenings in her district. She provided voting dates and encouraged everyone to vote. She encouraged everyone to attend the fair.
- Councilmember Ferguson announced information about the Annual Fall Festival at Floyd Middle School on October 19th.
- Councilmember Herndon announced the last day to convert regular i.d. to real i.d. was May 7, 2025.
- Mayor Owens encouraged everyone to attend the 2024 Faith and Blue Unity Walk on October 5th.
- Mayor Owens reminded everyone to put their events on the City's Community Calendar.
- He reported on being on a panel at the Metro Atlanta Mayors Association the previous week at Google.
- Mayor Owens reported to Google about Mableton's boundaries being incorrect. He got a commitment that the map would be updated in a couple of weeks. He will follow up with the Google team.
- Mayor Owens reported he had a meeting with the postmaster and was trying to get back on his calendar.
- There are zero plans for Mableton post office to close.
- Mayor Owens reported on his recent visit to South Cobb High School with South Cobb Partners and Education Breakfast. He spoke about how the word needs to get out about the exciting and good things being done at Mableton area schools.
- Mayor Owens reminded that there is a M-splst coming up in the next election. He encouraged everyone to reach out to someone at the County and be educated.
- Mayor Owens spoke about being a member of the Atlanta Regional Commission's Local Leadership Housing Action Committee, a commitment by mayors located in Metro Atlanta for the influence of affordable housing.

17. 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)) AND MISC. EXEMPTIONS (O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (B)(4)&(5))

Motion was made by Councilmember Ferguson and seconded by Councilmember Oladapo to go into Executive Session for litigation, real estate, and personnel. The motion passed unanimously. Yeas: Davis, Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Auch, Ferguson, Herndon and Owens (8:30 p.m.)

Motion was made by Councilmember Auch and seconded by Councilmember Ferguson to close the Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously. Yeas: Davis, Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Auch, Ferguson, Herndon and Owens (10:20 pm)

Motion was made by Councilmember Oladapo and seconded by Councilmember Ferguson to authorize the mayor to extend and or terminate all currently existing property sale agreements. The motion passed 7-0.

18. ADJOURNMENT

City Manager Tanks announced he would be out of town for his birthday. The Food Truck Friday event will be held October 4th.

Motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Oladapo and seconded by Councilmember Jeffcoat. The motion passed 7-0.

The meeting adjourned at 10:22 p.m.

Dr. Michael Owens, Mayor

Susan Hiott, City Clerk