



**Regular Meeting of the Mayor and City Council
City of Ball Ground, Georgia
Ball Ground City Hall ~ 7:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES
January 12, 2023**

Item 1: Meeting Called to Order by Mayor Roberts.

City Clerk Karen Jordan administered the Oath of Office to Newly Elected Council Members Scott Barnes, Vicki Benefield, and Annette Homiller. Each will serve a four-year term.

Council Members Present: Scott Barnes, Vicki Benefield, Annette Homiller, Dennis Nelson, and Kristine Rogers

Staff Present: City Attorney Whit Frost, Finance Director Donna England, Police Chief Bryon Reeves, City Planner Chris Luly, City Manager Eric Wilmarth and City Clerk Karen Jordan.

Recognition of Veteran of the Month – Council Member Nelson

Council Member Dennis Nelson recognized Specialist 4 Ronald P. Luchan (Ronnie) As Veteran of the Month. Sadly, Mr. Luchan passed away in December. His wife Mary accepted the honor on his behalf posthumously. Mr. Luchan served in the US Army from 1966 to 1972.

Item 2: Pledge of Allegiance led by Mary Luchan, wife of Specialist 4 Ronnie Luchan

Item 3: Approve Agenda

Council Member Benefield put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Rogers to approve the meeting agenda with the following amendment: Remove Item 7(a) Consider Application for Alcohol License submitted by David Westrick & Gary Lamb

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Item 4: Appearances

James Bence, Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC - Presentation of Financial Audit for Period Ended June 30, 2022

Mr. Bence stated the firm has issued an unmodified audit report (i.e., “clean opinion”). The financial statements are considered to present fairly the financial position and results of cooperation as of, and for the year ended June 30, 2022

Mr. Bence commended Donna England, Finance Director, City Manager Wilmarth and Staff for their excellent recording keeping and corporation during the audit.

Mayor Roberts and Council Members also commended Donna and her staff for their continued efforts to ensure our receipt of the Government Finance Officers Association Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

Item 5: Announcements – City Manager Wilmarth

City Hall closed Monday, January 16 in observance of Martin Luther King Day

Item 6: Approval of December 8, 2022 Council Meeting Minutes

Council Member Rogers put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Benefield to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2022 Council Meeting.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Item 7: Old Business

a) Item removed.

b) Consider Second Reading of Hough/Cherry Grove Deannexation Application

Council Member Rogers put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Barnes to approve the second reading of the request for deannexation by Hough/Cherokee Grove.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Item 8: New Business

a) Consider Appointment of Mayor Pro Tem

Mayor Roberts asked council members to consider Council Member Nelson for Mayor Pro Tem for the ensuing year.

Council Member Benefield put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Homiller to appoint Council Member Dennis Nelson as Mayor Pro Tem for the ensuing year.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

b) Consider Appointment of 2023 Department Heads, Committees, and Board Members

Council Member Benefield put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Nelson, to approve the following committee appointments as recommended by Mayor Roberts.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Finance, Insurance and Personnel

Scott Barnes, Chair; Kris Rogers and Donna England

Parks and Recreation

Annette Homiller, Chair; Vicki Benefield and Karen Jordan

Roads, Streets, and Sidewalk

Vicki Benefield, Chair; Annette Homiller and Chris Luly

Water, Sewer, and Sanitation

Dennis Nelson, Chair; Scott Barnes and Eric Wilmarth

Public Safety

Kris Rogers, Chair; Dennis Nelson and Bryon Reeves

Mayor Roberts serves as an ex-officio member of each Committee.

Council Member Barnes put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Nelson to approve the appointment of the following:

Municipal Court Judge – Scott Poole

Municipal Court Clerk – Karla Weaver

Cherokee Co Planning Commission – Scott Barnes

Council Member Benefield put forth a motion, Seconded by Council

Tree Board – Sally Eubanks, Jennie Byers, Dennis Holt, and Karen Jordan

Zoning Board of Appeals – David Kubala, Daniel Sission, Jennie Byers, Scott Barnes, and Stephanie Joyner

Motion Unanimously Approved.

c) Reaffirm Check Signers for any/all banking/checking accounts.

Council Member Benefield put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Barnes to appoint Mayor Roberts, City Clerk Karen Jordan, City Manager Eric Wilmarth, and Police Chief Bryon Reeves to sign any and all checks \$500.00 and over for any and all City banking/checking accounts.

Motion Unanimously Approved

d) Consider Establishing and Fixing Qualifying Fees for Municipal Elections per O.C.G.A. §21-2-131(1)(a)

Council Member Benefield put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Barnes to establish a qualifying fee of \$108.00 for the Office of Mayor and \$35.00 for the Office of Council Member.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

e) Consider Arbor Day Proclamation

Council Member Nelson put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Homiller proclaiming Friday, February 17, 2023 as Arbor Day in the City of Ball Ground.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Mayor Roberts said tree planting would take place on Friday, February 17, 2023 at a place and time to be determined. Mayor Roberts also noted that Ball Ground was first designated as a Tree City in 1989 and was the first city in the county to achieve this honor.

f) Consider GMA Lease Purchase Hydro Vac Excavator

City Manager Wilmarth requested authorization to enter into a Georgia Municipal Association Lease Purchase Agreement to obtain a CV SGT Vacuum Excavator by Vermeer. Recently there have been incidents where having this equipment would have been most beneficial. It is anticipated that the formal quote would be around \$70,000.00. The lease purchase agreement would have a 3.97% interest rate with monthly payments estimated at \$1,466.77.

Council Member Nelson put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Barnes to enter into a lease purchase agreement through the Georgia Municipal Association to purchase the Hydro Vac Excavator.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

g) Consider Updated Intergovernmental Agreement for Cherokee County to Conduct Elections for the City of Ball Ground.

Council Member Rogers put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Nelson to enter into a Intergovernmental Agreement with Cherokee County for the purpose of the Cherokee County Board of Elections and Registration with regard to the preparation for, conduction and administration of primaries and elections , succeed to and exercise all duties and powers granted to and incumbent upon the election superintendent pursuant to Title 21 of the O.C.G.A.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Item 9: City Manager Comments

City Manager Wilmarth provided Council Members with an unaudited report of account balances, and statement of revenues and expenditures for the month ended December 31, 2022. The report showed cash on deposit totaled \$2,815,178.43.

City Manager Wilmarth provided updates on several city projects.

Chief Reeves provided Mayor Roberts and Council Members with a written report of the Police Departments monthly activity for period ended December 31, 2022.

Item 10: Mayor Roberts announced that the annual council planning retreat would be held on Saturday, February 25 at the Senior Center. Council Members were asked to report on an item they considered important to the city.

Item 11: Council Comments

Council Members Benefield, Nelson and Rogers welcomed newly elected Council Members Barnes and Homiller. Council Members also expressed their sympathy to employee David Dean in the recent passing of his mother.

Item 12: Public Comments

Employee David Dean expressed his thanks to Mayor Roberts, Council Members and Staff for their support during the recent illness and passing of his mother.

Item 13: Executive Session (If Needed)

Item 14: Adjourn

There being no further business for consideration Council Member Homiller put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Barnes to adjourn this meeting at 8:05 PM.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

The minutes of this January 12, 2023 City Council Meeting approved this 9th Day of February, 2023.