

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

Tuesday, September 6, 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*; Scott Allison, *Director of Planning & Zoning*; Randy Dykes, *Asst. Planning & Zoning*; Charlie Heino, *EOM*; Mark Long, *Code Enforcement*; Harvey Lashely, *Park & Tree Director*; Jason Sakelarios, *Police Captain*

Visitors: Jamie Parker, Ted O'Neil, Ron Elliott, David Williams, Cindi Catlett, Karen Krupp, Jordan Johnson, Michelle Meacham, Brendon Greene

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 Council Meeting on **August 16, 2016**

Councilmember Carpenter made a motion to approve the August 16, 2016 City Council Minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fesperman. 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. Approve/Disapprove Resolution to Declare Certain Property Surplus. Captain Sakelarios stated they had some old vehicles with high mileage they needed to get rid of. City Manager Lovell read off list of vehicles to Council. Mr. Lovell noted they had high mileage and some had actually been in accidents. All six vehicles have been replaced.

Councilmember Bass made a motion to approve the Resolution to Declare Certain Property Surplus. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fesperman. Motion

carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass and Murphy.

Captain Sakelarios stated he would like to thank the Fire Department for all their help along with EOM for this past weekend during the storm.

Mayor Fowler stated he would like to also thank the Fire, Police, and EOM Department for the fantastic job they performed this past weekend during the storm and to let their department staffs know they did a great job.

Fire Department: Ralph Catlett

Chief Catlett told Mayor & Council that “Axe” will be the honorary leader for the 5th Annual Tunnels & Towers 911 Event in Savannah.

Chief Catlett also noted that on this Sunday at 8:30 a.m. they will be having the 911 ceremony in the park and everyone is invited to attend.

Chief Catlett told Council he was proud to announce that the City of Richmond Hill has improved their ISO rating from a Class 4 to a Class 3. Chief Catlett noted that in just two short years they went from a score of 60.67 to a 74.56.

The Richmond Hill Fire Department becomes one of only 69 departments in the State of Georgia, to achieve a Class 3 rating out of 1,038 departments that are rated ISO in Georgia. Nationally, out of the 68,786 departments evaluated by ISO only 5% of those departments have a Class 3 or better.

Chief Catlett thanked his staff for the hard work and the effort they put in along with Mayor, Council, and City Manager for their support to achieve this class; without that this would never have happened. Chief Catlett noted the ratings and how much they had come up, and we are 5 points away from being a Class 2. By dropping to a Class 3 the homeowner with \$125,000 home is saving an annual amount of \$642.00.

Mayor Fowler and Council thanked Chief Catlett for the success he has accomplished in just two short years.

Public Works: Charles Heino, Enviroworx

Mr. Heino gave Mayor and Council an update on the past weekend’s storm, noting that they had lost power at 12 lift stations, wastewater treatment plant, and a water well. The staff worked through the night and didn’t get power back until Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m. They did a fantastic job with the mobile generators getting power back up. Mr. Heino stated that Julius and his team did a fantastic job with the storm water. There were only a couple of places that flooded but it really wasn’t that bad due to the fact that area ditches had been cleaned out the previous week. Having extra equipment and being able to hire extra people really helped.

Mayor Fowler stated he thought Mr. Heino needed to go ahead and stress the need for extra generators at some of those lift stations and what the needs are. Mr. Heino commented that

everything goes to Mainstreet station and it has a generator but you had lift stations down in the other areas. We were pretty much able to time it and move generators down to other stations.

City Manager Lovell stated that it's not the really big storms but the smaller ones where the people do not evacuate. If everyone evacuates you really have no need for a lift station. The categories one and two where everyone stays and you lose power is where you have the problems.

Mr. Heino stated that you don't really need one at every station but we could use extra ones. Councilmember Murphy asked how many stations we had. Mr. Heino stated we had 43. We have one with a generator and 42 without. Councilmember Murphy asked how many portable generators did we have that we could move around. Mr. Heino stated the city has four. Councilmember Murphy asked how many could we use. Mr. Heino stated he would have them at key location spots, especially high density areas; we could probably get by with 6 or 7 permanent generators (not mobile).

Councilmember Murphy asked City Engineer Chris Stovall if we could make the permanent generator mobile. Mr. Stovall stated you could but from a financial stand point it would be better to just purchase a few more. Councilmember Murphy asked what the cost would be for the size generator we would need. Mr. Stovall stated \$25,000.00 or possibly higher. Mr. Heino stated if it was him he would invest in a permanent bypass pump instead of a generator. Councilmember Murphy stated he was all for getting what we need.

Mayor Fowler stated that's why he wanted Council to be aware of the situation and get Councils' backing to do something about this.

Mayor Fowler thanked Mr. Heino and his department.

Parks, Recreation and Culture: Harvey Lashley

Councilmember Bass asked Mr. Lashley how the park did during the storm. Mr. Lashley stated pretty well, just a lot of limbs and debris to clean up.

Planning, Zoning and Code Enforcement: Scott Allison

1. Approval/Disapproval of the building elevation for **Yates Astro** to be located at 10904 Ford Avenue. Mr. Allison stated Council had the application as well as the existing photograph of the structure and the description of what they plan to do. This is at the corner of Pine Crest and Hwy. 144. The proposal is to remove the vinyl siding and replace it with Hardie board siding and paint that white. They plan on installing black shutters on the windows and painting chimneys white. They had planned on doing a silver metal roof. Mr. Allison noted everything in their plans meet the ordinance.

Councilmember Murphy asked if we could make it conditional to use the black shingle. Mr. Allison stated he could pass that along to them.

Councilmember Murphy made a motion to approve the building elevation for Yates Astro to be located at 10904 Ford Avenue with the condition that the roof be black architectural shingles. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Carpenter. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass and Murphy.

2. Approval/Disapproval of an amendment the **Revenue Ordinance of 2015 to Levy Taxes and Fees and Raise Revenue for the City of Richmond Hill Georgia, Article J. Inspection Fees, Section 6. Sign Fees**, for the purpose of Revising the Sign Permit Fee and Removal of the Annual Sign Renewal Fee. Mr. Allison stated in the past they had charged a fee of \$5.00 for sign renewal and it was staff's recommendation to remove that charge due to the fact of how we handle sign permits now. This is to get everything in line with our new Sign Ordinance.

Councilmember Bass made a motion to approve an amendment the Revenue Ordinance of 2015 to Levy Taxes and Fees and Raise Revenue for the City of Richmond Hill Georgia, Article J. Inspection Fees, Section 6. Sign Fees, for the purpose of Revising the Sign Permit Fee and Removal of the Annual Sign Renewal Fee. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fesperman.. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass and Murphy.

3. Approval/Disapproval of an amendment to the **Revenue Ordinance of 2015 to Levy Taxes and Fees and Raise Revenue for the City of Richmond Hill Georgia, Article L. Utility Service Fees** for the purpose of Adding Section 11 titled "Stormwater Utility Fee". Mr. Allison stated this is a housekeeping item that needed to be added to the Revenue Ordinance.

Councilmember Carpenter made a motion to approve an amendment the Revenue Ordinance of 2015 to Levy Taxes and Fees and Raise Revenue for the City of Richmond Hill Georgia, Article L. Utility Service Fees for the purpose of Adding Section 11 titled "Stormwater Utility Fee". The motion was seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass and Murphy.

4. Approval/Disapproval of an amendment to the **Revenue Ordinance of 2015 to Levy Taxes and Fees and Raise Revenue for the City of Richmond Hill Georgia, Article K. Development and Review Fees, Section 3. Facility Fees** for the purpose of Removing Part (E) Use of Amphitheater. Mr. Allison stated that fee is no longer needed.

Councilmember Murphy made a motion to approve an amendment the Revenue Ordinance of 2015 to Levy Taxes and Fees and Raise Revenue for the City of Richmond Hill Georgia, Article K. Development and Review Fees, Section 3. Facility Fees for the purpose of Removing Part (E) Use of Amphitheater. The

motion was seconded by Councilmember Bass. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass and Murphy.

Finance Department: Bob Whitmarsh

- a. Approve/Disapprove budget expenditure for city Christmas party. Mr. Whitmarsh stated we just needed to get Council's approval of budget expenditure for Christmas party to be held on December 17th, to begin the planning process.

Councilmember Bass made a motion to approve the budget expenditure for city Christmas party. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass and Murphy.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

CITY MANAGER TOPICS: Chris Lovell

1. Update on renovations in J. F. Gregory Park. Mr. Lovell stated the amphitheater is down we are in process of installing walls around the electrical panel, and roof is being installed on that building. Most of the dirt work is complete and should be pouring slab for the stage hopefully by Friday.

City Manager Lovell stated the hiking trails are almost complete; we did run across a little snag having to do with the shooting range. We are going to go ahead and allocate some funds from that budget for security fencing to make it safe for everyone.

Councilmember Carpenter stated that they would be having a citywide drop-in Town Hall Meeting on October 3rd from 5 – 7p.m. The park will include 5 to 6 miles of walking trails, 3 miles of that will be a nature trail; it will include 3 to 5 miles of mountain bike trails. We are going to be cleaning up and around the existing lake to include fishing, community garden, and primitive campgrounds. We are hoping to Cut the Ribbon on trails in January. The park really looks good and the Park department has really worked hard on it. Councilmember Carpenter encouraged the other Councilmembers to go and take a look at it; it's really going to be another beautiful park.

There was a brief discussion on cost of fencing and security.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Approve/Disapprove request from Lucas Bryant to serve **beer and wine only** at a wedding on November 26, 2016 in the Wetlands Center at J. F. Gregory Park

Councilmember Carpenter made a motion to approve the request from Lucas Bryant to serve beer and wine only at a wedding on November 26, 2016 in the Wetlands Center at J. F. Gregory Park. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass and

Murphy.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor Fowler noted the United Way was hosting their Bryan County Kick - Off on Tuesday, September 13th, beginning at 11:45 at the City Center so please try to make it.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 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

