

**REGULAR MEETING  
FEBRUARY 12, 2018**

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Washington, Georgia, held their regular monthly meeting on Monday, February 12, 2018, beginning at 4 PM at the Edward Pope Conference Center. Mayor Ames Barnett presided.

Present were Mayor Barnett and Council members Armour, Armour, Cullars, Mahoney, Scarborough and Tutt. Also present were City Administrator Bailey, City Clerk Danner and City Attorney Nelson.

Attorney Nelson opened the meeting in prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MINUTES APPROVED:** On motion by R. Armour, second by Scarborough, council approved 6 to the minutes of the previous meetings, noting a change in wording on the February 2, 2018, Called Meeting that the Mayor *recommended that council reject all bids received on this project.*

**AGENDA APPROVED:** On motion by Tutt, second by Mahoney, council approved 6 to 0 the meeting agenda as presented, deleting the appointment to the Parks and Recreation Board and adding under the Administrator a discussion of utility fees.

**MAYOR'S COMMENTS:** Mayor Barnett requested council approval for the appointment of Andrew Jackson to the Historic Preservation Commission. On motion by Tutt, second by Cullars, council approved appointment 6 to 0.

Mayor Barnett advised that a Town Hall Meeting with MEAG/ECG officials will be scheduled for March to discuss current utility rates.

Mayor Barnett advised that though the utility rate increases went into effect with the January 2018 billing a lot of the increase in current bills can be attributed to the extreme cold weather. Barnett also reminded citizens that the city allows you to leave a past due balance of \$150.00 on your utility account. Barnett also suggested that citizens consider signing up for budget billing.

**CITY ATTORNEY COMMENTS:** Attorney Nelson requested council approval of a resolution amending City Ordinance Section 2-67 regarding residency requirements for the city administrator. On motion by R. Armour, second by Mahoney, council approved resolution 6 to 0. Resolution and amendment follows:

**A RESOLUTION TO AMEND SECTION 2-67 OF THE CITY OF  
WASHINGTON, GEORGIA CODE OF ORDINANCES**

**WHEREAS,** the City of Washington recognizes Section 2-67 of the Code of Ordinances contains a provision regarding a residency requirement for the City Administrator; and

**WHEREAS,** acknowledges Section 2-67 is currently written in contravention of OCGA 45-2-5, which states "no municipal or county government in this state shall require as a condition of employment by such government that applicants for employment as officers or employees, or such officers or employees now or hereafter employed, must reside within the boundaries of the municipality or county."; and

**WHEREAS,** the City desires to amend Section 2-67 to conform with State law.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** by the City Council of the City of Washington as follows:

- 1) Section 2-67. – Appointment of the Code of Ordinances shall be amended to read as follows:  
The City Administrator shall be appointed by the mayor and council for an indefinite term. The administrator shall be chosen solely on the basis of executive and administrative qualifications, with special reference to actual experience in or knowledge of accepted practice in respect to the duties of the office set forth in this division. No mayor or council member shall receive such appointment during the term for which appointed or within 90 days after expiration of the term.
- 2) All portions of this Code in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.
- 3) The foregoing Ordinance was adopted on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2018, by a vote of 6 "yea" and 0 "nay".

Attorney Nelson also requested council action on a proposed "Ban the Box" policy to be included in the City's Personnel and Policies manual and related job applications. On motion by Mahoney, second by Tutt, Council approved 6 to 0 the amend the current city personnel system as follows:  
Section 6. Application and Examinations.

8. Ban the Box Policy. In order to encourage the full participation of motivated and qualified persons with criminal histories in the workforce, reduce recidivism, and assure public safety, the City shall implement the following “Ban the Box” provisions”

a. No applicant shall be automatically barred from employment based solely on that applicant’s criminal record.

b. Any application form used by the City for interested parties which requires information regarding the party’s criminal record shall allow the applicant to discuss any extenuating circumstances and provide information that demonstrates rehabilitation.

c. Any applicant shall have the opportunity to discuss any inaccuracies, contest the content, and/or the relevance of any portion of their criminal record.

d. The City shall be allowed to designate certain sensitive governmental positions for which a criminal history would be an immediate disqualification and initial disclosure on such applications shall still be required.

**TOPICS SUBMITTED BY COUNCIL:**

**SCARBOROUGH:** Council member Scarborough made a motion for council to appropriate funds not to exceed \$35,000 to install an air conditioning system in the Parks and Recreation Department gym. Motion was seconded by Mahoney and council approved motion 6 to 0. It was noted that SPLOST funds in the amount of \$140,000 was set aside for lighting work at the Parks and Recreation facilities. It is thought that not all of those funds would be required for the lighting projects so the balance would be used for the air conditioning of the gym.

**MAHONEY:** Council member Mahoney requested that Pope Center make monthly reports to council.

Mahoney also questioned the use and updating of the City’s facebook account. The City Administrator updates the City’s facebook page and uses it to get information to citizens and to respond to citizen inquiries.

Mahoney requested that the city attorney look into the current bid policy of the city and perhaps consider lowering the threshold for the requirement of bids to the \$5 to \$10,000 dollar range.

Mahoney reminded council that several months back, the city attorney had given information on having an independent attorney handle ethics complaints. Mahoney requested that this information be looked at again at the March meeting of council.

**CULLARS:** Council member Cullars made a motion to reinstate the Assistant City Administrator position, second by Tutt, council voted 3-3-1. Voting against the motion were council member Armour, Armour and Scarborough. Mayor Barnett voted against the motion, breaking the tie vote.

Council member Cullars discussed to re-paving of city streets and reviewed the list of priority streets that was distributed to council. Cullars asked that sidewalks for Old Skull Shoals Road be given priority consideration.

Cullars requested that council consider scheduling future council meetings on an afternoon/evening rotating schedule so that working citizens may more easily attend.

Cullars requested that council members be paid once per month. This matter was tabled until the March meeting.

Cullars requested that Barnett Southern equipment not be used on private property to avoid billing disputes by citizens. This issue arose from allowing Barnett Southern employees to use equipment to take down houses that were either condemned or no longer habitable. The equipment use was donated, but the citizens were to pay for employee labor.

**TUTT:** Council member Tutt reminded citizens that the Callaway Plantation property was donated to the city from the Hardin family and that there are stipulations on what the city can do with the property. This facility does not generate positive revenue for the city. The new Director of Historic Properties, Janet Parker, has submitted ideas to the City Administrator for events at Callaway that potentially could raise revenue.

**CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:** City Administrator Bailey requested council approval to install speed bumps on Ashley Avenue in the vicinity of the ball fields. On motion by Tutt, second by T. Armour, council approved request 6 to 0.

City Administrator Bailey requested council decision on extending the 25% discount of water and sewer rates to the Hospital. On motion by Tutt, second by R. Armour, council approved the 25% water and sewer rate reduction for the hospital 5 to 1. Council member Cullars voted against the motion.

On motion by Tutt, second by T. Armour, council approved 6 to 0 the use of the square and Pope Center grounds for the Teen Pregnancy Prevention walk on May 19, 2018.

City Administrator Bailey requested council approval for a letter of support for a grant to develop an ATV Trails Park at Lake Boline as requested by Parks and Recreation Director Alvin Jones. This matter has not been discussed with the Parks and Recreation Board and was therefore tabled.

Council discussed city utility fees that are currently charged and possible changes. After discussion, this matter was also tabled until the March meeting.

**MAYOR'S CLOSING COMMENTS:** Mayor Barnett stated that Barnett Southern did not mind donating to the city (dirt) and helping citizens in our community. It was Barnett Southern's intention to help citizens get the houses taken down. Barnett Southern operates on compassion, honesty and integrity and that Mayor Barnett felt in this case that the citizens were taken advantage of and for that he was truly sorry.

**ADJOURNMENT:** On motion by Mahoney, second by R. Armour, council approved 6 to 0 adjourned at 5:13 PM.

\_\_\_\_\_ MAYOR

\_\_\_\_\_ CLERK