

The Mayor and Council met for their regular meeting.

Those Present:	John Howard	Mayor
	Larry Bradley	Vice-Mayor
	Lee Malcom	Council Member
	Myoshia Crawford	Council Member
	Charles Boyce	Council Member
	Norman Garrett	Council Member
	Tyler Gregory	Council Member
	Nathan Little	Council Member
	David Dickinson	Council Member
	Logan Propes	City Administrator
	Beverly Harrison	Interim City Clerk
	Paul Rosenthal	City Attorney
	Russell Preston	City Attorney

Staff Present: Danny Smith, Jeremiah Still, R.V. Watts, Andrew Dykes, Beth Thompson, Brian Thompson, Chris Bailey, Brad Callender, Kaitlyn Stubbs, Sara Shropshire, Leigh Ann Aldridge

Visitors: Lisa Anderson, Alexandra Trivino, Roger Hillman, Terrence Atkism, Shawna Mathias, Clayton Mathias, Mike Mirolli, Michelle Mirolli, Julie Sams, Kim Jolly, Lidia Garrett, Kelli Herrington, Lori Volk, Jayne Sinclair, Juli Tredwell, Rod Johnson, Tracy Arnold, Joe Grizzle, Chad Draper, Lesa Dowdy, Stacy Dowdy, Deborah Johnson, Michele Crawford, Johnny Atkinson, Cristena Atkinson, Lakeketha Lewis-Johnson, Eric Johnson, Whit Holder, Edith Hill, Gabel Holder, Geraldine Reed, Patsy Vinson, Chris Collin, Paul Wilson, Amylee Hammond, Teri Giles, Winston White

I. CALL TO ORDER – JOHN HOWARD

1. Invocation

Vice-Mayor Larry Bradley gave the invocation.

2. Roll Call

Mayor Howard noted that all Council Members were present. There was a quorum.

3. Approval of Agenda

To approve the agenda as presented.

*Motion by Boyce, seconded by Little.
Passed Unanimously*

4. Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. April 11, 2023 Council Minutes
- b. March 21, 2023 Planning Commission Minutes
- c. March 28, 2023 Historic Preservation Commission Minutes
- d. March 23, 2023 Downtown Development Authority Minutes
- e. March 23, 2023 Conventions and Visitors Bureau Minutes
- f. March 23, 2023 Urban Redevelopment Agency Minutes

To approve the consent agenda as presented.

*Motion by Malcom, seconded by Crawford.
Passed Unanimously*

II. PUBLIC FORUM

1. Public Presentations

- a. Georgia Public Works Week Proclamation

Mayor John Howard presented the Proclamation for Georgia Public Works Week May 21 – 27, 2023.

Mr. Chris Bailey recognized Mr. Roger Hillman with the Public Works Department, who was at the Council Meeting.

No Action.

2. Public Comments

Mr. Gabel Holder, of 2300 Lemonds Road, Social Circle, spoke concerning the Alcohol Ordinances. The Factory at Walton Mill is his business; it is a special events venue located on Broad Street. They have about 70 events a year there. It is very common to serve alcohol at most weddings and events, but under the current Ordinance they are not allowed to sell alcohol. Their customers are required to use certified servers, but they have to bring the alcohol in themselves. This does not allow their business to have any control over the alcohol served. They would be required to install a full kitchen in order to qualify for an alcohol license under the current Ordinance. He discussed how Lawrenceville handles their Ordinance, and how the tax revenue could be redirected. Mr. Holder requested for Council to consider changing this in the Ordinance.

Ms. Geraldine Reed, of 1239 Fairview Drive, discussed affordable housing. She passed out information that she obtained from Morgan County, where they built some housing that is affordable. She stated that the City has a lot of land and requested that the City invest in that type of project. The Mayor of Morgan County is going to share the information for the builder with her, so she will have it for the next meeting.

Ms. Lisa Anderson, of 136 West Highland Avenue, stated she serves on the Downtown Development Authority Board. She read a letter on behalf of the DDA requesting that Council let Section 6-36 of the City Ordinance stand as written. She discussed the long-standing partnership between the City and the DDA. The Entertainment District Ordinance has been one of many important components of building a downtown culture and business base that is envied across the State. She stated the Ordinance has attracted businesses to open in Monroe and some rely on it as a key component of their operations. Ms. Anderson discussed the following reasons that they are requesting for the Ordinance not to be changed: No Evidence of Incidents or Direct Negative Outcomes, Community Representation, Responsibility for Children, Direct Impact of Taking Away Rights, Cultural Regression, and Rights are Rights. She requested for the Entertainment District Ordinance to be left as it was approved.

Mr. Chris Collin, of 614 Saint Ives Walk, stated he is a member of the Downtown Development Authority and a downtown business owner. At the last Council Meeting he had to follow someone speaking about affordable housing, and it was embarrassing that attentions have been taken away from affordable housing. He challenged Council to think about the tax dollars being spent and whether personal beliefs are being focused upon. That time and effort could be put into the community; there is a major opportunity now to bridge the wealth gap of the haves and the have-nots. He feels that intentions are misguided. Mr. Collin discussed how some of his restaurant employees have moved up from being dishwashers to managers. He requested for efforts to be refocused and to move on to things that really matter in the community.

III. BUSINESS ITEMS

1. City Administrator Update

City Administrator Logan Propes recognized the Gas Department, which is led by Mr. Rodney Middlebrooks and Mr. Brian Pittman. They won the Gas Authorities 2022 Marketing Excellence Award, which is based on the highest customer growth. He stated over 20 miles of gas line has been run throughout the County; this has provided jobs in agriculture and serves new homes. There will be a preconstruction meeting with ER Snell and GDOT on Monday for the Bypass Project. There were about 6,600 people in Downtown between 4 pm and 11 pm for the Friday Night Concert.

2. Assistant City Administrator Update

Assistant City Administrator Chris Bailey stated they are working on the curbing for the Town Green this week; the estimated completion date is July 2023. The Terminal Building should be finished by the end of June. There was a DOT Inspection two weeks ago. The inspection concerns obstruction removal and will be reviewed next week. Parking is being added to the backside of Mathews Park. The Farmers Market will be held each Saturday until October. The Flower Festival is May 20. There were 65 volunteers at the Cleanup Event on April 29, and over 750 pounds of trash was collected.

3. Department Requests**a. Utilities: Solar Power Purchase Contract Second Amendment**

Mr. Brian Thompson presented the second amendment to the Solar Power Purchase Contract with MEAG to purchase bulk solar power in partnership with other Cities. He explained the Solar Developer has not been able to acquire financing for the project, due to the significant increase in costs in 2022. The current price is \$29.03 per megawatt hour for a contract term of 15 years. They have requested an increase to \$37.75 per megawatt hour, which would be fixed for a 15-year term. He stated this is still financially viable for the City; it is still on average lower than market power. Mr. Thompson recommended approval of the second amendment.

To approve the second amendment to the Solar Power Purchase Contract.

*Motion by Little, seconded by Gregory.
Passed Unanimously*

IV. NEW BUSINESS**1. Public Hearings****a. Rezone – 1203 South Madison Avenue**

Mr. Brad Callender presented the rezone request from R-2 to R-1A at 1203 South Madison Avenue. The applicant is requesting the rezone in order to subdivide a property with two existing single-family residences. The subject property is Zoned R-2 (Multi-Family, High-Density Residential District) and contains a single-family. One single-family residence has been on the property since 1924, with the other single-family residence dating back to 1950. The applicant is requesting a Rezone to R-1A (Medium Lot Residential District) in order to subdivide the property into two lots, one for each of the existing dwellings. The Planning Commission and Code Office recommend approval of the rezone request as submitted without conditions.

The Mayor declared the meeting open for the purpose of public input.

Mr. Winston White, the property owner, spoke in favor of the rezone. He explained they are trying to subdivide the property so it is not maintained as multi-family. It would not make sense to fix the property up that way. They want to keep it as single-family residences, as they have been used in the past.

There were no other public comments; Mayor Howard declared that portion of the meeting closed.

2. New Business**a. Application – Spirituous Liquors and Beer & Wine On-Premise Consumption – San Andres Monroe LLC**

To approve the application.

*Motion by Malcom, seconded by Garrett.
Passed Unanimously.*

b. Appointment – Historic Preservation Commission

City Administrator Logan Propes explained there was a mistake in the packet for last Council Meeting; the appointment for the Historic Preservation Commission should have been for Marc Hammes instead of Susan Brown.

To appoint Marc Hammes for a three-year term, to expire May 1, 2026.

*Motion by Gregory, seconded by Garrett.
Passed Unanimously.*

c. Appeal – Brookland Commons PRD

City Attorney Paul Rosenthal questioned whether the appellant or representative for Brookland Commons was present, but they were not present. Mr. Rosenthal explained a decision made by the Planning Department has been appealed, and the hearing has been set for today. The appeal under Section 14.1 of the City of Monroe Development Regulations is before Council, with no representation.

City Planner Brad Callender provided a brief synopsis of the appeal. The decision that is being appealed is the requirement from staff that they install street trees and sidewalks in compliance with their development plan and their custom zoning. The developer refused to comply with that requirement; they do not wish to install those features in the right-of-way. He explained the lots

are alley loaded, so there is no impact to the lots themselves or access to the lots. The improvements are in the right-of-way that would be dedicated to the City, which is the reason they are being required upfront before the dedication. It will prevent any utilities from being impacted in a negative manner.

Council Member David Dickinson stated the standard for a review is abuse of discretion. Development Ordinances give that discretion to the Planning Department. The applicant skipped this step initially. They went directly to court and filed a lawsuit, which was thrown out, because they skipped this step. He does not feel that there has been an abuse of discretion; he feels the Planning Department acted appropriately.

To deny the appeal.

*Motion by Dickinson, seconded by Malcom.
Passed Unanimously.*

d. Rezone – 1203 South Madison Avenue

To approve the rezone.

*Motion by Dickinson, seconded by Gregory.
Passed Unanimously.*

e. Intergovernmental Agreement with Walton County and City of Loganville for Aerial Photometrics

City Administrator Logan Propes explained the third Intergovernmental Agreement with Walton County and the City of Loganville for enhanced aerial photometrics, which gives an ultra-high resolution, aerial orthorectified photography model. This will allow more accurate assessment determinations. The model will provide great planning and property assessment tools that will help with better ground visualizations and resolution for property assessment / appraisals, parcel boundaries, layering, and other GIS and planning work. The bulk of Walton County will be covered. Mr. Propes explained the City of Monroe and the City of Loganville will each have a cost of 20%, and Walton County will have the remaining 60%. The City of Monroe will be responsible for paying \$6,968.06 per year for a period of three years.

To approve of the Intergovernmental Agreement with Walton County and the City of Loganville for aerial photometrics.

*Motion by Malcom, seconded by Gregory.
Passed Unanimously.*

f. Traffic Signal Reimbursement – US 78 / SR 10 at Aycock Avenue

City Administrator Logan Propes presented the recommendation for approval of authorizing a partial reimbursement to Jacks Creek Landing LLC for installation of the traffic light at Aycock Avenue and US 78 in the amount of \$54,236.67. An Intergovernmental Agreement was not done with Walton County, due to the involvement of a potential developer. He explained that in 2021 while working through the truck connector route with Walton County and the forthcoming apartments on Aycock Avenue, the City, County and the developer created a preliminary plan. The plan stated that if the developer would proceed with installation of the full traffic signal and appropriate supporting studies required by GDOT, then potentially the County and City could reimburse upon installation and full activation of the traffic signals. The City and County would each contribute one-third of the original construction cost of the project, which was \$162,710.00. The developer would be responsible for any overages and for all traffic studies. Therefore, the City and County would each pay \$54,236.67. The County will reimburse the City for its portion of the traffic signal. The signal has been installed and is now operational.

To authorize a partial reimbursement to Jacks Creek Landing LLC for installation of the traffic signal at Aycock Avenue and US 78 in the amount of \$54,236.67.

*Motion by Malcom, seconded by Crawford.
Passed Unanimously.*

g. Approval – July Meeting Schedule

City Administrator Logan Propes presented the recommendation to amend the date for the July Council Meeting to Monday, July 17, 2023 at 6:00 pm, due to conflicts. He explained it would be best to move the meeting date in order to keep various business items on track instead of cancelling it. July 17 is the best available day for a reschedule.

To amend the July 2023 Council Meeting date to Monday, July 17, 2023 at 6:00 pm.

*Motion by Garrett, seconded by Boyce.
Passed Unanimously.*

h. Discussion – Affordable Housing

City Administrator Logan Propes stated Council wanted the topic added for a general discussion, and there is a lot to be discussed. Staff needs input from Council on the next steps to take moving forward in the general housing realm of planning and zoning, workforce housing, and affordable housing. The City has been working on a housing study to see where the City stands in order to find out which way to go. The assessment will be done demographically based on income levels and the present housing stock. This data is needed prior to seeking any grant opportunities. He explained that staff needs to know how Council wants to approach each of these topics.

Mayor Howard stated the Walton County Development Authority is also doing a study for the region. The number one point of discussion at the GMA Board Meeting was affordable housing; there are major economic and residential issues that have to be faced nationwide.

Council Member Norman Garrett questioned how the City can help with developing and building affordable housing.

Mr. Propes explained a couple of years ago the City partnered with the Monroe Housing Authority, who then partnered with the Valdosta Housing Authority. They got a Low-Income Tax Credit Housing Grant for rehabilitation of the Country Grove Apartments complex. The City acts as a conduit to help other organizations get funding, but the City cannot outright create affordable housing or workforce housing from scratch. He discussed finding the right development partners. The City has started the process with the Zoning and Ordinance Updates and the Comprehensive Plan Update. In Georgia, the price of homes or rent costs cannot be dictated. The issue of affordable housing is a national and global problem.

Council Member Tyler Gregory stated who can be helped by what measure has to be defined. Not everybody is going to be able to be helped by Habitat, and not everybody is going to be able to be helped by Workforce Housing. Some people are going to need wrap around services on the lower end, and some people might need a place right after college. He stated there are actually many issues being discussed when discussing affordable housing; it needs to be broken up into smaller issues, so the right tools can be used to help. There are different things that can be done for different situations.

Council Member David Dickinson stated everyone needs to have an honest conversation with each other about what governments can and cannot do. There is not a City in the Country that does not have a housing issue. As Mr. Gregory said, there are different categories of things. He wants to do something that is concentrated and focused with very specific goals that are defined and attainable. He is concerned about taking on a global issue that will not get much of anything accomplished. Workforce housing is the most important component for the health and wellbeing of the community. Mr. Dickinson discussed how homelessness can get into the issue of the mental health crisis. He discussed creating a task force that would include input from the City, County, citizens, and businesses. There needs to be a coherent plan that involves the entire community.

Mayor Howard stated he agrees that government is not going to be the solution.

Mr. Propes discussed starting a task force and diving deeper into the issue at a Housing Retreat; he discussed coming up with a plan of action.

Mr. Gregory discussed different grant opportunities and the possibility of a timeline.

Mayor Howard stated there will be a Community Impact Day and Housing Expo at the Walton County Boys and Girls Club on May 27.

No Action.

i. Discussion – Alcohol Ordinance Amendments

City Administrator Logan Propes stated that it has been five years since the last cleanup; this will verify that the City is in compliance with Georgia Law and business friendly. He discussed the

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MAY 9, 2023

6:00 P.M.

summary of changes for Chapter 6. Definitions will be amended to clarify microbrewery and microdistillery are legally in compliance. Sections of the Zoning Ordinance will be amended to permit land use of microbrewery and microdistillery. There will be an amendment to increase non-profit license fees to match standard on-site license fees.

Vice-Mayor Larry Bradley questioned the definition section not including event facilities.

City Attorney Paul Rosenthal explained this is a bullet point list of key topics. There will be some adjustments to other sections after the first round of edits are done. The special event venue definition might not need to be changed, because that issue is located in Section 6-81 and Section 6-106. This is not a comprehensive list of every edit that will need to be done.

Mr. Bradley questioned the expansion of the Entertainment District and whether the issues discussed by Mr. Holder will be fixed.

Mr. Propes answered the special event items that Mr. Holder discussed are incorporated in the proposed changes and will be discussed in the subsequent months. As per feedback, the Entertainment District Boundaries could possibly be expanded to the Mills. He explained the purpose of the Entertainment District Boundaries is to provide additional economic benefit to restaurants areas around downtown. He discussed the possibility of eventually having ped-sheds or different nodes around the City where there is restaurant activity.

Council Member Garrett questioned the time changes.

Mr. Propes stated currently pouring goes until 1:55 am, and they have discussed moving it back to 12:00 or 12:30. It would be 1:30 am on New Years.

Council Member Lee Malcom stated she would prefer for the cut off to be 12:00.

Mr. Rosenthal stated the first reading of the Ordinance could be done on July 17 and the second reading in August. This would give Council plenty of time to review the changes and give his office time to get the Ordinances fully drafted. Council would have time to look at them and provide feedback. He stated the addition of the ped-sheds is more of a forward-thinking idea, but the rest are more clean-cut types of changes. The goal is to clear some things up for law enforcement, such as adding a public intoxication violation and an open container violation for areas outside of the Entertainment District. The time changes will be made and the rest is mostly general cleanup. He stated the Entertainment District Boundaries are a legislative decision; it could be left as it is or be expanded to match the Downtown District Boundaries.

Mr. Bradley stated that he still does not understand about the event facilities. He likes what Mr. Holder said, but how are those changes going to be made without the unintended consequences of allowing a bar to open that he mentioned.

Mr. Rosenthal stated those items were fixed in Section 6-81 and Section 6-106. They use some of the wording for special events venues that came from Lawrenceville. His office will work with staff to make the changes, if it is the desire of Council to change the Ordinance from 2018 to allow special event venues to get their own pouring license. They will develop a draft Ordinance, and it can be fine-tuned from there. If needed, the definitions can be amended and additional regulations can be added in Article VII, Chapter 6.

Ms. Malcom stated Council has heard from the business community and from the DDA. She feels a direction with the cup ordinance needs to be established.

Ms. Malcom made a motion to approve the proposed Alcohol Amendments as discussed and for staff and legal counsel to proceed with the technical updates. There will be time for Council to have input over the course of the next two months, with the first and second readings at the regular Council Meetings. Leaving intact all portions of the current Alcohol Ordinances contained within Sections 6-36.

Mr. Dickinson questioned how Council is supposed to vote without seeing a draft. He is completely against changes to the Ordinance.

Ms. Malcom stated the motion is for them to proceed with the items of concern and cleanup, not to make any changes immediately.

Mr. Dickinson seconded the motion from Ms. Malcom.

Mr. Bradley stated he still does not understand the motion; Council is not approving the list of items.

Ms. Malcom explained the motion is to proceed with the Ordinance cleanup in regards to the listed items. A draft of the Ordinance will come back to Council, then over the next two- or three-months Council will give their input on the draft. It will be brought back for a first and second reading, but Section 6-36 will remain as it stands today. She stated Section 6-36 will stand outside of this cleanup. That portion of the Ordinance concerning the City cups will remain. The size of the cups could change, but people will be allowed to move from place to place within the Downtown Entertainment District with the City cups.

Council Member Norman Garrett questioned whether the Entertainment District Boundaries were being expanded.

Ms. Malcom answered not at this point.

Council discussed the Entertainment District Boundaries being part of Section 6-36.

Mr. Propes explained there is minor cleanup involved in different parts of Section 6-36. As it stands today Section 6-36 has already been approved by Council. He clarified that the motion made by Ms. Malcom is charging staff and legal counsel to move forward with the cleanup, which will be brought back to Council in the subsequent months for first and second readings. It does not have any bearing or change on Section 6-36 or any of the other alcohol sections. Staff and legal counsel are only being charged with moving forward with some summary changes of definitions, and such.

Mr. Rosenthal explained the intent of Ms. Malcom's motion is to give staff and legal counsel some direction on which way to go. The issue of leaving Section 6-36 intact is sending a message to the business community. The question is whether or not Council wants to keep the Entertainment District's City cups as part of the Alcohol Ordinance. He stated that the vote would essentially be to yes keep the cups or no do not keep the cups. That vote tells the City businesses, staff, and legal counsel how to draft the Ordinance. Council discussed removing the Entertainment District Cup Ordinance at the meeting last month, and there were a lot of citizens that said to leave it. Staff needs to know which direction Council wants them to proceed in. Mr. Rosenthal stated that he believes the motion and second was to proceed forward with the updates. There should probably be a second motion concerning the issue of whether Council wants the Cup Ordinance to remain so that the Entertainment District exists and people can have cups with the City branding to be able to walk around with alcohol under the various regulations.

Ms. Malcom stated she would rescind her first motion.

Mr. Rosenthal explained that Ms. Malcom could clarify her motion.

Ms. Malcom clarified her motion; she directed City staff to proceed with a cleanup of the Ordinances in Chapter 6, to create a draft for Council to review, and to move forward with a first reading on either July 17 or in August.

*Motion by Malcom, seconded by Dickinson.
Voting no Bradley.
Passed 7-1.*

Mr. Bradley stated that he fully supports the cleanup process, but he does not understand why that was a part of the same motion. He is opposed to the City logo being on the cups.

Mayor Howard stated that would be part of the second motion that Ms. Malcom is about to make.

Ms. Malcom made a motion to leave Section 6-36 in regards to the City cup as it is written today. Mr. Dickinson seconded the motion.

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6:00 P.M.

Mr. Bradley made a motion to amend Ms. Malcom's motion to remove the City logo from the cup and replace it with some other type of identifying information. Mr. Garrett seconded the motion.

Mr. Dickinson stated he is opposed to removing the City logo from the cups, because the situation will become less legalized. It would be less enforceable, and the police will have to start studying all of the cups. The cups being different would encourage people to bring their own cups. He believes it make sense to have one universal logo, which is the City name. Many other municipalities have copied exactly what Monroe is doing, because it works.

Ms. Malcom agreed with Mr. Dickinson.

To amend Ms. Malcom's motion; to remove the City logo from the cup and replace it with some other type of identifying information.

*Motion by Bradley, seconded by Garrett.
Voting no Malcom, Dickinson, Gregory, Boyce,
Little.
Failed 3-5.*

Mayor, Council, and Mr. Rosenthal discussed the issue and clarified the motion and vote was concerning the logo; the motion to amend the original motion failed three to five.

To leave Section 6-36 in regards to the City cup as it is written today.

*Motion by Malcom, seconded by Dickinson.
Voting no Bradley.
Passed 7-1.*

V. DISTRICT ITEMS

1. District Items

Council Member Tyler Gregory thanked staff for all of their hard work concerning Codes and Ordinances.

2. Mayoral Update

Mayor John Howard reminded everyone that the Community Impact Day will be on May 27. Ms. Kelly Watts was named Teacher of the Year at George Walton Academy. He discussed Facebook having posts with the wrong information; the Mayor's office will not be tearing down any apartments.


VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

*Motion by Malcom, seconded by Garrett.
Passed Unanimously.*

RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION

VII. ADJOURN

*Motion by Garrett, seconded by Malcom.
Passed Unanimously.*


MAYOR


INTERIM CITY CLERK

The Mayor and Council met for an Executive Session.

Those Present:	John Howard	Mayor
	Larry Bradley	Vice-Mayor
	Lee Malcom	Council Member
	Myoshia Crawford	Council Member
	Charles Boyce, IV	Council Member
	Norman Garrett	Council Member
	Tyler Gregory	Council Member
	Nathan Little	Council Member
	David Dickinson	Council Member
	Logan Propes	City Administrator
	Paul Rosenthal	City Attorney
	Russell Preston	City Attorney

Staff Present:

I. Call to Order – John Howard

1. Roll Call

Mayor Howard noted that all Council Members were present. There was a quorum.

II. Real Estate Issue (s)

1. Real Estate Matter

Real Estate matters were discussed, including attorney-client discussions.


III. Legal Issue (s)

1. Legal Estate Matter

Legal Real Estate matters were discussed, including attorney-client discussions.

IV. Adjourn to Regular Session

*Motion by Malcom, seconded by Norman.
Passed Unanimously.*



 MAYOR



 INTERIM CITY CLERK