



CITY OF MABLETON, GEORGIA

Riverside EpiCenter
135 Riverside Pkwy, Austell, GA 30168
February 12, 2025 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

Mayor Owens called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

2. ROLL CALL

The City Clerk conducted the roll call and a quorum was present. Councilmember Davis was not present.

3. INVOCATION

City Manager Tanks led in the invocation.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Pro Tem Keisha Jeffcoat led the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Owens announced the item. He announced he would like to defer Item 12b. He recognized City Attorney Walker-Ashby. She explained that the ordinance was sent to the State Insurance Commissioner Office via email and certified mail. She wanted to defer the item to make sure there would not be any adjustments.

Councilmember Auch suggested that Item 12c be deferred also. She had some information that she would like to verify. She asked if the agenda packet had been updated recently. City Attorney Walker-Ashby explained she had added additional information. She provided background of how she had noticed some fees were missing. She asked consultant, Rob Hosack to provide the additional information. The City's Planning and Zoning goes live March 3. This past week, he added the supplemental information. This would be the First Read. The public hearing will be March 10th and adoption on March 12th. The information was added on Monday, February 10th. City Attorney Walker-Ashby explained the Zoning Act, needing advertising 15 days prior to the required public hearing. The public can see the fees in the agenda packet.

Questions and discussion continued about the ordinance being a First Read:

City Attorney Walker-Ashby will ask Mr. Hosack to send the County's fee schedule for comparison.

Councilmember Auch expressed concern about the \$100 fee for backyard chickens.

Councilmember Auch noted there was an item not added and updated in Consent Item 10b regarding Consideration and Approval adopting a Procedure for Government Representatives to Request Speaking Opportunities. Discussion followed.

Motion was made by Councilmember Jeffcoat to approve the agenda including deferral of Item 12 b Second Read an Ordinance Creating Chapter 9, Fire Protection and Prevention to the next meeting. Councilmember Ferguson seconded.

Discussion followed about Consent Item 10 b. (Clerk's Note: Item 10 b was in Consent - regarding additional time allocated by the mayor for questions and comments on the Procedure for Government Representatives to Request Speaking Opportunities).

Mayor Owens called for a vote on the original motion. The vote was 3 to 3. Nays Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Owens. Yays: Auch, Ferguson and Herndon

A friendly amendment was made.

Motion was amended to read as written with deferring Item 12b to next meeting and moving 10 be from Consent transferred to New Business which will be Item 12d. The motion passed 5-1. Nay was Councilmember Auch.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

7. PRESENTATIONS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS/PROCLAMATIONS

8. APPOINTMENTS

a. Resolution for Appointment of Mableton Development Authority Chair

Mayor Owens announced the item and provided background regarding the reappointment of Jason Gaines as chairman of the Mableton Development Authority. Mr. Gaines was not present.

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.

The following expressed their concerns about an event held by The Auto Hangar ATL located at 2360 Harris Street, Austell, Georgia, city limits of Mableton:

- Joanna Conner provided a copy of SLU submitted to the County that was withdrawn. She described unsafe activities of the cars participating in the event in her neighborhood area, including cars doing donuts, speeding, flames coming out from the cars.
- Brielle Tumey expressed concerns about the chaos, cars running the stop signs, reckless driving, and that small children are in neighborhood.

- Cathy Evans expressed concern about the cars racing up and down the road during the church services where there were small children.
- John Tumey expressed concern about the small neighborhood and that kids playing. There was a four-way stop sign and the cars were running and racing through the stop sign.

10. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat and seconded by Councilmember Oladapo (Item 10 b was removed and added to New Business 12d). The motion passed unanimously.

- a. **Consideration and Approval of Audit Engagement Letter with Rushton for 2024 Audit - not to exceed \$30,000**
- b. **Consideration and Approval of Facilities Maintenance Contract with Keystone Management for City Buildings**
- c. **Consideration and Approval of Resolution Updating the Classification and Pay Plan**
- d. **Approval of January 28, 2025 Special Called Meeting Minutes**
- e. **Approval of January 22, 2025 Work Session Minutes**
- f. **Approval of January 22, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes**

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

12. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Second Read - An Ordinance Creating Article 2, Elections Under Chapter 2, Administration, of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances and for Other Lawful Purposes - City Attorney Emilia Walker-Ashby**

Mayor Owens announced the item and provided a summary. He noted the ordinance was a second read. He asked if there were any changes. City Attorney Walker-Ashby confirmed no changes.

Motion was made by Councilmember Oladapo to approve an Ordinance Creating Article 2, Elections Under Chapter 2, Administration of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances and seconded by Councilmember Ferguson. Councilmember Ferguson asked if this was something that would need to be done continuously. Attorney Walker-Ashby explained there will be an Intergovernmental Agreement with the County. The motion passed 6-0.

- b. **Second Read - An Ordinance Creating Chapter 9, Fire Protection and Prevention, of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances and for Other Lawful Purposes - City Attorney Emilia Walker-Ashby**

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

- c. **First Read: of an Ordinance Updating the Zoning and Permitting Fee Schedule and for Other Lawful Purposes - City Attorney Emilia Walker-Ashby**

Councilmember Auch stated she would like to have the \$100 permit fee for backyard chickens removed from the proposed fee schedule. She would like to pull it from the

agenda to have time to review the other fees as well. Councilmember Ferguson agreed. The City Attorney will consult with Mr. Hosack to clarify the source of the data used in the permit fee schedule and compare it to the fees set by the County. Initially, she requested that Mr. Hosack aligns the City's fees with those of the County. Councilmember Auch suggested setting the fee for backyard chickens at zero dollars.

The City Attorney clarified that the County Code, which she requested to have mirrored in the City's code, requires a permit for backyard chickens on properties under 2 acres, with specific stipulations. She outlined the permitting process as defined in the County Code and explained that the Community Development Department is responsible for managing and reviewing applications, which will notify the City of residents keeping chickens or coops. Once an application is submitted, the City will notify the County and maintain a log. The City ultimately has the discretion to either retain the current regulations or adjust them, including altering any associated fees. She noted that this regulation may not currently be tracked/enforced by the County.

Mayor Owens summarized that the decision ultimately hinges on whether the City wishes to impose a fee. He encouraged the Council to conduct the necessary research and propose any adjustments. The City Attorney stated that she would ask Mr. Hosack to send her a copy of the fee schedules used to assess accuracy and consider potential adjustments to City's proposed fees.

Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat asked if the Council would be able to receive the info needed to decide on the matter ASAP in order to have enough time for a thorough review. City Attorney explained the time sensitivity of the issue with the City opening up for permitting on March 3rd. If the City does not get through the adoption process before March 3rd, a temporary moratorium will be put in place until fees are designated. This will allow the City to defer the acceptance of permitting applications until the fee has been decided.

Councilmember Ferguson asked when the County stopped accepting zoning applications. The City Attorney confirms that the County has already stopped accepting applications despite the request of the City for them to officially stop on March 3rd. Councilmember Ferguson expressed concern for those applicants that may have gotten lost in the transition. The City Attorney stated that those who have submitted their money to the County will have their request completed to fruition by the County. City Manager Tanks stated that it would require a case-by-case assessment but, in general, if the County accepts the services, they should complete them. Attorney Walker-Ashby affirmed that to date, Cobb County has not taken any money for any service that they have not completed the process for.

The official deadline for Cobb County to stop accepting applications is March 3rd. Juliana, the Community Development Director, acknowledged and confirmed that the County ceased accepting applications in January, as there is a 60-day period for applicants to be heard at the County's public hearing.

City Manager Tanks explained that while there are many nuances, the general rule is that if the fees were paid in Cobb, the process would be completed in Cobb. The City may become involved in specific aspects depending on the needs of each individual case. The Mayor's final thought was that the Council should conduct research to assess all proposed

fees.

d. Consideration and Approval of a Resolution Approving adopting a Procedure for Government Representatives to Request Speaking Opportunities at City Council Meetings and for other lawful purposes

Mayor Owens explained that the purpose of this resolution is to establish guidelines for presentations from other government agencies. The City will limit presentations to actions and activities relevant to the City directly, with a 5-minute allotment to each presenter. If there are questions or concerns following the presentation, additional time can be granted. Councilmember Ferguson asked for clarification on "government representatives." The Mayor clarified.

Councilmember Ferguson proposed setting a cap on the total time allotted for all presentations within the SOP (Standard Operating Procedure). Discussion ensued.

Councilmember Oladapo suggested a 30-minute total allotment for presentations, which Council Member Ferguson agreed to. Councilmember Auch expressed concerns about other entities using the allowed time for unrelated business. It was agreed that each presenter would be given 5 minutes max, and the total time for all presentations would not exceed 30 minutes.

Councilmember Ferguson made a friendly amendment to the original motion.

Motion was made by Councilmember Ferguson to approve the Resolution to Adopt a Procedure for Government Representatives to Request Speaking Opportunities at City Council Meetings and for other lawful purposes and authorizing the City Attorney to amend and place a 30-minute time limit. Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0.

13. OTHER BUSINESS/DISCUSSION

14. CITY MANAGER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS

City Manager Tanks recognized Lamaya Edmonds, the recently appointed Business License Supervisor. He also acknowledged Lily Smith for her promotion to Administrative Supervisor. Additionally, he celebrated Xavier Ross, Special Projects Manager, for being selected to attend the Local Government Budgeting Convention hosted by the Southern Economic Advancement Project in Phoenix, AZ.

Mayor Owens stated he was pleased to have Ms.Edmonds join the team. He also expressed his full support and well-wishes for Lily as she transitions into her new role as Administrative Supervisor, stepping away from her position as his Executive Assistant.

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

No comment

16. MAYOR AND COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS

Councilmember Oladapo expressed her gratitude to everyone for attending.

Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat expressed gratitude to everyone who attended tonight. She congratulated the new employees. She recognized Lily Smith for her well-deserved promotion, emphasizing the importance of excellence in the City. She then congratulated those who won their respective district elections, extending special congratulations to the District 4 County Commissioner on her re-election. She highlighted the importance of voting and expressed concern over the low voter turnout at the polls. She recognized Black History Month. She also celebrated the ribbon-cutting at the new Cobb Works facility in her district, and thanked everyone involved and emphasized the importance of workforce development. To close, she extended a heartfelt Happy Valentine's Day to all.

Councilmember Ferguson expressed excitement about the Cobb Works facility opening. He highlighted the focus on empowering City residents, with the hope that the knowledge and experience gained in the “world” will be poured back into the long-term development of the City as a whole. He emphasized the importance of the youth’s understanding of local government and getting involved.

Councilmember Herndon thanked everyone for attending and extended a Happy Valentine’s Day.

Mayor Owens recognized the Cobb Works opening as a great opportunity to see a “10-year vision put in place.” He noted that much of the work being done in and around the City is generational, with its impact unfolding over time. He also congratulated District Commissioner Monique Sheffield on her election win and acknowledged those who came out to vote.

Mayor Owens referenced a recent meeting with Senator Ossoff’s team regarding the City’s post office. He reassured the community that the post office would remain open, highlighting that the building’s exterior has been repaired and anti-theft devices have been installed for added security.

Mayor Owens highlighted the significant challenge posed by the 16,000 homes and businesses in the city that do not have a Mableton address. He explained that Mableton was originally recognized by the 30126 ZIP code, but when city boundaries were established, other ZIP codes were incorporated. He further noted that, as a city of 80,000, a large portion of the population resides outside the Mableton ZIP code—specifically in Smyrna, Marietta, and Austell. He emphasized that no one was removed from one city and added to another. He noted that a large portion of Cobb County is unincorporated, but the post office requires everyone to have a city address.

Mayor Owens acknowledged that a solution has been reached, but he is actively working on the issue. He asserted that Senator Ossoff’s team is aware of the challenges. He emphasized that vanity is not the driving force behind the proposed changes and highlighted other concerns, such as ensuring business owners have accurate business licenses and improving public safety’s ability to locate addresses quickly, among others.

Mayor Owens assured that he had been in discussions with the leadership at the post office and the Postmaster for nearly a year, but progress has been slow. As a result, he has decided to escalate the issue to Senator Ossoff’s office and will continue to push forward to resolve the matter.

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 Oladapo and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat to enter into Executive Session for litigation, real estate & personnel. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Auch, Ferguson, Herndon and Owens.

Motion was made by Councilmember Oladapo and seconded by Councilmember Ferguson to close Executive Session for litigation, real estate & personnel. The motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Auch, Ferguson, Herndon and Owens

18. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat and seconded by Councilmember Auch to adjourn @ 9:42pm.

Dr. Michael Owens, Mayor

Susan Hiott, City Clerk