

WAYCROSS CITY COMMISSION PLANNING & INFORMATION SESSION
MONDAY, November 1, 2021 – 5:00 P.M. WAYCROSS CITY COMMISSION
CHAMBERS (417 PENDLETON STREET, WAYCROSS, GA)

The Planning and Information Session of the City of Waycross was called to order November 1, 2021 at 5:00 pm by Mayor Michael-Angelo James. The meeting was held in the Commission Chambers of City Hall. Present was Mayor James, Mayor Pro Tem Henry Strickland, Diane Hopkins, and Mariam Solomon Gaines and John Threat.

The Planning and Information Session opened with the invocation offered by David Eddins followed by the Pledge to the Flag. City Clerk read the decorum.

I. Guests

A. Tim Peacock 906 Euclid Ave came to speak with the Commission regarding selling the community as a place to eat, play and live. Mr. Peacock advises that when you go into other towns like Tifton and Brunswick you see signs that promote the city upon entrance. He asks the Commission what can we do to make Waycross more intriguing to business and people. He asks how many businesses have come to Waycross. He advises that the first sign you see coming into Waycross from Blackshear is the cemetery. Commissioner Solomon-Gaines advises that everything south of Walmart on Memorial was added since she has been on the Commission. She advises that there are billboards on 95. Commissioner Hopkins explains that there are different organizations in Waycross that help with promoting Waycross such as the Chamber, CVB, Waycross Ware County Development Authority, Downtown Waycross Ware County Development Authority are all working hard to promote the City. She said people are finding Waycross because of the Swamp. She explains that larger cities pay more but, the cost of living is higher but, Waycross has plenty of land that can be annexed in the City Limits to receive city services. Commissioner Strickland says it is not only the Commissioners job to promote the City it is also the job of the citizens. He explains that so many citizens speak negatively on social media about the City and we need to start speaking positive about our City. He also says that many cities are making their Downtown a Modern Rural Area to make people want to come. But, in order for that to happen we have to create discretionary income for people to patronize. Mayor James says he teaches workforce development and says we have to feed positivity. He suggests that we have to create talking points to combat the negativity and we do have things going on like the Reopening of Downtown. City Manager Tonya Parrish advises that Patrick Simmons with the CVB does a lot of promoting of the City with things like 5 billboards on I-95, having a mural created on Knight Ave to show the different gateways, At every rest stop in Georgia there are brochures of all the different Tourism sites in the City. He also puts advertisements in the Atlanta Falcons magazines.

- B. James Thomas of 520 S Crawford St came to speak to the commission about removing \$10.00 late fee off the bill. He advises that he only gets paid once a month and by the time he is able to pay there is a \$10.00 late fee. He says that there needs to be a longer grace period before a late fee is added. Commissioner Hopkins asked Finance Director China Agu what is the grace period she advises 2 days. City Manager Tonya Parrish states that she spoke with Mr. Thomas and explained that he is paying a month behind that is why he always has a late fee. If he uses the first of the month check to pay the bill for the same month he will not have a late fee.

II. TRAVEL/TRAINING SCHEDULE AND REQUESTS

III. Planning and Information Session

A. Bids:

1. Bid #FY22-13 Center Elementary School Entrance Improvements was received on October 28, 2021 for the purposes of road improvements to the entrance of the school. Purchasing received 2 bids on the project and after staff and ESG review it is the recommendation to award the bid to Scruggs Company out of Hahira, GA in the amount of \$178,796.86 funds will come from RTSPLOST and LMIG Grant. Commissioner Solomon Gains inquired about there is a removal of a light pole in the bid. She states that if it is owned by Georgia Power then they have to move it not the City. Trey Gavin advises that is the school light not Georgia Power but, he will check to be sure.
 2. Bid FY22-20 Thermal Cameras was received on October 28, 2021 by purchasing for the purposes of updating thermal imaging cameras. There was only one bid from MES (municipal Emergency Services of Charlotte, NC in the amount of \$10,989.84 to be paid out of ARAP Funding.
- B. Trey Gavin, City Engineer explains that the Plant Avenue Sewer Repair came in at around \$68k which was really good price for the intensity of the job. He explains that Thrift Brothers were in town and just so happened to have everything need to get the job done. One hiccup in the process is that GDOT paved over the manholes and have not seen any specs as to where our sewer lines are. He explains that the project manager advises that this is a problem that they always have with GDOT and makes things more complicated because they have to locate lines. Commissioner Hopkins ask Tonya to send a letter an Ann Purcell advising the difficulties that we had with the cave in and we need to plans to any roads that they maintain to know where are infrastructure underground.
- C. Ms. Parrish explains the Governor has granted all Certified Public Safety officers that worked during the month of August 2021 \$1,000 using State ARAP funding. This document is just the terms and conditions to be signed by the Mayor for our staff to receive it.

- D. Mrs. Parrish explains that at the last meeting we discussed the protocol for staff for COVID. She advises that each employee has to have their temperature taken daily as well as sign a document that states that they will have no symptoms. The City has also had a meeting with a health professional to speak with staff regarding being vaccinated. Commissioner Solomon Gains explains that she and Fire Chief Eddins spoke and he wanted her to speak with his staff. She spoke with each of the shifts at the fire department and heard them out. She said that they are concerned about their jobs and if they don't get the vaccine will they give fired. She said no. She also advises that if they sign the sheet stating that they had no symptoms and they do it is automatic termination. Some employees state that their doctors said they don't need to take the shoot because they have the antibodies. Commissioner Solomon Gains states that she wants to create a medical exemption form that they will have to take to their doctor to sign and notarize sating the issue. She also explains that insurance companies are headed in the direction and has done research on it. The policy that vaccinated person test positive the City will cover the sick leave and if they are not vaccinated or do not have a medical exemption then the have to use their own sick leave. She is not willing to move on theat. Commissioner Strickland advises in his line of work in plant that he enters he has to do the log sheet with the temperature is and it is standard around the Southeast of the United States. He also explains that the insurance premium will take care of itself and he agrees with the vaccination policy. Mrs. Parrish advises that we did have information session with a doctor for employees to explain the vaccination works. He explained that the unvaccinated people are much sicker that unvaccinated. He said natural immunity will end the pandemic and the vaccine helps you prevent from getting as sick. A survey was sent out to employees to get the shot at the City and there was not enough people to sign up. Commissioner Solomon Gains ask the fellow commissioners are they ok to continue the way the policy is and if anything changes we will revisit it. Commission came to a consensus.
- E. Tammi Stark and Cindy Dury came to recommend the Health Insurance renewal for City of Waycross for 2022. Three companies bid on the they are Aetna, United Healthcare and Cigna. They recommend that the City go with Cigna for Health and dental insurance ; Vision will stay with Anthem. NY Life for Short Term, Long Term disability and life insurance. Cigna will return 50% of the premium if they come below what is paid in. They will also lock a rate for three years based off the loss ratio.
- F. Privilege License Renewals:
1. Flash Foods #1, Jennifer Bennett, 505 Reynolds Street, Waycross, GA 31503, Package Sales Beer and Wine
 2. Flash Foods, LLC/ dba Circle K #2745051, Jennifer Bennett, 2307 Plant Avenue, Waycross, GA 31503, Sales Beer and Wine
 3. Flash Foods, LLC/ dba Circle K #2745068, Jennifer Bennett, 1712 Memorial Drive, Waycross, GA 31503, Sales Beer and Wine

4. Flash Foods, LLC/ dba Circle K #2745085, Jennifer Bennett, 1401 Tebeau Street, Waycross, GA 31501, Sales Beer and Wine
5. Flash Foods, LLC/ dba Circle K #2745133, Jennifer Bennett, 1736 S. GA Parkway W., Waycross, GA 31503, Sales Beer and Wine
6. Rodeo Mexican Restaurant, Leonides Escalera, 2020 Memorial Drive, Waycross, GA 31501, Consumption on Premises, Beer, Wine, and Liquor
7. Manshi LLC/ dba Stop N Save, Urmilaben Patel, 1333 S. GA Parkway, Waycross, GA31501, Package Sales Beer and Wine
8. Two Guys Beverage and Tobacco, Josh Fowler, 2100 Memorial Drive, Waycross, GA 31501, Package Sales Beer, Wine, and Liquor

G. Privilege License:

1. Wong's Palace, Ming Qian Chen, 903, Knight Avenue, Waycross, GA 31501, Consumption on Premises, Beer and Wine
2. SNS 508, LLC/ dba Cheers Package Store, Shivang Shah, 508 City Blvd, Waycross, GA Package Sales Beer, Wine, and Liquor

H. Proposed Ordinances

1. An Ordinance to Grant A Special Exception Permit to River of Life Church of God, Inc. Located at 1441 Brunel Street in Order to Operate Transitional Housing on Property Zoned as RM – 75 (Residential Mobile Home District); and for Other Purposes.

I. Proposed Resolutions:

1. A Resolution of the City of Waycross, Georgia, To Approve an Agreement Between the Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services, and the City of Waycross to Provide Low Income Household Water Assistance; and for Other Purposes.
2. A Resolution of the City of Waycross, Georgia, To Award Contract to Thrift Brothers, LLC, for Plant Avenue Emergency Sewer Repair Project; and for Other Purposes.
3. A Resolution of the City of Waycross, Georgia, To Execute State Fiscal Recovery Fund Terms and Conditions for Public Safety Officials and First Responders Pay Supplement; and for Other Purposes
4. A Resolution of the City of Waycross, Georgia, To Award Bid Contract to MES (Municipal Emergency Services) of Charlotte, North Carolina, for New Thermal Imaging Cameras for the Waycross Fire Department; and for Other Purposes.

J. City Attorney's Report:

1. There will be two additional resolution for Tuesday for ARAP recipient's MOU and to approve the City Insurance approval.
2. There is nothing in the ordinance that prevents China from being the City Clerk and Finance Director. She will just need to be sworn in and affirmed.
3. Spoke with Chip Sasser that the owner of the land of Miami Ave. They want to put a priority on closing the street so they can sell the property and move on with a project that is in the works.

K. City Manager's Report:

1. Reminder that on November 5 the grant application process will be open for ARAP until November 19th.
2. Marisa Hendrix HR Director did the department report. She reported the benefits committee met to discuss coverage that was presented and they all were happy with the results. Open enrollment will open on the 17th and there are 8 jobs posted for the city. She has now started posting job openings on the City Facebook page and on the Department Labor. There has been a increase in application since it is posted on those outlets. HR is also brining up back the newsletter

L. Commission went into executive session for litigation and personnel reasons.



CITY OF WAYCROSS

BY:

Michael Angelo James

MICHAEL-ANGELO JAMES, Mayor

ATTEST:

China Agu

CHINA AGU, City Clerk