



CITY OF MABLETON, GEORGIA

Riverside EpiCenter
135 Riverside Pkwy, Austell, GA 30168
May 12, 2025 at 7:30 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 at 7:44 pm. The City was having its work session and regular meetings on Monday. There will not be a meeting on Wednesday.

2. ROLL CALL

City Clerk Hiott called the meeting to order. All of Mayor and Council were present.

3. INVOCATION

Led by Councilmember Ron Davis.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Mayor Pro Tem Keisha Jeffcoat.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Owens explained there was one item left over from the work session, and he recommended adding the item to the regular meeting agenda. The item was previously Item 3c on the Work Session Agenda held prior to the Regular Meeting.

Motion was made by Councilmember Auch and seconded by Councilmember Jeffcoat to approve the agenda as written with the addition of Special Services District - Six Flags as Item 7 on the Regular Agenda.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

7. PRESENTATION - SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT (SSD) SIX FLAGS

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Economic Director Artie Jones who provided the presentation. The presentation is available in the record.

Highlights of the presentation:

- The Six Flags Special Services District (SF SSD) was started in 2017 by Cobb County.
- The SF SSD levied a 3.5 millage rate on commercial properties.
- The SF SSD generated approximately \$1.7 million in tax revenue in 2024.
- It is set to sunset on May 31, 2025.
- The Purpose of the SF SSD is to provide services such as public safety, infrastructure, etc., and to clarify the geographic boundaries of the district.
- The City must ensure compliance with Georgia laws governing SSDs.
- Staff will work with the City Attorney to draft the ordinance/resolution.
- Mr. Jones addressed whether there should be public meetings and listening sessions other than the current presentation.
- Staff will gauge support and incorporate stakeholder feedback.
- A detailed budget for proposed services will be developed.
- How the tax impacts on district property owners will be evaluated.
- The ordinance or resolution will be presented to City Council for approval.
- The Council will adopt the ordinance or resolution to formally establish the SSD.
- Mechanisms for service delivery and billing will be set up.
- The City should ensure accountability with regular reporting.
- Mr. Jones noted the City may have to collect the taxes.
- There will be coordination with agencies such as Cobb County and Georgia DCA.
- The SSD should be registered and aligned with regional plans, including the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Jones asked if the Council would like to move forward and establish the SF SSD. He also asked if the boundaries of the new SSD change. If the boundaries were going to change, there had to be a recalculation of the area. Mr. Jones noted the County collected the taxes in the past, and asked the Council for directions to move forward to do what needs to be done to collect in house or hire an outside contractor to collect the tax.

Councilmember Jeffcoat asked if there was a visual for the SSD area.

City Attorney Walker-Ashby referenced the resolution in the agenda packet and provided an overview:

Article 9, Section 2 of the Georgia Constitution provides that special districts may be created for the provision of local government services within such districts; and fees, assessments, and taxes may be levied and collected within such districts. This would be an ad valorem tax. The County created the district back in 2016 for the Six Flags area. In Section 1, Definitions, the Six Flags Area Special Services District is defined. She recommended keeping the same name because the residents know what that means. Section 2 refers to Exhibit A, a parcel listing, and Exhibit B is the map. There was a conference call to the County that the City would likely continue the SSD. The collection mechanism was discussed with the County. The County did not reject but wanted to confirm the details.

Attorney Walker-Ashby reported that she asked the County for the updated parcel listing and a map. She left the mileage rate at 3.5. Council can set what they would think is reasonable. She continued to name the services for the tax: nuisance abatement, acquisition

of properties for infrastructure and redevelopment; blight remediation; parks, recreational areas and open spaces; street and road construction and maintenance, including landscapes, streetscapes, interchanges, curbs, sidewalks, pedestrian thoroughfares, street lights and traffic control devices; improvements to storm water and wastewater collection and disposal systems; improvements to garbage and solid waste collection and disposal; and other local government services. She named additional projects.

Attorney Walker-Ashby pointed out the money taken from the district must benefit services and projects within the district. The County was holding funds that the County could spend on project numbers from money already collected - \$765,858. They have revenue bonds of \$6.3 million.

There will have to be mileage hearings. The Tax Commissioner's Office will be following up on the collection issue. Mayor Owens expressed his option to keep the same mileage and to not change the boundaries. The area is 99% industrial. It doesn't matter who does the collection as long as the quality of service is there and if the County can do it at an attractive rate, he would support it.

Discussion continued about the timeline for collection and if the County can collect and the cost for in-house collection. Staff had some meetings with BS&A for an additional tax collection module and should have a quote in the next week or so. As soon as the Assessor's Office follows up, City Attorney Walker-Ashby will find additional information regarding the collection costs. The council directed staff to research, receive feedback and come back with a plan to implement. There is not a June 1st deadline. The City should consider if they can't negotiate a reasonable rate, and how quickly they need information to include in the invoices, including the direction on how people would pay the rate.

a. Information for SSD Presentation

8. APPOINTMENTS

a. Board of Zoning Appeals Appointment - Mayor's appointment

Mayor Owens announced his appointee for the Board of Zoning Appeals, Chijioiki Ebbis, and provided information about his credentials. Mr. Ebbis works in the housing arena, being a former employee of the Atlanta Housing Authority as well as the Department of Community Affairs. He has worked at DeKalb Housing Authority as well. Mayor Owens asked the Council for any questions. There was none. He asked for a vote. It was unanimously approved.

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.

Nick Dimondi thanked the Council for their support by standing against the bus depot. He commented that he would like to have council meeting dates and times announced on the Mableton House sign at the amphitheater. He commented about the pressing need for a comprehensive rental ordinance regarding the short-term rentals that are popping up across the city. In his neighborhood, there has been an influx of short-term rentals. He addressed the crime occurring in some of the houses.

Cassandra Brown referenced the school bus depot fueling station at Veterans Memorial Hwy. Ms. Brown noted she had spoken multiple times about the issue. There has been contact, but no movement. At this point, it looks like the School Board were going to move forward with it. Ms. Brown asked the Mayor and Councilmember Auch to engage and work with the Board of Education to ensure they have a plan to put in in such a way that there will be as little impact.

10. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Owen summarized the items on the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Herndon asked if the sustainability policies would have any teeth. Where would the City establish mandatory and support behind overall policy. Mayor Owens explained how the resolution was the starting ground level of stating who we were and what was important. This is done by resolution. Ordinances and green initiatives will come out of the overall framework.

Councilmember Auch referenced the green fleet policy that was promoting electric vehicles, and noted the City was discussing possibly looking at hybrid vehicles, and asked if the resolution and policy would have an impact. Mayor Owens explained the Ethos had a 100% electric fleet, but there is an out if the total cost of ownership of gas outweighs the use of electricity,

Councilmember Ferguson noted the No Idling Policy would be enforced for all policies. Mayor Owens noted electric vehicles do not idle. The language was definitive.

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

- a. **Consideration and Approval of a Resolution to Adopt the City of Mableton's Sustainability Policies and Standards - Sustainability, Waste and Beautification
Director Emily Groth**
- b. **Consideration and Approval of a Resolution Promoting the Adoption of Electric Vehicle Use Within Our Community - Sustainability, Waste and Beautification
Director Emily Groth**

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

12. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Consideration and approval for the Mayor to negotiate and sign in substantial form the Professional Services Agreement with Mauldin & Jenkins LLC for Financial Audit Services - \$94,500 for five successive annual renewals, ending with the FY 2029 audit - Finance Director Karen Ellis**

Mayor Owens announced the item and provided background. The audit is a requirement for the City but also in place to make sure the City has a strong audit trail. Finance Director commented about how important it was to have consistency, so the five-year audit was recommended. It is \$94,500, with a tiered schedule, for five years.

Motion was made to approve the Mayor to negotiate and sign in substantial form the Mauldin and Jenkins, LLC Professional Services Agreement for Financial Audit Services - \$94,500 for five successive annual renewals, ending with the FY 2029 audit.

Councilmember Herndon seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Second Read - Consideration and Approval of an Ordinance Enhancing Code Enforcement Operations, Updating Chapter 2, Administration, Creating New Article 4, of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances and for Other Lawful Purposes - Code Enforcement Director Alejandro Ferrell and City Attorney Emilia Walker-Ashby

Mayor Owens announced item and recognized Code Enforcement Director Al Ferrell who provided an additional explanation about the ordinance. It allows the Code Enforcement Department's capabilities to enforce and proceed to the process of adjudication. City Clerk Hiott confirmed there were not any changes. Mayor Owens asked for questions. There was none.

Motion as made by Councilmmber Auch to approve an Ordinance Enhancing Code Enforcement Operations, Updating Chapter 2, Administration, Creating New Article 4, of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Second Read - Consideration and Approval of an Ordinance Creating Chapter 13, Nuisances, Article 3, Noise, of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances and for Other Lawful Purposes - Code Enforcement Director Alejandro Ferrell and City Attorney Emilia Walker-Ashby

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Code Enforcement Director Alejandro Ferrell who explained the Noise Ordinance improves the quality of life. City Attorney Walker-Ashby confirmed there were not any changes since the first read.

Motion was made by Councilmember Auch to approve Ordinance Creating Chapter 13, Nuisances, Article 3, Noise, of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances. Councilmember Davis seconded the motion.

Councilmember Ferguson commented that he thought there were going to be some changes. Discussion followed. Mayor Owens remembered discussions about how to or the process to enforce the ordinance. He did not remember any changes to the ordinance. Council discussed leaving it up to the staff to address procedures and work with the Police on how they would enforce the laws in Mableton's jurisdiction. Councilmember Ferguson asked if approved tonight, when could staff go out to look at the noise concerns. Mr. Ferrell stated the noise concerns usually take place around holidays. Staff will try to be as proactive as they can. Staff would look for opportunities to educate the constituents. Discussion continued about helping residents understand the Noise Ordinance.

The motion passed unanimously.

d. Second Read - Consideration and Approval of an Ordinance Creating Chapter 6, Municipal Court of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances - City Attorney Emilia Walker-Ashby

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized City Attorney Walker-Ashby who provided background. The version in the agenda packet shows the changes. The ones in purple were what Council had seen, and the wording in blue had been changed since the

last version. Most formatting is non-substantial. She reported she adjusted the City Manager and the designee would establish the court schedule. Some judges prefer night court. The court schedule is subject to contract. All other changes are minor. The request is to approve the ordinance, and as Councilmember Auch alluded to earlier, Council can always amend as necessary. Councilmember Herndon referenced Section 6.116 and noted that council sets fines at \$1000 limit. The fines should be within the Charter. Nothing should limit or prevent the City Council from setting fines. At the Council's discretion, they can set by ordinance what the fines should be.

Councilmember Herndon asked for further explanation about the city manager approving the schedule. She asked if that was typical? Mr. Tanks stated the Court Administrator would work with the judge, and he would have some say. He stated he would not recommend a night court because staff have to stay after hours. The City Manager can also designate the judge. The has the authority to pull the schedule back.

e. Consideration of HR Consulting Agreement for Council Approval with LOCALGOV HR Guru LLC, a professional human resources consulting firm, to assist with critical HR functions, including policy development, employee relations strategies, compliance with employment regulations, and organizational best practices - HR Manager Candice Fields

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Human Resource Manager Candice Fields. Ms. Fields asked Council to consider approval. The agreement allows the professional human resources consulting firm to assist with critical HR functions, including policy development, employee relations strategies, and compliance with employment regulations.

Councilmember Jeffcoat commented that she thought the City was moving away from contracting out services. Mr. Tanks explained that the City was, but the internal affairs would be handled by the City's HR staff. This is to bring an HR professional consultant who can handle special circumstances, independent investigation and research. The consultant would not be needed unless there was a special circumstance. Mayor Owens noted the scope of the agreement was very large. The compensation is \$200 an hour, not to exceed 20 hours a week. Mr. Tanks explained there may occasionally be a need to bring in someone from expert areas. This expert is Dr. Tabb, who teaches at UGA and is well respected. An example of need includes when the City is ready to interview for HR Director, Dr. Tabb could be called to oversee the process if Ms. Fields wanted to apply. There may be some sensitive situations.

City Attorney Walker-Ashby provided clarification of the changes she had made to the agreement.

Per Mayor Owens' questions, Mr. Tanks stated he would use the consultant for specific needs that may arise when the City does not want to use internal staff.

Questions and discussion followed about the termination clause and what services the consultant would do for the City. Mr. Tanks explained the consultant would be used for situations such as a sensitive termination and sensitive investigations. Mayor Owens asked if this was coming out of the HR Budget and the staff replied yes.

f. First Read - An Ordinance Creating Chapter 14, Animal Control, of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances - City Attorney Emilia Walker-Ashby

Mayor Owens announced item and recognized City Attorney Walker-Ashby. She explained this was the first read. During initial SDS discussion and negotiation, the County provided a list for the City to adopt ordinances to utilize their services. The City should adopt ordinances in order to provide consistency between the County and the City because the County will be conducting the services. The ordinance needs to be consistent with their own County ordinances. If the City has a change, the County has to know of the change, and will have to be in the IGA and be approved. Council has given approval to issue the IGA. Councilmember Ferguson asked if the animal violations go through the County's court. Attorney Walker-Ashby replied the animal violations would go through their own processes. Mr. Tanks noted most violations will go to Cobb County Court. Mayor Owens asked if the IGA was in line compared to other cities. Mr. Tanks stated there was only one animal ordinance in Cobb County. Most cities use the County. A question was raised whether the ordinance was the same as other Cobb city ordinances. Discussion followed. The ordinance authorizes the County to operate in Mableton. City Attorney Walker-Ashby replied she had not looked at the other cities. Mr. Tanks summarized that the ordinance gives the County permission to conduct the services in the City of Mableton.

g. First Read - An Ordinance Updating Chapter 11, Environment and Natural Resources, of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances - City Attorney Emilia Walker-Ashby

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Attorney Walker-Ashby. She explained how the
The county wanted a level of consistency with their ordinance because the Cobb County Water Department would be handling the billing, assessment, and enforcement of the water and sewer. They will charge the same rates and enforce the same requirements. The City needs to make sure the City adopts the ordinance.

Mayor Owens asked for questions. There was none from the Council. Mayor Owens stated he had questions, but he would look into them further. He will be following up with questions related to land disturbance, the tributary area, and noting the City was responsible for portions of the Chattahoochee.

h. First Read - An Ordinance Creating Article 5, Subdivisions, under Chapter 8, Buildings and Construction, of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances - City Attorney Emilia Walker-Ashby

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized attorney Walker-Ashby. City Attorney Walker-Ashby explained this was part of the County Service Delivery strategy. This First Read was to ensure regulations were consistent as they related to County water and sewer. If the City makes any adjustments to the County's ordinance, the City should bring them first as part of the agreement about to be put in place. Mayor Owens asked if they complied with the Zoning Plan and Comp Plan. Attorney Walker-Ashby reported that it currently aligns because there are specific zoning standards already put in place. In some, they adopted the County's development standards and there were not any changes. In the future, any changes would have to be disclosed to the County, and the City must make sure

the County is in agreement. As long as the City is satisfied with the County's water, the City should keep it in place because it is a substantial cost and undertaking.

13. OTHER BUSINESS/DISCUSSION

14. CITY MANAGER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS

City Manager announced information about a volunteering opportunity for the Reality University on May 16th at Betty Gray Middle School.

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

None.

16. MAYOR AND COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMENTS

Mayor and Council expressed appreciation to all the mothers and thanked everyone who attended the meeting. Additional comments included:

- Councilmember Jeffcoat reported on the Chick fil-A ribbon cutting. The IT Director has made some changes to the customer service number 404-590-2511.
- Councilmember Auch announced the Food Truck Fridays would be May 23 on Friday at 6:00 pm and the Mableton Day Festival was coming up on May 31.
- Councilmember Ferguson reported on an event at the Reality University named Money Masters.
- Councilmember Herndon thanked everyone for attending.
- Mayor Owens expressed how impressed and happy he was with the continued progress and direction the City was taking. He reported on the meeting with Congresswoman Lucy McBath. She was amazed by the progress of the City. She offered to help the City. He spoke about a lot of people knowing about the new City of Mableton.

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 Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat and seconded by Councilmember Davis to go into Executive Session for litigation, real estate, personnel and exemptions. The motion carried unanimously. Yeas: Owens, Davis, Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Auch, Ferguson, and Herndon

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

a. Resolution Authorizing A Regulatory Related Intergovernmental Agreement with Cobb County

Motion made by Councilmember Auch to approve Resolution Authorizing A Regulatory Related Intergovernmental Agreement with Cobb County. Councilmember Jeffcoat seconded the motion. The motion was approved 7-0.

18. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made to adjourn by Councilmember Oladapo and seconded by Councilmember Ferguson. The motion passed unanimously. (11:10 pm)

Dr. Michael Owens, Mayor

Susan Hiott, City Clerk