

**TYRONE TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING
MINUTES
December 21, 2023 at 7:00 PM**

Eric Dial, Mayor

Gloria Furr, Mayor Pro Tem, Post 4

Linda Howard, Post 1
Melissa Hill, Post 2
Billy Campbell, Post 3

Brandon Perkins, Town Manager
Dee Baker, Town Clerk
Dennis Davenport, Town Attorney

Not in attendance:

Brandon Perkins, Town Manager

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. INVOCATION

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS: *Comments are limited to three (3) minutes. Please state your name & address. Comments that require a response may not be answered during this time. The Council or staff may respond at a later date.*

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made to approve the agenda.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Hill.

Voting Yea: Council Member Howard, Council Member Furr.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA: *All matters listed under this item are considered to be routine by the Town Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will not be separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the consent agenda and will be considered separately.*

1. Approval of the December 7, 2023 Workshop and Council meeting minutes.
2. Reappointment of Alisha Thompson as the Town of Tyrone's Municipal Court Judge.
3. Consideration to hire Mr. Curtis Carson for the Public Works Specialist position.

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Howard.

Voting Yea: Council Member Hill, Council Member Furr.

VII. PRESENTATIONS

4. Presentation of Service to Amy Godfrey, Solicitor of Tyrone Municipal Court. April Spradlin, Court Clerk, and Alisha Thompson, Judge

Ms. Spradlin shared that Amy Godfrey had served as Solicitor for the Tyrone Municipal Court for the past 5 years. On behalf of the Town of Tyrone and the Tyrone Municipal Court, we would like to show our appreciation to Amy Godfrey for her 5 years of dedication and service with the Tyrone Municipal Court. We would like to also congratulate Amy on recently being named as the Interim Solicitor General of Coweta County Solicitors Office. Amy was a hard and dedicated worker who without a doubt would succeed as she applied her passion to continuing her career as a prosecutor.

5. Oaths of Council: Alisha Thompson, Municipal Judge

Jessica Whelan, Council Post 1, January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2027

Dia Hunter, Council Post 2, January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2027

Judge Thompson swore in Council Members Whelan, and Hunter.

6. Recognition of Council Member Melissa Hill's service to the Town. - Eric Dial, Mayor

Mayor Dial presented plaques to the Councilwomen from the Town and Council for their service. He thanked them for their service and recognized that both ladies loved their Town. He added that Council Member Hill served for four years and Council Member Howard served for a total of sixteen years, not including her time as Clerk.

7. Recognition of Council Member Linda Howard's service to the Town. - Eric Dial, Mayor

Mayor Dial presented Council Member Howard with a proclamation that mentioned her years of service to the Town. It began in 1969 as she was a Clerk and the first female Council Member. She led the Centennial Book project in 2011 and also played a crucial role in the inception of Founders Day and the Tyrone Museum. He declared December 21, 2023, as Linda Howard Day.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

IX. OLD BUSINESS

X. NEW BUSINESS

8. Appointment of Judge Tonya Shy as Judge Pro-Tem for 2024. April Spradlin, Court Clerk

Ms. Spradlin shared that Judge Shy had dedicated her legal career to serving the public with integrity and character. Throughout her twenty-two-year career, she had practiced in various areas of law, including as a prosecutor and defense attorney, serving as a Senior Assistant Solicitor in the City of Atlanta for five years, an Assistant District Attorney for 5 years, and a criminal defense attorney for approximately 4 years.

She added that she was currently practicing as a civil litigator. In addition to the practice of law, for the past 3 years, she had served as a part-time judge in the following municipalities: Pro Tem Municipal Court Judge in Fayetteville Municipal Court, Associate Judge in Dunwoody Municipal Court, and Associate Judge in Jonesboro Municipal Court. She was very knowledgeable of the laws and criminal procedures of the State of Georgia, including, but not limited to: felonies, misdemeanors, traffic offenses, city ordinances, and code violations. During the time she served as a Judge, she had rendered decisions that were sound, fair, and impartial and believed strongly in the integrity of the judicial system. She was attentive and respectful to all who enter the courtroom and strove daily to hear courteously, to answer wisely, to consider soberly, and to decide impartially.

A motion was made to appoint Judge Shy as Judge Pro-Tem for Tyrone Municipal Court.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Hill.
Voting Yea: Council Member Howard, Council Member Furr.

Judge Thompson administered Judge Shy her oath.

9. Consideration to appoint Isaac Godfrey as Solicitor for Tyrone Municipal Court. April Spradlin, Court Clerk

Ms. Spradlin stated that Isaac Godfrey earned his Juris Doctor from Georgia State University College of Law. He had practiced criminal law, bankruptcy, and personal injury. For the last two years, he had filled in as the prosecutor for the Town of Tyrone on a regular basis. He also filled in for the prosecutor for the City of Newnan and the City of Senoia as needed. She added that before graduating from law school, Isaac worked as a police officer and deputy sheriff in metro Atlanta for nearly a decade. During that time, he became knowledgeable about Georgia traffic law. He had investigated hundreds of DUIs and was certified in the Standardized Field Sobriety Tests. She stated that Mr. Godfrey was a veteran of the United States Army where he served in the field artillery and military intelligence. He deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina as a member of SFOR-6 and served during Operation Enduring Freedom.

A motion was made to appoint Isaac Godfrey as Solicitor for Tyrone Municipal Court.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Furr.
Voting Yea: Council Member Howard, Council Member Hill.

Judge Thompson administered Mr. Godfrey his oath.

10. Consideration to re-appoint Taylor & Strickland Law Firm as the Indigent Defense Attorneys for Tyrone Municipal Court for the term of January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024. April Spradlin, Court Clerk

Ms. Spradlin informed Council that the reason the item was not under consent was that although their services had not changed, there was an increase for each case by \$45. She added that her department had budgeted for the increase.

A motion was made to adopt the Public Defender Agreement for Taylor and Strickland from January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024.

Motion made by Council Member Hill, Seconded by Council Member Howard.
Voting Yea: Council Member Campbell, Council Member Furr.

11. Consideration to Award professional engineering services for the 2024 East Crestwood Resurfacing and Multi-Use Path, Project Number PW-2024-15, to Keck and Wood, Inc. Scott Langford, Town Engineer / Public Works Director

Mr. Langford shared that the project was to design the 2023 SPLOST project East Crestwood multi-use path (MUP) in conjunction with General Funds to resurface East Crestwood and Huntingdon Court. Design for East Crestwood would be full-depth reclamation (FDR), the MUP, replacing four culverts, and associated landscaping for the MUP.

He stated that Keck and Wood provided survey, design, bidding process, and construction. administrative services as a lump sum fee. The total fee for the scope of work was not to exceed \$133,600. Funding would come from the General Fund and SPLOST funds.

A motion was made to authorize Mayor Dial to execute the professional service contract with Keck and Wood, Inc. at a fee not exceeding \$133,600 for the 2024 East Crestwood Resurfacing and Multi-Use Path project number PW-2024-15.

Motion made by Council Member Furr, Seconded by Council Member Campbell.
Voting Yea: Council Member Howard, Council Member Hill.

Council Member Howard asked for clarification regarding what end of East Crestwood would the work be performed. Mr. Langford stated that the resurfacing would be from Senoia Road to Highway 74.

Council Member Campbell inquired about the cart path. Mr. Langford stated that the cart path would be from Senoia Road to Huntingdon Ct. Council Member Campbell asked Mr. Langford for an approximate cost of the entire project. Mr. Langford stated that he preferred not to divulge that information as it could affect the bidding process. However, he gave an amount of approximately \$600,000 to \$800,000. Council Member Campbell then inquired about property acquisition. Mr. Langford estimated that property acquisition would be minor, although there may be some acquisition regarding the pipes as they may extend past the path.

12. Consideration of an updated employee pay plan. - Eric Dial, Mayor

Mayor Dial informed everyone that he would be presenting the following two items as Mr. Perkins was absent. He shared that he did not recollect the Town performing a pay study as long as he had been in office and he was not aware of how employee pay initially came about but there were several inconsistencies. He added that Council directed staff in May to begin the pay study and retirement study.

He stated that he believed Peachtree City's pay study to cost \$50,000, we did ours internally, saving the Town money. He stated that \$10,000 was budgeted for both studies. The retirement study was performed by an outside group for \$4,000. The jurisdictions that were included in the study were Fayette County, Coweta County, Fayetteville, Peachtree City, Senoia, Newnan, Palmetto, Hapeville, South Fulton, Douglasville, College Park, East Point, Fairburn, Union City, and McDonough. He stated that the study indicated that a couple of positions at the bottom of the pay scale and a few at the top were underpaid, eight total positions were underpaid.

Mayor Dial stated that the purposes of the study was not only to be good to our employees but also for good retention. The goal was to maintain a 70-percentile benchmark with a 55% base width of the study and competitive market which would include a compensation adjustment for the eight employees. He stated that if adopted, it would begin on January 1, 2024, costing \$102,992.38 which would include required adjustments to the affected employee's benefits. The cost adjustment would come from the General Fund Surplus.

A motion was made to approve the new pay plan and market adjustments for the eight (8) employees affected by the change.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Howard.
Voting Yea: Council Member Hill, Council Member Furr.

13. Consideration of an update to the Town's Employee Retirement Plan. – Eric Dial, Mayor

Mayor Dial presented the item and stated that currently the Town operated the Rule of 70 Plan, which was full retirement was possible once an employee's age plus their years of service equaled 70, with a minimum age of 55. The current multiplier was at 1.25%. He listed surrounding jurisdictions and their multipliers. Peachtree City was 2.5% with a 3% employee contribution, Fayetteville was 2.5% with a 3% contribution, Fayette County was at 2% with a 5 % contribution, Newnan was 2% and 0% employee contribution, Griffin 2% and 2% employee contribution, McDonough was at 2.25% with a 0% contribution, Fairburn was 1.25% with 0% contribution. Mayor Dial stated that the proposed Tyrone multiplier was 2% with a 5-year average earning period with a 0% employee contribution. He explained that the basic formula was that 2% would be taken from the average pay of the last few years of employment for the retirement amount.

Mayor Dial also explained that the state required that if a municipality went beyond 1.50%, employees had the opportunity to opt out of social security. He added that the Town would not and could not force them out of social security. He gave the example of an employee putting in \$300 per month for social security, they could then receive that money and perhaps invest it into their retirement plan. The employees had the option whether they wished to stay in social security, along with the Town's retirement plan, or opt-out. He also clarified that the five highest-paid years would be included in the retirement plan, along with the 2.0 % multiplier.

Mayor Dial shared that after they looked at the current 1.25 multiplier with a few employees and what they would make after retirement, it was embarrassing. He suggested increasing the multiplier.

The Georgia Municipal Employee Benefits System (GMEBS) performed the study for the Town. The options were to stay with the Rule of 70 along with the 1.25% multiplier, the Rule of 70 with a 2.0% multiplier, or the Rule of 70 with a 2.5% multiplier. He added that the retirement plan would cost the taxpayers, and he recommended the 2.0% multiplier. He shared that all surrounding jurisdictions except Fairburn, were at least at 2.0%. He added that if we were a fast-food restaurant, we would also want to compete with other surrounding fast-food restaurants. The upgrade would be an additional \$145,677 per year, coming from the General Fund Surplus. He stated that Council recommended a zero-employee contribution.

A motion was made to approve the proposed update to the retirement plan.

Motion made by Council Member Campbell, Seconded by Council Member Howard.
Voting Yea: Council Member Hill, Council Member Furr.

Mayor Dial shared that the .75% proposed increase in the multiplier represented a 62.5% increase in the employee's future retirement income. Tonight was very good news for our employees. He thanked Council for their support and the employees for their continued hard work.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS: *The second public comment period is for any issue. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes. Please state your name & address. Comments that require a response may not be answered during this time. The Council or staff may respond at a later date.*

XII. STAFF COMMENTS

Mayor Dial stated that at the last meeting, Council and staff decided to go to a different communication mechanism where the staff reports to Council would become more public.

Mr. Langford briefed Council on all 42 ongoing Town Public Works projects. He first gave a Shout-Out to Police Corporal Tony Koranda for completing a stormwater pollution course and essentially reported potential illicit discharge on a site.

Mr. Langford stated that out of the 42 projects, 9 were still in the architect and engineering phase, 27 were under design, and 6 were under construction. He began with the intersection of Rockwood/Senoia/Crabapple's four-way stop which was complete. The Palmetto/Spencer/Arrowood round-a-bout was in the land acquisition phase. The Palmetto/Senoia intersection study results were coming to Council soon. The Swanson Road traffic study was 90% complete. The Dogwood Trail resurfacing project with Fayette County was still under design and maybe bid on this summer. He stated that the 2024 asphalt resurfacing project was at 25% competition, bidding should take place in February.

The Tyrone Road multi-use path was almost complete, contractors ran into a drainage issue that was being resolved. The streetscape project near Gunnin Graphics and Partners Pizza design plans were at 90% completion with bidding in February.

The Senoia/Spencer multiuse path was under design and land acquisition, bidding in February. The Laurelwood Road multi-use path was under design and at 25%, and the Tullamore/Greencastle Road multi-use path was also at 25% and under design. The surveying on the Sandy Creek multi-use path was at 50% of completion.

The East Crestwood multiuse path and resurfacing project was moving forward as of tonight's approval of the Keck & Wood agreement. The 2024 sidewalk repairs project was substantially complete. He stated that the emergency access road in Shamrock Industrial Park was in the stage of procuring the architecture and engineering. The larger downtown streetscaping project was in the architect and engineering phase, and the 2024 road stripping project and the 2024 road signage project were both moving forward. He stated that facilities and grounds projects along with the museum project were being scoped. The Veterans Park flag pole was under design, there would be 3 poles on one side and 2 on the other, with a sidewalk realignment.

The Handley Park restroom was under design, and the 881 Senoia Road/garage project was under design. That project was also under discussion regarding the Statewide procurement process. Mr. Langford stated that the Pickleball court only had punch list items to complete. The Handley Park Public Works building was under design and legal was assisting with the procurement process. He stated that under vegetative control, tree pruning would take place on Castlewood Road. The Shamrock Park improvements were moving forward in the design phase. The demolition planning for 969 Senoia Road was 75% complete and should begin sometime next week. He added that the demolition should be complete in January and that the two wells on site would be abandoned in place.

He stated that the Pendleton Dam upgrade plans were in the permitting process, and the grant decision was still underway. The Adams Lake Dam was in the evaluation process, then the homeowners would be contacted regarding the property along the dam. He stated that the Handley Park Dam was evaluated by staff with a camera and was found to be in fairly good shape with some disjointment. The Shamrock Park Dam was 50% complete with the designs on the spillway side. The Pendelton Dam Culvert project was completed. The 2023 culvert designs were complete and should be bid in February. The 2024 culvert replacement projects were being scoped. He stated that the downtown parking project was being scoped and a part of the 969 Senoia Road project.

Mr. Langford then moved to sewer projects. The annual and emergency contacts were approximately 60% complete. The sewer manhole repair project was also 60% complete. The 90% plans were expected in January and bidding would take place in March. The Southampton sewer manhole stabilization project was 60% under design. The pump station #2 generator was going to be scoped with Mr. Carson (new employee) and bid in March. He added that staff was also working on pump station #4.

Lastly, the 2024 sewer infrastructure repairs for pipes, pipe holes, manholes, and lift stations. That project should have an architect and engineering contact before Council in February.

Council Member Campbell clarified that all projects were on the Town's website. Mr. Langford shared that the project list did not include all of the tiny projects that staff were working on.

Council Member Howard asked for clarification regarding the multi-use path on Laurelwood Road. Mr. Langford stated that the path would begin at the paved section of Laurelwood and travel down Briarwood to the unpaved section of Laurelwood, connecting the two with some asphalt.

XIII. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Campbell thanked Amy Godfrey for her service to the Town. He congratulated Issac Godfrey and Judge Shy for their appointments. He congratulated Jessica Whelan and Dia Hunter on their appointments. He thanked Council Members Linda Howard and Melissa Hill for their years of service to the Town.

Council Member Hill thanked everyone for their patience when she was new to Council.

Council Member Campbell wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

XV. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn.

Motion made by Council Member Howard.

Voting Yea: Council Member Hill, Council Member Campbell, Council Member Furr.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

By: _____
Eric Dial, Mayor

Attest: _____
Dee Baker, Town Clerk