

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

Tuesday, October 18, 2016  
7:30 P.M.

## Richmond Hill City Hall Council Chambers

**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 Director*; Bob Whitmarsh, *Finance Director*; Chris Stovall, *City Engineer*; Harvey Lashley, *Park Director*; Billy Reynolds, *Police Chief*

**Visitors:** Ron Elliott, Jamie Parker, Ted O'Neil, JC Balio, Drew Davenport, Brendon Greene, Bree Thomas, Jason Bryant, Ray Pittman, Karen Krupp

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 Reynolds.

Mayor Fowler asked for Council to make a motion to amend agenda for the purpose of naming Interim City Clerk.

**Councilmember Carpenter made a motion to amend the agenda for the purpose of naming Interim City Clerk. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Bass. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass, and Murphy.**

### 1. Approval of Minutes of **Public Information Session on Sterling Creek Park** **October 3, 2016**

**Councilmember Bass made a motion to approve the Minutes of Public Information Session on Sterling Creek Park October 3, 2016. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Carpenter. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass, and Murphy.**

### 2. Approval of Minutes of Council Meeting **October 4, 2016**

**Councilmember Carpenter made a motion to approve the October 4, 2016 City Council Minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Bass. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass, and Murphy.**

## **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:**

### **Administration and Personnel: Linda Blankenship**

Nothing to report.

Mayor Fowler stated at this time he would like to get a motion to appoint Linda Blankenship as the Interim City Clerk.

**Councilmember Bass made a motion to appoint Linda Blankenship as the Interim City Clerk. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fesperman. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass, and Murphy.**

### **Public Safety:**

#### **Police Department: Chief Billy Reynolds**

Monthly report submitted.

Chief Reynolds stated everyone was back at work and had survived the storm. Mayor Fowler thanked the Chief and his department for their help and support.

#### **Fire Department: Ralph Catlett**

Monthly report submitted. Mayor Fowler asked Chief Catlett to thank his department as well.

#### **Public Works: Charles Heino, Enviroworx**

Monthly report submitted.

Mr. Heino told Mayor & Council his department had removed about 61 truckloads of debris. Currently they have picked up once everything west of Highway 17 and north of Hwy. 144 except Sterling Woods in which they are in now and should be completed by Friday. They are planning on moving into Live Oak and Robinson Loop tomorrow, we're 85% complete in the Bottom. Mr. Heino stated they are waiting on further instructions from FEMA about the collected debris. Mr. Heino stated they lost 50% of the wells during the storm but managed to keep the two primary wells in operation so we kept the system pressurized.

Mr. Heino stated it was a great effort between all the departments of the city and how well they all worked together as well as Mayor and Councilmembers giving their

support. Mr. Heino gave his thanks to all the departments.

Mayor and Council thanked Mr. Heino and his department for their hard work and dedication. Mayor Fowler noted that after listening to some of the surrounding areas we were very fortunate to have the people and staff that we have in the city.

Mr. Heino stated that's true we were 3 to 4 days ahead of some of his counterparts. The roads were clear and most of the city had power by Monday morning.

Councilmember Murphy stated he had heard that FEMA had declared Georgia as being a disaster area and because of that they would be helping people out with personal claims as well as the municipalities. Mr. Allison stated that was true and the information for FEMA had been placed on the city's website. Mr. Lovell stated it could fall over into businesses as well.

Councilmember Murphy asked if this was the first time that residents of the city had been helped out by FEMA. Councilmember Carpenter stated no there was a flood in 1994 and residents were assisted at that time.

Mr. Heino stated they had three crews going and working to make sure all debris was removed from the city. The goal is to have everything done by next Friday and to be able to go back to regular routes beginning the following Monday.

Councilmember Bass asked about the recycling. City Manager Lovell stated the recycling is going to pick up whatever is in the trash cans this week only; residents should only put recyclable items in those trash cans after this week.

There was a brief discussion about Sterling Creek and what course of action is planned for that area.

Mayor Fowler noted he would like to read the following Letter of Thanks:



ON BEHALF OF COUNCIL, ALL CITY DEPARTMENTS, AND CITY STAFF WE WOULD LIKE TO LET THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE LISTED BELOW KNOW HOW MUCH WE APPRECIATED THE FOOD YOU PROVIDED FOR US. WE LIVE IN A GREAT COMMUNITY THAT PULLED TOGETHER IN A TIME OF NEED.

THIS WAS A DIFFICULT TIME FOR ALL OF US, BUT KNOWING WE HAVE THE SUPPORT OF OUR CITIZENS MADE IT ALL WORTH WHILE.

A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS'S & RESIDENTS:

Little Caesars

Mr. & Mrs. Davies

McDonald's

Keller Williams "The Huffman Group"

Remax

Boomer Lee Realty

The Ford Plantation

United Way

Derek, Tonya, Samantha, & Brooke Lehr

Lawson & Bella Haley

Mr. & Mrs. Alexander

Ice Cream Shop

Clyde's Gas

Kyle – Young boy with the cookies

Hampton Inn

Ways Station Coffee Co.

Zaxby's on Hwy. 17

Unknown Business Owner – 4 dozen specialty doughnuts

Domino's

Caldwell Bankers

Girl Scout Troop 30373

The Mijares Family

Mr. John Drew

Melanie Carter & Family

The Luke Family

The Suddath Family

THANK YOU,

MAYOR HAROLD FOWLER

Mayor Fowler and Council thanked everyone for their help and support during Hurricane Matthew. Mayor Fowler also stated he would also like to give a special thanks to Congressman Buddy Carter, Representative Ron Stephens, and Representative Jessie Petrea without their help in getting us in touch with the FEMA and GEMA people we would not have been able to start with the cleanup as early as we did.

### **Parks, Recreation and Culture: Harvey Lashley**

Mayor Fowler noted the park as well as the jogging trail was still closed; noting the Park Department had cut up 118 trees on the jogging trail. They are working hard to get the park and trail back open.

### **Planning, Zoning and Code Enforcement: Scott Allison**

1. Approval/Disapproval of the building sign for **Charlie Graingers** to be located at 10010 Ford Avenue. Mr. Allison stated this is going to be located in the building that's attached to Flashback. This is a National Chain Hotdog establishment. The sign does meet all the city requirements and the renderings are in Council's packet.

Councilmember Bass asked if there would be seating inside. Mr. Allison stated yes there would be some seating.

**Councilmember Bass made a motion to approve the building sign for Charlie Graingers to be located at 10010 Ford Avenue. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fesperman. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass, and Murphy.**

2. Approval/Disapproval of the building sign for **Yi Spa & Massage** to be located at 10275 Ford Avenue. Mr. Allison stated this is next door to where the Sun Trust Mortgage was located. This will be a sandblasted look sign with the 2" thick Yi Spa & Massage coming out from that. It does meet all the city requirements.

**Councilmember Carpenter made a motion to approve the building sign for Yi Spa & Massage to be located at 10275 Ford Avenue. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass, and Murphy.**

3. Approval/Disapproval of the landscape plan for **Creek Valley Townhomes** to be located at 1743 Harris Trail Road. Mr. Allison stated this is the landscape plan and is included in Council's packet. This does include the suggested improvements to the landscaping plan to soften the look along Harris Trail as well as the fence. Mr. Pittman is present if you have any additional questions.

Mr. Pittman showed Council the plans with the improvements showing the landscape

with the berm. It was indicated that there may be a drainage problem with that berm in the future, in order to help with that it was suggested to extend the fence an additional 2 feet to allow the drainage to go under the fence and do away with that berm.

Councilmember Carpenter stated so you're losing 2 feet of berm and gaining 2 feet of fence. Mr. Pittman stated that was correct. Councilmember Carpenter stated he had no problem with that and it seemed like an easy fix to a drainage problem.

**Councilmember Carpenter made a motion to approve the landscape plan for Creek Valley Townhomes to be located at 1743 Harris Trail Road. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fesperman. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass, and Murphy.**

4. Code Enforcement Monthly Report.

**Finance Department: Bob Whitmarsh**

Mr. Whitmarsh stated there would be a Capital Budget workshop on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 6:00 pm. Mayor Fowler asked Council to note it on their calendars.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**CITY MANAGER TOPICS: Chris Lovell**

1. Approval/Disapproval of City Clerk job description. Mr. Lovell stated the one in the packet was not correct and that he had emailed Council the correct one today. There were a couple of changes as follows: Business License was moved to Planning & Zoning, Payroll and Water Utilities to Finance. Over the years that position had taken on so much that was really not in that realm of duties; so this is just some housekeeping to be inline of the true job description.

**Councilmember Bass made a motion to approve the City Clerk job description. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Carpenter, Fesperman, Bass, and Murphy.**

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Councilmember Carpenter stated he would like to recognize some of those folks that really stepped up during Hurricane Matthew and would like to give a special thanks. If you hear of any stories please send them City Hall.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Approve/Disapprove request from Michael Cooper to serve **beer and wine only** at a wedding and reception in J. F. Gregory Park at the pavilion and the Wetlands Center on November 5, 2016.

**Councilmember Murphy made a motion to approve the request from Michael Cooper to serve beer and wine only at a wedding and reception in J. F. Gregory Park at the pavilion and the Wetlands Center on November 5, 2016. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Bass. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Murphy, Carpenter, Bass and Fesperman.**

2. Approve/Disapprove request from Stephanie Ulrich to serve **beer and wine only** at a Hail and Farewell in the pavilion at J. F. Gregory Park on November 4, 2016.

**Councilmember Bass made a motion to approve the request from Stephanie Ulrich to serve beer and wine only at a Hail and Farewell in the pavilion at J. F. Gregory Park on November 4, 2016. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fesperman. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Murphy, Carpenter, Bass and Fesperman.**

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mayor Fowler stated he had a request from J C Balio to address Mayor and Council about crosswalk at Casey Drive and Harris Trail.

Student J C Balio stated he was the student that was hit by a car while walking to school on that crosswalk on Monday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at approximately 6:45 a.m. Mr. Balio stated he goes to school daily for tutoring and has to cross before the Crossing Guard arrives. Mr. Balio stated he would like discuss a few safety suggestions for that crossing.

Mr. Balio stated that first of all the vehicle did not stop to allow him to finish crossing the street and did not slow down. Mr. Balio stated he felt the need for a sign stating it's a Pedestrian Crossing and that it is a State Law, and have it placed on either side of the road. There is only one street light at that intersection and it does not face the crosswalk. The crosswalk where I was hit is really dark and it's hard to see. The driver of vehicle did not have her lights on when she hit him.

Mr. Balio stated he had researched a company called Lang Lang Lighting that has lighting for crosswalks. They provide LED crosswalk systems that show up to 99% higher motorist compliance than round beacon systems. They flash simultaneously to advise pedestrian crosswalks. There are over 10,000 of these systems operating in the US and Canada. Mr. Balio stated he believed this would be a lifesaving investment for that area.

Mayor Fowler stated he was going to have City Manager Lovell give a little history on this area. Mr. Lovell stated the city has already looked into those illuminated lights that you're speaking of and we do have pricing of re-striping that particular crosswalk with reflective paint. Mr. Lovell stated his understanding was that there was street lighting on both sides. Mr. Balio stated there are two but one faces away from crosswalk and the other one is not bright at all.

Mr. Lovell stated he would submit the prices to Bryan County because that is a county road; if they're not going to do anything the city will ask permission to do something. It may be next year for the lights due to our budget and the other thing is to get rid of that crosswalk and have everyone use the other crosswalk that is more heavily lit. Mr. Lovell stated the city is on it and looking into correcting that crosswalk.

Mayor Fowler thanked Mr. Balio for addressing Council and that he did a great job.

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

**There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:38 P. M. in a motion by Councilmember Bass. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Motion carried in the affirmative by Councilmembers Fesperman, Carpenter, Bass and Murphy.**

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Blankenship  
Interim City Clerk



