

## Council Meeting Minutes

December 7, 2020

Lone Oak Town Hall

4945 Lone Oak Road

Present: Mayor Phillip Dow, Councilmember Kody Forbus, Councilmember Susan Banks, Councilmember Jon Ivester, Councilmember Jennifer Lamb and CSR Debbie Watson.

Not Present: Water Superintendent Chris Wheelus

Call to Order – Mayor Dow called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

Invocation: Councilmember Susan Banks

Pledge of Allegiance: All

Approval of Agenda

**PUBLIC HEARING:** Questions from previous meeting and water

**Start of Public Hearing:** 6:37 p.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Mr. Briggs had several questions from the last meeting and the first question was the water break at the community building. Question number 2 was are we going to bid for the work such as grass cutting and etc. Question number 3 does the country store and the community building fall under the liability of the city when they are rented so the city will not be reliable. Question 4 is the city in the red or black for the year and are we being audited. Question 5 do we have an accountability for the taxes coming in from the county.

Answers:

Question 1 talking with Chris it was better to bore under than to saw cut. With the information from Chris the water leak was fixed by boring under the concrete.

Question 2 we will be getting bids shortly for the grass cutting to be done in the city. We will check to see how much a small ad would cost for the LaGrange Daily News and the Vindicator. Councilman Ivester advised that we quit paying for grass cutting for the winter parts.

Question 3 the insurance renews the month of March and Mayor Dow asked the agent to get quotes from different agency's not just Selective. The insurance will cover the city unless there is negligence.

Question 4 the audit for the city has not been completed for this year they are still working on it at the present time.

Question 5 the fees and taxes are they accounted for from the county. The tax revenue is not broken out by county from the tax accessors but things will be changed with the new tax commissioner takes office.

**PUBLIC SPEAKERS:** Willis Briggs and Debbie Nelson

**ADJOURN PUBLIC HEARING:** the public hearing was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Mayor Dow opened the regular meeting and asked if there were any changes or additions to the November minutes and there being none asked for a motion to accept the minutes as read.

Councilmember Banks made the motion to accept, Councilmember Forbus seconded the motion. Vote: All were in favor. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF FINANCIALS:** Mayor Dow asked if there were any question concerning the November financials for the Town and Water System, copies of which will be attached and made a part of these minutes. Mayor Dow asked for a motion to approve financials as read. Motion was made by Councilmember Banks to accept the financials and Councilmember Forbus seconded the motion. Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

**WATER SYSTEM UPDATE:** Water system has been quite this month.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** You have a yellow folder for you to follow along with our water system. Debbie Nelson advised that she has checked with several other cities to see how they do their water. Water and meter agreement. This is going to be able to help us determine with they are renters or owners and it will help determine if the water bills are e-mailed or printed and sent out for the ones that don't want them e-mailed. The 2020 utilities fee scheduled this schedule is from the Town of Turin. The water tap will be a standard fee for most cities supplying water to an eight-inch main. Debbie Watson and I talked today about the deposits if you own your home the4 deposit would be \$100, if you are a renter the deposit would be \$200, and if you are a business coming into town you would have a \$200 deposit. The water rates for the inside and outside the base rate for inside is \$25.63 and for outside is \$29.03 and the base for commercial rates would be \$60.00 inside or outside. The new late fees would be \$15.00 or 10% of bill, whichever is greater. The new cut off dates of the bills would be 45 days if the bill is not paid in full. The reconnect fees would be \$150.00 and meter re-reads would be \$25.00. The water customers need to sign this acknowledgement of responsibility and in this agreement, they are advised of the rights that can be taken against them if they tamper with the water meter or system in any way. They will be charged with a \$1,000.00 tampering fee and a \$250.00 fee for cutting off the seal and replacing with arrest being possible and them having to pay court cost and fines. The water will be in their name and they will be responsible for the bills. The return payments will be charged \$40.00 and they have 5 business days to pay in full or be disconnected. If the service is disconnected the full bill plus a \$150 reconnect fee will be added. After you have 1 returned check you can only pay in cash or with a money order no other check will be accepted. The Town of Lone Oak may use any means necessary to collect a debt including turning the bill over to a collection agency. We can place a lien on the property and they will be required to pay all fees. If the property is rented the owner needs to sign an agreement to be kept on file. Any water leaks past the water meter the renter or the owner will be responsible for fixing the leaks. Talked to Chris and it was decided to be 25% or 35% and that is what the council need to vote on. We also talked about the fees and schedules for annexation and planning fee. Copies to be attached to the minutes. Safe-build is interested in getting a building system for the Town of Lone Oak and the charges for the different permits.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

The council needs to vote on the water rate changes. They also need a letter in the water bills letting the people know the water rates are going up. Also add to the water bills that these are the new rates to be effective with the billing in February and they have not increased since 2005. Councilmember Ivester made the motion to approve the water rates and Councilmember Lam seconded the motion. Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** The city attorney Catherine Jenkins has been working on our ordinances for the city and had some question about parking and vehicles. The problem we are having is residence that own a business brings their commercial vehicles to the house with it becoming a fleet. We would have to make an ordinance to limit

where they can not have them visible or placed where it is not necessary. We need to have where the commercial vehicle cannot park on city streets, they need to park it on their land and not on city or county property. It was suggested that someone go talk to John about his commercial vehicles. Needs to see if he can park the vehicles out of site and not in the front yard. The city does not want to put self-employed residence out of business but limit the number of commercial vehicles and they need to have the space to park the vehicles and not park them in the grass or next to the porch.

Catherine Jenkins wanted to discuss the water authority with the city of Hogansville. The contract with the water authority would be bad for the Town of Lone Oak. Our agreement with the water authority would be a little simpler than the one they have with the City of Hogansville because they have water and sewer. Mrs. Jenkins has been looking at the service strategy that Mayor Dow signed in 2018 is null and voided because nothing had been voted on but unable to located the original meeting minutes.

There is a bid to update the alarm system to change it over to cellular service. After discussing the bid with the council, they decided to leave the alarm system as it is now and not change it to cellular service. Councilmember Forbus made the motion to keep the alarm system and Councilmember Banks seconded the motion. Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

**MAYOR'S COMMENTS:**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no other business, Mayor Dow asked for a motion to adjourn the regular meeting.

Councilmember Forbus made the motion to adjourn and Councilmember Lamb seconded the motion. Vote: All were in favor. Motion carried.

The council dismissed the regular meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Minutes approved by the Mayor and Council.

Minutes approved this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2020.

Attest by

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Debbie Watson, CSR