

MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF RICHMOND HILL

Tuesday, July 19, 2016
7:30 P.M.

Present from City Council: Harold Fowler, *Mayor*; Russ Carpenter, *Mayor Pro-Tem*;
Councilmembers: Johnny Murphy, John Fesperman, Jan Bass

Staff Present: Chris Lovell, *City Manager*; Linda Blankenship, *Asst. City Clerk*; Ralph Catlett, *Fire Chief*; Billy Reynolds, *Police Chief*; Scott Allison, *Director of Planning & Zoning*; Randy Dykes, *Asst. Planning & Zoning*; Jason Sakelarios, *Police Captain*; Charlie Heino, *EOM*; Mark Long, *Code Enforcement*; Chris Stoval, *City Engineer*;

Visitors: Ted O'Neil, Ron Elliott, Jordan Johnson, Blandon Johnson, Braden Weeks, Capt. David Williams, James Felix, Brendon Greene, Buddy Barrow

Mayor Fowler called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. Councilmember Carpenter gave the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chief Catlett.

1. Approval of Minutes of meeting **July 5, 2016**

Councilmember Murphy made a motion to approve the July 5, 2016 City Council Minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Carpenter. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass and Murphy.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Administration and Personnel: Linda Blankenship

Nothing to report.

Public Safety:

Police Department: Chief Billy Reynolds

1. Monthly Report submitted.
2. Approve/Disapprove the expenditure of SPLOST funding in the amount of +/- \$35,000 to replace a patrol car totaled in a recent accident. Chief Reynolds reminded Council that when his officer was in the accident a few weeks ago involving the semi; everyone is okay but vehicle was totaled. That particular vehicle was due to be replaced in the near future anyway, so we had to go ahead and replace that vehicle. We are not sure what the insurance company will allow on the car. We would like to go ahead and purchase a new car with SPLOST funds if approved by Council.

Councilmember Carpenter made a motion to approve the expenditure of SPLOST funding in the amount of +/- \$35,000 to replace a patrol car totaled in a recent accident. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass and Murphy.

Captain Jason Sakelarios told Council they had applied for a Safety Grant from GMA and they should know in a couple of weeks if that was approved. The grant would be used for safety training as well as equipment for both the Police and Fire Departments. Captain Sakelarios stated he would keep Council informed.

Fire Department: Ralph Catlett

1. Monthly Report submitted.
2. Vehicle replacement request. Chief Catlett stated they had a 2008 Chevy Tahoe the Fire Marshall is driving and that vehicle has 137,000 miles on it. This vehicle needs replaced due to costly repairs. Chief Catlett stated he had 3 quotes with the lowest being \$31,000; with lights and other equipment bringing the cost up to \$39,581.00.

Councilmember Murphy asked if this was part of the FD budget for this year. Chief Catlett replied they would use SPLOST funds to pay for it.

Councilmember Bass made a motion to approve the Vehicle replacement request by Chief Catlett at a cost of \$39,581.00. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fesperman. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass and Murphy.

3. Introduction of new Fire Safety Education Tool (Axe). Chief Catlett said earlier this year they had put in for a grant from the Georgia Firefighters Association for a new Safety Educational Prop in the amount of \$3,000.00. We were awarded the grant and we decided to buy a 9'4" inflatable Mascot, to put a firefighter in it and build a Fire Safety Program around him; his name is "Axe". Axe has been waving at cars for the last week on Hwy. 144; Axe will be participating in all of the City Events including the Seafood Festival and July 4th helping to get the Fire Safety message out. Beginning in October we will have an email service setup where kids can email Axe and ask him questions and he will answer them back. Mayor and Council I now introduce you to Axe.

Axe hit it off with Mayor and Council. Chief Catlett thanked Council.

4. Swearing in of new firefighter Blandon Johnson. Chief Catlett asked Lt. Jordan Johnson and Blandon Johnson to come forward.

Mayor Fowler gave Oath to Firefighter Blandon Johnson.

Lt. Jordan Johnson had the honor of pinning his brother Firefighter Blandon Johnson. Mayor and Council welcomed Firefighter Johnson to the city.

Public Works: Charles Heino, Enviroworx

1. Monthly report submitted

Parks, Recreation and Culture: Harvey Lashley

Nothing to report

Planning, Zoning and Code Enforcement: Scott Allison

Mr. Allison introduced Mr. Ron Elliott as new member to the Planning Commission. Mr. Elliott will begin at the next meeting. Mayor and Council thanked Mr. Elliott for his service and dedication to the community.

1. Approval/Disapproval of the building sign for **Tim & Dave's Nursery** located at 173 Mulberry Commercial Park. Mr. Allison told Council the proposed renderings are in Council's packet. Mr. Fortier would like to add this canvas to his awning on the building. It will be blue in color with white letters. Mr. Fortier is present to answer any questions.

Councilmember Fesperman asked Mr. Fortier if the color could be changed to match the building better and also if the letters could be a little smaller in size. Mr. Fortier stated that those are his logo colors and also the letters from the street are more visible and he would rather not change them. The current awning is sixteen years old and it's time to replace it. Mr. Fortier also stated he had been working on getting the road looking good so now it was time to start getting the building to look good. Mr. Fortier told council he plans to do landscaping around the building and also have it where traffic could drive completely around the building. This is just the first step in this project.

Councilmember Fesperman asked if he could still make the lettering smaller. Mr. Fortier replied that he was in compliance with the code. Councilmember Fesperman stated that was his only concern.

Councilmember Murphy stated that he had made the comment earlier that a green earth tone color awning would have enhanced the building so much with all the beautiful plants that you have. Mr. Fortier explained he was trying to keep the existing colors of his logo.

Councilmember Carpenter asked about a different font that would be more appealing. Mr. Fortier replied that the font really will be appealing and enhance his building.

Councilmember Bass made a motion to approve the building sign for Tim & Dave's Nursery located at 173 Mulberry Commercial Park. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass and Murphy.

2. Approval/Disapproval of the building signs for **The Local on 17** to be located at 4040 US Hwy 17. Mr. Allison stated this used to be Steamers. The renderings are in Council's packet. Mr. Allison noted everything was in compliance with the Sign Ordinance.

Councilmember Murphy made a motion to approve the building sign for The Local on 17 to be located at 4040 US Hwy 17. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Carpenter. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass and Murphy.

3. Approval/Disapproval of the master sign plan for **Burger King** to be located at 4414 US Hwy 17. Mr. Allison stated renderings are in council's packet along with additional signs that we

don't regulate. All the signs are in compliance with the Sign Ordinance.

Councilmember Carpenter stated he was glad to have a Burger King back in Richmond Hill again.

Councilmember Bass made a motion to approve the master sign plan for Burger King to be located at 4414 US Hwy 17. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass and Murphy.

4. Approval/Disapproval of the purchase of a 2016 Ford F-150 from O. C. Welch Ford in the amount of \$24,955.00 to be utilized as a Building Inspector vehicle. Mr. Allison stated this was budgeted for in the 2016 SPLOST Budget. Mr. Allison stated the existing vehicle is a 2006 with high mileage on it; we will be passing that vehicle over to EOM for their use.

Councilmember Murphy made a motion to approve the purchase of a 2016 Ford F-150 from O. C. Welch Ford in the amount of \$24,955.00 to be utilized as a Building Inspector vehicle. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Carpenter. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass and Murphy.

Finance Department: Bob Whitmarsh

Nothing to report

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

CITY MANAGER TOPICS: Chris Lovell

1. Annual Street Contract-Project Status Report. Mr. Lovell stated that awhile back they had approved the Street Contract repairs with Mr. Lee McCurdy and shortly after that Mr. McCurdy passed away. The contract was approved but was in limbo for a period to see what was going to happen. We currently have two contracts that we are now moving forward on; PineCrest which is \$41,000 and Rice Gate West which is estimated at about \$60,000. We will be using money out of SPLOST and General Funds for those projects. Before we start the projects we will bring it before Council to let you know we're about to begin. Several of the streets have been in bad shape for a while. The next two that are on the list are Ellis Drive and the street behind the fire station. We do not have costs for those at this time.

Councilmember Murphy asked when the first road would be paved. Mr. Lovell replied in a couple of weeks. Councilmember Murphy asked with all the prep work going on with Hwy. 144 when will DOT do the overlay. Mr. Dykes stated he had been told approximately 90 days. Mayor Fowler stated he was told 90 days as well. Councilmember Murphy stated that he thought with all of the work going on and completion dates he thought it would become very noticeable on the positive side to the community.

2. Approve/Disapprove Utility Easement Agreement with Rayonier Atlantic Timber Company along the Butler Road boundary of Elbow Swamp property. Mr. Lovell stated to refresh everyone's memory all those hotels on the other side of I-95 all that sewer went under I-95 and through Main Street. We had an opportunity to run sewer to the KOA pump and then go

parallel to I-95 and cross over to the Lift Station. We were able to get an easement from Rayonier; this is an approval of that Easement.

Councilmember Murphy asked if in the future this line would tie in to the potential line at the Belfast Commerce Center. Mr. Lovell replied yes they would come down to the same cross point. Mr. Lovell reminded Council that Rayonier gave the city \$75,000 to go toward their portion of this project.

Councilmember Murphy asked when this would be done to get it off of this side. City Engineer Chris Stovall stated completion should be done by end of year.

Councilmember Carpenter asked Mr. Stovall if they were going to bore under I-95. Mr. Stovall replied yes.

Councilmember Carpenter made a motion to approve the Utility Easement Agreement with Rayonier Atlantic Timber Company along the Butler Road boundary of Elbow Swamp property. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fesperman. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass and Murphy.

COMMUNICATIONS

Public Hearing to approve the 2017 millage rate @ 7:00 p.m. August 2, 2016

NEW BUSINESS:

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Councilmember Carpenter made a motion to take a recess for refreshments only. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Bass. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Murphy, Carpenter, Bass and Fesperman.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:06 P. M. in a motion by Councilmember Murphy. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Bass. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Fesperman, Carpenter, Bass and Murphy.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Blankenship
Asst. City Clerk

