

## Meeting Minutes of The Mayor and City Council

October 5, 2021 at 7:00PM

A meeting of the Thomaston Mayor and City Council was held on Tuesday, October 5, 2021, at 7:00 pm on the main floor of the Thomaston-Upson Government Complex, in the City-County meeting room. This meeting was open to the public as well as live-streamed on The Thomaston City YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCR1F8V1o6j-67nNYbOysNwg>).

Mayor J.D. Stallings called the meeting to order and was in attendance with Councilmembers Don Greathouse, Jeff Middlebrooks, Ryan Tucker, Doug Head, and Lakeitha Reeves. Others in attendance included: Russell Thompson, City Manager; Deann Wheeler, City Attorney; Corporal Conner Dix; Officer Justin Sanders; Corporal Jared Fordham; Officer Jake Janovsky; Officer David McCoy; Officer Tamara Hand; Corporal Joshua Warren; Mike Richardson, Police Chief; Taylor Smith, Economic Development Coordinator; Renee Harris, Fire Chief; Chairman of Community Relations Committee Reverend James McGill; Priscilla McCoy Community Relations Committee Member; and Oasis Nichols, Deputy City Clerk.

Mayor Stallings asked Councilmember Head to lead the meeting with a prayer, followed by the pledge of allegiance.

A. Call Meeting to Order / Invocation / Pledge of Allegiance

B. Approval of Minutes for August 19, 2021 (Joint Project & Budget Meeting), and September 21 (Regular) Meeting - A motion was made by Councilmember Greathouse, seconded by Councilmember Middlebrooks to approve the minutes for August 19, 2021 (Joint Project & Budget Meeting) and September 21 (Regular) meeting minutes as written. Those voting include: Councilmembers Greathouse, Middlebrooks, Tucker, Reeves, and Head. All votes were yes and the vote was carried out unanimously.

C. Adoption of Agenda – Mr. Thompson requested that we add the introduction and swearing-in of two new officers as well as recognize some of the current officers for jobs well done. Mr. Thompson stated that council requested that we table agenda item four (Discussion and Authorization to Set Vacant Unit (3 Bedroom) Rent Rate.) Mr. Thompson also asked that agenda item seven is moved to after the executive session. A motion was made by Councilmember Middlebrooks, seconded by Councilmember Head to approve the meeting agenda as amended. Those voting include: Councilmembers Greathouse, Middlebrooks, Tucker, Reeves, and Head. All votes were yes and the vote was carried out unanimously.

Police Chief Richardson recognized several officers for their good works and bravery. The officers are listed as follows:

- Corporal Conner Dix and officer Justin Sanders were recognized for their outstanding actions and response to a small child medical crisis call.
- Officer Jake Janovsky was recognized for his bravery and apprehension of a suspect after being assaulted with gun.
- Corporal Jared Fordham received commendation for a job well done tracking a missing juvenile with police K9 Beno. Councilmember Tucker stated that City Council sends their condolences for Corporal Fordham and his family's recent loss.
- Officer David McCoy received commendation for his observation, quick thinking, and apprehension of a murder suspect from The Columbus Police Department.
- New officer Tamara Hand who has recently graduated from police academy was sworn-in.
- New certified and experienced officer Corporal Joshua Warren was also sworn-in.

Mayor Stallings Thanked Police Chief Richardson for his leadership and all of the police department for their hard work and dedication. He stated that our police department is frequently complimented and is supported by City Council and this community.

D. City Attorney's Report – None.

E. City Clerk's Report – City Council was reminded of two vacancies on The Historic Preservation Committee and two vacancies on The Community Relations Committee.

F. City Engineer's Report – None.

G. City Manager's Report –

1. Discussion and Action of R.E. Lee Institute Presentation of Recommendation from The Community Relations Committee – Mr. Thompson introduced the Community Relations Committee Chairman Reverend McGill to speak on the committee's recommendation. Reverend McGill made a statement that back in 1970, eight men made a recommendation to the Board of Education regarding changing the name of The R.E. Lee Institute. Reverend McGill stated the committee's recommendation to City Council was to remove the R.E. Lee name from the building. Mayor Stallings made a personal statement that The Community Relations Committee does not serve the interest of our citizens and he asked Council to not accept their recommendation but to entertain a motion to disband the committee. The mayor then opened the floor up for discussion by Council. Councilmember Reeves stated that this committee only met once with all of the districts represented. She stated she would like to see all districts represented and for the committee to review this topic again. Councilmember Head stated that this was a difficult topic and that both sides should be represented in a broader discussion. Councilmember Tucker stated that the recommendation verbally given by Chairman Reverend McGill was not the recommendation and or memorandum provided to City Council. Mayor Stallings asked Chairman Reverend McGill for calcification on the

recommendation. Chairman Reverend McGill stated that his personal recommendation that was verbally stated be overridden and the recommendation of relocating by the committee be accepted. Councilmember Tucker stated that from the perspective of his constituents they would like to see other pressing issues addressed by this committee. Councilmember Middlebrooks asked if Councilmember Greathouse and Tucker thought they could find anyone to represent their districts. Greathouse stated he recently had two people who were interested. Tucker stated that he had one person who did show interest but would like to see more than the R.E. Lee topic addressed. A motion was made by Councilmember Head, seconded by Councilmember Tucker to not accept the Community Relations Committee recommendation. Those voting include: Councilmembers Greathouse - yes, Middlebrooks – yes, Tucker – yes, Reeves – no (She stated she is in favor of the recommendation made by the committee.), and Head - yes.

2. Adoption of The Downtown Master Plan (Presented by WLA Studios at September 21, 2021 Meeting)– Mr. Thompson explained that at the last meeting this document was presented but not officially adopted therefore staff recommends the adoption of the Downtown Master Plan as presented at the last council meeting. A motion was made by Councilmember Head, seconded by Councilmember Greathouse to officially adopt the Master Plan. Those voting include: Councilmembers Greathouse, Middlebrooks, Tucker, Reeves, and Head. All votes were yes and the vote was carried out unanimously.
  
3. Discussion and Authorization of IDA Joint Sewer Agreement – Mr. Thompson explained this is a three-party agreement between the county, the city, and IDA. This agreement is a complement to the intergovernmental agreement between the city and the county that is currently executed. A motion was made by Councilmember Tucker, seconded by Councilmember Middlebrooks to authorize Mayor Stallings to execute this agreement. Those voting include: Councilmembers Greathouse, Middlebrooks, Tucker, Reeves, and Head. All votes were yes and the vote was carried out unanimously.

4. Discussion and Authorization to Set Vacant Unit (3 Bedroom) Rent Rate – This item was tabled to be added to the next city council agenda after a work session has been scheduled. No action was taken.
5. Discussion and Authorization of Fire and Police Department Agility Tests – Mr. Thompson explained there will be a phase in process and the Police Chief Richardson and Fire Chief Harris both gave a brief explanation of their department's agility test. A motion was made by Councilmember Greathouse, seconded by Reeves. Those voting include: Councilmembers Greathouse, Middlebrooks, Tucker, Reeves, and Head. All votes were yes and the vote was carried out unanimously.
6. Authorization of Requisition Approval for Self-Contained Breathing Apparatuses for The Fire Department – Mr. Thompson stated this was a budgeted expenditure for the Fire Department but due to the amount of the purchase it must be brought before Council. A motion was made by Councilmember Reeves, seconded by Councilmember Tucker to approve the purchase of the self-contained breathing apparatuses for the Fire Department. Those voting include: Councilmembers Greathouse, Middlebrooks, Tucker, Reeves, and Head. All votes were a yes and the vote was carried out unanimously
7. Authorization to Execute Listing Agreement for Pobiddy Road Property – This topic was moved to be discussed after executive session.

#### H. Other Business –

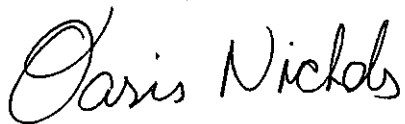
1. Georgia Cities Week – Mr. Taylor Smith briefly spoke about the Georgia Cities Week events and activities going on.

2. Ordinance Number 1157 – Councilmember Head mentioned he had some concerns with the setbacks in the trash ordinance amendment that may need to be readdressed.
  3. Golf Carts – Councilmember Head also mentioned he would be interested in seeing how other communities are allowing the usage of gold carts in their cities.
- I. Executive Session / Discussion/Potential Action - A motion was made by Councilmember Tucker, seconded by Councilmember Reeves to enter into an executive session regarding real estate. Those voting include: Councilmembers Greathouse, Middlebrooks, Tucker, Reeves, and Head. All votes were a yes and the vote was carried out unanimously to enter into executive session at 8:08pm. The executive session ended and the meeting was back open to the public at 9:05pm.

A recommendation was made for City Council to authorize the City Manager and City Attorney to reach to the Upson County Manager regarding this agreement for the Pobiddy Road Property. A motion was made by Councilmember Reeves, seconded by Councilmember Head to authorize the City Manager and City Attorney to reach out to the Upson County Manager regarding this agreement. Those voting include: Councilmembers Greathouse, Middlebrooks, Tucker, Reeves, and Head. All votes were yes and the vote was carried out unanimously.

J. Adjournment - A motion was made by Councilmember Reeves, seconded by Councilmember Tucker to adjourn the meeting at 9:07pm. All votes were yes and the vote was carried out unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



Oasis Nichols

Deputy City Clerk