



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

**MINUTES
January 11, 2024**

Item 1: Meeting Called to Order by Mayor Rick Roberts.

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

Staff Present: Chris Luly, Donna England, Bryon Reeves, Darrell Caudill, Eric Wilmarth and Karen Jordan

Mayor Roberts recognized the Ball Ground Boy Scout Troop 1755 for their attendance at tonight's meeting.

Recognize Veteran of the Month - Mayor Pro Tem Nelson Recognize Veteran of the Month Mr. Gregory See. A proclamation was presented to Mr. See along with a challenge coin for his service.

Item 2: Pledge of Allegiance led by Veteran of the Month, Mr. Gregory See

Item 3: Approve Agenda

Council Member Benefield put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Homiller to approve the meeting agenda as proposed.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Item 4: Appearances

James Bence, Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC - Presentation of Financial Audit for Period Ended June 30, 2023.

James Bence provided Mayor Roberts and Council Members with the results of the annual audit for the period ended June 30, 2023. Mr. Bence stated that it is the responsibility of his team to perform the audit under Auditing Standards Generally Accepted in the United States of America. They considered the internal control structure for the purpose of expressing their opinion on the City's basic financial statements and not for the purpose of providing assurance on the internal control structure.

Mr. Bence stated that information provided 2023 Basic Financial Statements the City received an unmodified ("clean") opinion on the basic financial statements. The financial report package contains a report on tests performed by Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC of the City's internal controls and compliance with laws, regulations, etc. The report dated December 12, 2023, is not intended to provide an opinion on internal controls and compliance with applicable rules and regulations performed and required by Government Auditing Standards.

Mr. Bence thanked Donna, City management and staff for their full cooperation while performing the audit.

Mayor Roberts and council members also thanked Donna England and her staff for the effort they put forth to ensure the City receives a clean audit each year.

Item 5: Announcements – City Manager

January 24 – State of the County Meeting
February 16 – Arbor Day
March 2 – Council Planning Retreat
April 6 – BBQ & Brews

Item 6: Approval of December 14, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

Council Member Barnes put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Benefield, to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2023 meeting as submitted in writing by the City Clerk.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Item 7: Old Business - None

Item 8: New Business

a) **Consider Appointment of Mayor Pro Tem**

Council Member Barnes put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Homiller to approve the appointment of Dennis Nelson as Mayor Pro Tem for the ensuing year.

Motion Unanimously Approved

b) **Consider Appointment of Committees and Board Members**

Council Member Nelson put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Benefield to approve the appointment of the following committees.

Finance, Insurance and Personnel
Annette Homiller, Chair
Kris Rogers
Donna England

Parks and Recreation
Scott Barnes, Chair
Vicki Benefield
Annette Homiller
Karen Jordan

Roads, Streets, and Sidewalks
Vicki Benefield, Chair
Annette Homiller
Chris Luly

Water, Sewer, and Sanitation
Dennis Nelson, Chair
Scott Barnes
Eric Wilmarth
Public Safety

**Kris Rogers, Chair
Dennis Nelson
Bryon Reeves**

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Council Member Benefield put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Nelson to approve the appointment of Scott Poole as Municipal Court Judge for the ensuing year.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Council Member Barnes put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Homiller to approve the appointment of Karla Weaver as Municipal Court Clerk for the ensuing year.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Council Member Homiller put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Nelson to approve the appointment of Karen Hawkins, Jennie Byers, Dennis Holt, and Karen Jordan to serve as members of the Tree Board for the ensuing year.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

- c) **Consider Mayor Roberts, City Clerk Karen Jordan, City Manager Eric Wilmarth and Director of Planning and Zoning Chris Luly as Check Signers for any/all banking/checking accounts; checks \$500.00 plus requires two signatures.**

Council Member Benefield put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Nelson to approve the appointment of Mayor Roberts, City Clerk Karen Jordan, City Manager Eric Wilmarth and Director of Planning and Zoning Chris Luly as check signers for the ensuing year and to require all checks in the amount of \$500.00 or greater be signed by any two of these appointed.

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 Homiller put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Barnes, to establish the 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 (February 16, 2024)**

Council Member Homiller put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Benefield proclaiming Friday, February 16, 2024 as Arbor Day in the City of Ball Ground.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Mayor Roberts stated that the tree planting would take place on Friday, February 16, 2024 at a place and time to be decided. 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 Appointment to the Cherokee County Development Authority**

Council Member Benefield put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Barnes to approve the appointment of Mayor Roberts to serve on the Cherokee County Development Authority Board of Directors.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

g) **Consider First Reading of Metro District Model Stormwater Ordinance**

Council Member Barnes put forward a motion, Second by Council Member Homiller, to approve the first reading of An Ordinance creating Subpart B. – Land Development: Chapter 111. – Watershed Protection: Section 9. – Post-Construction Stormwater Management for new development and redevelopment, of the Code of the City of Ball Ground, Georgia to establish minimum requirements and procedures to control the adverse effects of increased post-construction stormwater runoff and nonpoint source pollution associated with new development and redevelopment.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

h) **Consider Amendment to Stream Buffer Ordinance Subpart B-Land Development Sec. 107-6(a). - Administrative appeal and judicial review & Sec. 107-9(b)(1&2). - Land development requirements.**

Council Member Nelson put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Homiller to approve the first reading of An Ordinance Subpart B. – Land Development: Chapter 107. – Sections 6. and 7. – Stream Buffer Protection i. Outlines the process and timeline to appeal decisions of the administrator. ii. Places authority with City Council instead of Zoning Board of Appeals

Motion Unanimously Approved.

b) **Division 108. Administrative and Enforcement – Section 108.2 Administrative Variances**

Council Homiller put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Barnes to approve Amendment to An Ordinance Subpart B. – Land Development: Section 108.2 Administrative Variances to which the amendment is to remove the power of staff to grant variances and grant power to the Board of Zoning Appeals to consider all variance request.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

c) **Division 109. Board of Zoning Appeals – Section 109.3 Powers and Duties.**

Council Member Benefield put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Homiller to approve an Amendment to An Ordinance Subpart B. – Land Development: Appendix A – Zoning Division 109.3 Board of Zoning Appeals Powers and Duties to which the amendment is to define what an implementation of a variance is and to provide guidance for multi-phase projects that have been granted variances.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

i) Consider Metro District Model Building Code Change (Plumbing)

Council Member Homiller put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Barnes to adopt A Resolution requesting the Georgia Department of Community Affairs grant permission to implement a more restrictive plumbing code in the City of Ball Ground so to comply with the requirements of Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's 2022 Water Resources Plan in the WSWC-8 Action Item on Metro Water District -Water Efficiency Code Requirements.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

j) Consider Adopt Zoning Map

Council Member Barnes put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Benefield, to approve the Official Zoning Map of the City of Ball Ground as submitted.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

k) Consider Amendment to Schedule of Fees

Council Member Benefield put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Homiller to approve the following fees related to Planning and Zoning services.

Residential Development Plan Review – Application Fee

0-10 acres	\$100.+Cost of Engineer Review
10. 1-50 acres	\$150. +Cost of Engineer Review
50. 1-100 acres	\$200. +Cost of Engineer Review
100. 1 + acres	\$250. +Cost of Engineer Review

Commercial Development Plan Review – Application Fee

0-10 acres	\$100.+Cost of Engineer Review
10. 1-50 acres	\$150. +Cost of Engineer Review
50. 1-100 acres	\$200. +Cost of Engineer Review
100. 1 + acres	\$250. +Cost of Engineer Review

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Item 9: City Manager Comments

Chief Reeves provided the Mayor and City Council with a written and oral report of the department's activities for the month ended December 31, 2023.

City Manager Wilmarth provided the mayor and council with updates regarding ongoing projects in the city. Several of the projects mentioned was the construction progress of the proposed round-a-bout at Howell Bridge Rd and Hwy 5, installation of new downtown crosswalk signals, renovation of the playground in Calvin Farmer Park, proposed plans to expand well house, upcoming public meetings to solicit input from residents on how to plan for the future of Calvin Farmer Park and opening of RFP'S on January 17 for solid waste services.

Item 10: Mayor Roberts

Mayor Roberts announced that the City will be recognized at the Awards Luncheon during the GMA Cities United Summit Awards Luncheon at the Hilton Atlanta on Sunday, January 28th at 12:15 p.m.

Mayor Roberts stated that he along with Council Members Barnes and Homiller will be attending the GMA Cities United Summit for training.

Item 11: Council Comments

Council Member Homiller asked that council members consider the city participation in GMA's Equity and Inclusion program.

Council Members expressed their appreciation to the Ball Ground Boy Scout Troop 1755 for their attendance at tonight's meeting. Each council member also expressed their appreciation to Finance Director Donna England and staff for their work in receiving an unqualified or "clean audit" opinion.

Item 12: Public Comments

Item 13: Executive Session

Council Member Benefield put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Homiller to adjourn into executive session according to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-3(6).

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Council Member Benefield put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member BARNED to reconvene back into regular session.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Item 14: Adjourn

There being no further business for council consideration Council Member Benefield put forward a motion, Seconded by Council Member Homiller to adjourn the meeting.

Motion Unanimously Approved.

Respectfully submitted by:
Karen L. Jordan, City Clerk