

The Mayor and Council met for a called meeting, via Teleconference-Zoom.

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

Staff Present: Danny Smith, Jeremiah Still, R.V. Watts, Jack Armstrong, Beth Thompson, Rodney Middlebrooks, Brian Thompson, Chris Bailey, Sadie Krawczyk, Patrick Kelley, Les Russell

Visitors: Sharon Swanepoel, Brad Callender, Chad Gravette, Mike McGuire, Bob Saville, Donnie Wright, Franklin Etheridge, Jared Campbell

I. CALL TO ORDER – JOHN HOWARD

1. Roll Call

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

2. City Administrator Update

City Administrator Logan Propes stated the City employee base is seeing a fairly high number of COVID-19 cases. The City is working with Walton County and the Department of Public Health to assist with rolling the vaccines out. He discussed the vaccine eligibility for Public Safety and the 65-plus employee base. City Hall, the Police Station, and the Fire Station will continue to be closed to walk-in traffic. Meetings will continue to be by appointment only, but the City will continue with business as usual. Mr. Propes discussed projects for 2021. The Alcovy River Sewer Line and Pump Station tie-in will be a big project. The bid and construction for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Rehabilitation will be starting this year. The Loganville water line is finishing up and will be connecting to their system. The engineering and bids are being worked on for the upsized water transmission line from Cedar Ridge to Charlotte Rowell Boulevard. There will be a 20-inch connection from the Water Plant to the Publix site. The 2020 CDBG Stormwater Project, the Downtown Green Final Engineering, the Parks Master Planning and Improvements, the TAP Grant, and several Traffic Calming Projects are all in process. He stated the Truck By-Pass is continuing, and according to GDOT, construction should start during the summer of 2022. The City will also be working on the Downtown Solid Waste Master Plan, Transfer Station Improvements, Wayne Street Sidewalks and Streetscape, the Highland Avenue parking lot improvements, the milling and paving on South Madison Avenue, the LMIG Project, alley way improvements, a water tower, upsizing the line to the Piedmont Industrial Park, a potential ground tank at the north end of the system, the Fiber Monroe Project, automated switching for the electric system, Downtown and Park wi-fi deployments, the East Walton gas line extension, the Airport Runway repaving improvements, and facilitating additional private party Airport investments. The new Police Department at Walton Plaza is almost complete, and Walton Plaza Phase II Rehabilitation will be discussed later this year. The City has been working with Walton County Economic Development on a variety of project inquiries. He discussed the Planning and Code process revisions and ordinance updates that were discussed at the Retreat. There will be an RFQ with DDA's oversight to sell the building after the Police Department gets moved.

3. Central Services Update

Mr. Chris Bailey stated the facilities and grounds crews picked up 3,400 pounds of trash throughout the City. The flooring that finally became available for the Police Station / Municipal Court Building is currently being installed. The last of the carpet is being installed and the rest of the floors are being cleaned and polished. The fiber is being installed and they are also working on some of the punch list items. Hopefully, everything should be move-in ready by

Spring. The building sign and monument sign are being designed. He is waiting on bids for rehabbing the roof and remaining exterior of the facility. Mr. Bailey discussed partnering with the Azalea Regional Library System to replace the interior and exterior lighting fixtures at the Library with LED lights and trimming the trees.

II. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

1. Finance

a. Monthly Finance Report

Ms. Beth Thompson presented the monthly Finance Report. She stated the numbers in the report are not yet been finalized for December; accruals and year-end entries are still being done. The current figures are unaudited; the audited financials will be provided when they are completed. She explained the overall revenues exceed expenses for 2020 citywide. She complimented Logan and the Department Heads for keeping all of the expenses low, as they were requested. The Sales Tax Revenues have continued to increase; there was a 6% increase from last year. She explained there was a 13% increase from 2019 to 2020, which was due to the Department of Revenue Audit in September. The Property Tax Collections are at 97%. There are approximately 75 customers currently enrolled in the Average Monthly Payment and Budget Billing Program. Ms. Thompson stated the annual year-end audit is underway. Mauldin & Jenkins will be on-site doing fieldwork for the next two weeks. The City of Monroe received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence and Financial Reporting from GFOA for the 18th year.

b. Renewal – Property and Casualty Insurance

Ms. Beth Thompson stated the property and casualty insurance renewal covers the time period from April 2021 to April 2022. There was a slight increase of \$5,434.00 in the premium.

Mr. Bob Saville explained the 2021 renewal details for property and casualty insurance. The total premium is \$404,347, which is \$5,434.00 more than last year. The coverage will be moving from State National to Travelers this year, which generates a significant savings compared to most other Cities and Counties. The Law Enforcement Liability deductible was reduced from \$15,000 to \$10,000. There are no communicable disease exclusions on the policy, which refers to COVID. The Cyber Liability coverage increased \$5,223 and Airport Liability increased slightly. Mr. Saville explained the premiums were able to stay low this year, but there may be about a five percent increase next year if the market continues to stay hard.

No Action.

2. Airport

a. Monthly Airport Report

Mr. Chris Bailey presented the monthly Airport Report. He stated the fuel sales for 2020 were higher than they have ever been before. The 12-unit T-Hangar is complete; the City will now finish the final grading, paving, and utility installation.

b. Cy Nunnally Memorial Airport Runway 3/21 Rehabilitation & Paving Project

Mr. Chris Bailey discussed the three bids received on January 7 to completely rehabilitate, pave, and restripe the runway. Atlanta Paving & Concrete Construction, Inc. had the lowest bid amount of \$888,888.00, and GMC Network has vetted all the bids. He explained the project came in \$400,000 under budget, and with grant funds the project will only cost the City \$44,444.40.

The committee recommends to Council approval of Atlanta Paving & Concrete Construction, Inc. for the amount of \$888,888.00.

*Motion by R. Bradley, seconded by Little.
Passed Unanimously.*

3. Public Works

a. Monthly Solid Waste Report

Mr. Danny Smith presented the monthly Solid Waste Report. He stated they are in the process of installing an automated gate at the entrance to the Transfer Station; it should be completed by the end of the week. The gate will allow more control of access for safety and will support the proposed new scale system that includes an automated kiosk. The remainder of the tipping floor is scheduled to be resurfaced in April. He discussed transitioning curbside recycling to 65-gallon carts. The tonnage increased about 1,100 tons compared to last year. Mr. Smith discussed the details of the 2020 Annual Tonnage Report. He stated the curbside glass collection is going well, with approximately 260 customers. The vendor in College Park is paying the City \$25.00 per ton for the materials.

b. Monthly Streets & Transportation Report

Mr. Jeremiah Still presented the monthly Streets & Transportation Report. The crews are trying to stay ahead of things with the cold weather months hitting. They are working on making utility cuts passable, until they can be repaired. They are working to maintain the right-of-ways and doing some aggressive cut backs. He stated the leaf season is coming to an end.

4. Utilities

a. Monthly Electric & Telecom Report

Mr. Brian Thompson presented the monthly Electric & Telecom Report. He discussed the outage today that was caused by a junction switch catching on fire; the crews are assessing the situation now. All of the poles and guy wires were set for Publix today; they will start pulling the wire tomorrow. The contractors are strategically placing duct work around town for the fiber project, which will be starting on Ammons Bridge and Michael Etchison. The new commercial project on Etten Drive is about eighty percent done. The first Downtown WiFi unit has been deployed and is being tested.

b. Fiber Pricing

Mr. Brian Thompson presented the proposed pricing for the City's FTTX products. He has reviewed the existing pricing for the City's main competitors, which are Comcast and Windstream. The City wants to beat them on price and service. He discussed going with a symmetrical product to give the customers exactly what they need for a competitive price.

Council and Mr. Thompson further discussed the proposed price list.

The committee recommends approval of the FTTX rates as presented to Council.

*Motion by L. Bradley, seconded by Gregory.
Passed Unanimously.*

c. Monthly Water, Sewer, & Gas Report

Mr. Rodney Middlebrooks presented the monthly Water, Sewer, & Gas Report. The gas loop for pressure improvement has just been completed on Unisia Drive. The crews started the gas expansion on Highway 186 last week. The Alcovy River and Highway 138 Sewer Extension bids have been opened. The equipment and labor bids for the Sewer Plant Rehab were moved to March. He stated Weideman & Singleton have completed the water modeling for the distribution system, and the report shows the affect Publix will have on the northern section. The 30-inch raw water line is in the design process and will be out for bid in March. The Loganville Water Extension is waiting on the final easement.

d. Approval – Sanitary Sewer System Improvements – Alcovy River Outfall

Mr. Rodney Middlebrooks presented the recommendation from Hofstadter and Associates to award the contract for sanitary sewer system improvements to Mid-South Builders, Inc. They had the lowest bid amount of \$1,515,500.00 and an additional industry-standard 5% contingency fund of \$75,775.00, for any unforeseen issues. The sewer project will begin at Highway 138 and run along the Alcovy River to the pump station located on Michael Etchison Road.

City Administrator Logan Propes explained this will be Phase I, which is the bulk of the project and is way under budget. Phase II and Phase III, which will run up Highway 138, are currently being analyzed.

The committee recommends to Council approval of Mid-South Builders, Inc., for the amount of \$1,515,500.00 and the 5% contingency fund of \$75,775.00 for unforeseen circumstances.

*Motion by Gregory, seconded by L. Bradley.
Passed Unanimously.*

5. Public Safety

a. Monthly Fire Report

Battalion Chief Jack Armstrong presented the monthly Fire Report. He stated they had 19 false calls, which is common with all of the HVAC equipment coming on. They responded to 254 calls in the month of December and four were fires. There was an outside rubbish fire. They had a structure fire on Cook Street, which was limited to the kitchen cabinets. The fire was largely extinguished by the home owner. The department assisted Walton County with a fire on old Athens Highway and also had a vehicle fire. He stated the good intent calls are up in relation to EMS COVID-19 response. Walton EMS has graciously been assessing the patients and

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keeping the fire personnel from having to be at the forefront of those calls. Health has been improving at the Fire Department. Currently, they do not have anybody out.

b. Monthly Police Report

Police Chief R.V. Watts presented the monthly Police Report and discussed the year end totals. The Joint Operations Unit had a total of 122 felony arrests for the year, 12 misdemeanors, took approximately 77 guns off the street, executed 20 search warrants, and 11 cell phone search warrants. They made 22 marijuana cases, 10 cocaine cases, 20 methamphetamine cases, 2 heroin cases, and 17 cases listed as other drugs. Total calls for service are down by 36% for the year, area checks are up by 278%, citizen complaints are down by 38%, arrests are up by 10%, and use of force is down by 29%. Chief Watts stated he is very proud of the men and women in blue and how effectively they have operated during the pandemic. The Police Department was able to sponsor several families in the Shop with a Cop Event, using donated funds.

6. Planning & Code**a. Monthly Code Report**

Mr. Patrick Kelley presented the monthly Code Report. The Code office had 102 inspections and wrote 131 permits. He stated five new businesses acquired business licenses and four businesses closed. The Main Street Apartments have started leasing under a temporary Certificate of Occupancy, until some landscaping and drainage issues are resolved. Grace Monroe Church and the Reddy Clinic are both working on getting their construction projects finished. The City Marshals issued 146 repair / cleanup orders, investigated six utility tampering cases, and wrote eight citations. He explained the Planning Commission had requests for variances at 606 and 603 Alcovy Street for which they recommended denial and 132 Pine Crest Drive for which they recommended approval with conditions. They also had a request for a rezone from PRD to B2 at Bold Springs Avenue for which they recommended approval to B1. Subsequently, these have been approved by Council except for Alcovy Street, which will be discussed next week. The preliminary plat was approved for 455 Vine Street during the same time period.

7. Economic Development**a. Monthly Economic Development Report**

Ms. Sadie Krawczyk presented the monthly Economic Development Report. She reviewed the data numbers from tracking smart devices through the trade area showing customer patterns. This tool helps tract the recovery from COVID. The data shows an upward spike in March, which was from the Car Show and the last big event in Downtown. There was a spike in October from Fall Fest; the Christmas Parade in Place numbers are not yet available. She discussed the Retail Leakage Report showing there is a lot of room for retail growth. The 2021 Event Calendar is being finalized. The first event scheduled in Downtown is the Car Show on March 13; they are still planning for four concerts this summer, Fall Fest, and the Farmers Market. The sponsorship drive to pay for the events is just getting started. She stated the Tree Board is coordinating an Arbor Day Event and will be giving away over 200 free saplings. The Downtown Annual Reception for sponsors and volunteers is being moved to March 1.

8. Parks**a. Monthly Parks Report**

Mr. Chris Bailey presented the monthly Parks Report. He stated there has been a steady increase in activity at the parks. The lights are being taken down at Childers Park as weather permits. The fence has been painted white at Pilot Park, and the entire project has been completed. The shade structures for the lower section proposed in the 2021 CIP will be installed by early Spring. The restroom facility at Mathews Park should be installed within the next couple of weeks; the old restroom was demoed about a week ago. He stated the CIP Budget shows additional restrooms for this year, which will be for Pilot Park.

III. ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

- 1. Public Hearing Variance – 603 & 606 Alcovy Street**
- 2. Public Hearing Variance – 1360 Armistead Circle**
- 3. Application – Beer & Wine Package Sales – M and S Food Mart**
- 4. 1st Reading – Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions – Possession of Marijuana Ordinance Amendment**

There was a general discussion on the above items. There was no action taken.

IV. ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION**1. Loganville Water Line Change Order #2**

Mr. Rodney Middlebrooks requested approval of Change Order #2 for the Loganville Transmission Line totaling \$333,342.00 from Mid-South Builders, Inc. for the extension of the 20-inch water main along Cedar Ridge Road. He explained pressure issues were discovered around the hospital area when the 20-inch line was being tested, which is due to a 10-inch line feeding a 20-inch line. Continuing the water line connection along Cedar Ridge Road will allow Loganville to pull from both West Spring Street and Cedar Ridge Road to prevent pressure issues within the system.

City Administrator Logan Propes explained this is listed under the Monroe Loganville Water Line Connection, but the cost is not subject to the 50/50 split with the City of Loganville. This is a major improvement to the City's system.

To approve Change Order #2 with Mid-South Builders, Inc. for the amount of \$333,342.00.

*Motion by R. Bradley, seconded by Little.
Passed Unanimously.*

2. Resolution – Support of Grant Match Application for 2021 Historic Preservation Fund CLG Survey & Planning Grant

Ms. Sadie Krawczyk explained the resolution is part of the grant application, which is through the Historic Preservation Division. The grant will be used to update the City's Historical Resources Survey, which is required to maintain a Certified Local Government Status.

To adopt the resolution.

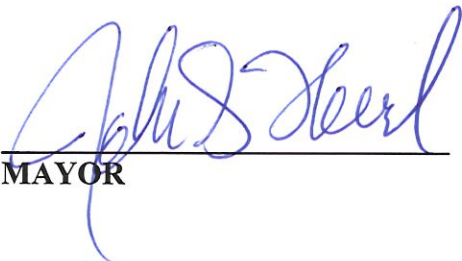
*Motion by Dickinson, seconded by Malcom.
Passed Unanimously.*

V. MAYOR'S UPDATE

Mayor John Howard stated they met with the Georgia Department of Transportation concerning the County Comprehensive Plan earlier this week, and they were extremely complementary on working with the City. All systems are on go, and the truck route has been approved to begin construction in the Summer of 2022. The City is a little higher on COVID cases, but Piedmont is down according to Larry Eibert. Piedmont Walton is not diverting any patients from Walton County, but they are also not accepting any coming from out of the area. There are beds available in ICU and vents available. Mayor Howard explained that he has requested a Community Vaccination Center from the Biden Administration; they may be sending the first one to Newton County. The City has space and what they are looking for in the general population; he will stay on top of the situation with Carl Morrow.

VI. ADJOURN

*Motion by R. Bradley, seconded by L. Bradley.
Passed Unanimously.*


MAYOR


CITY CLERK