



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

**MINUTES  
December 9, 2021**

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

**Council Members and Staff Present:**

**Vicki Benefield – Council Member  
John Byrd – Council Member  
Mickey O’Maley – Council Member  
Lee Prettyman – Council Member  
Andrenia Stoner – Council Member  
Darrell Caudill, City Attorney  
Donna England, Finance Director  
Chris Luly – Director of Planning & Zoning  
Eric Wilmarth, City Manager  
Bryon Reeves, Chief of Police  
Officer Matt Young  
Karen L. Jordan, City Clerk**

**Item 2: Pledge of Allegiance**

**Item 3: Approve Agenda**

**Council Member Stoner put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Byrd to approve the agenda.  
Motion Unanimously approved.**

**Item 4: Appearances - None**

**Item 5: Public Comments – None**

**Item 6: Announcements/Informational Items/Project Updates**

**Mayor commended Eric and staff on how good the downtown Christmas decorations look.**

**City Manager Wilmarth announced the following upcoming events for 2022.**

**April 30, 2022 – Bar-B-Q and Brews Festival  
June 25 – Annual Fire Works Display  
Dec 2 – Parade of the Toys Parade for Toys for Tots**

**Jan 4 - Loyd Development Services Public Hearing will be held by the Cherokee County Planning Commission at the County Administrative Building**

**Jan 13 - Public Hearing will be held prior to Council Meeting related to the Stan Fitts Development**

**Item 7: Approval of November 18, 2021, Council Meeting**

**Council Member Prettyman put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Stoner to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2021, Council Meeting as submitted in writing by the City Clerk.  
Motion Unanimously approved.**

**Item 8: Old Business - None**

**Item 9: New Business**

- a) Consider Certain Items for Surplus: 14,000 lb. Utility trailer and Santa Sleigh**

**City Manager Wilmarth stated the 14,000 lb. utility trailer is no longer useful to the city. A minimum bid of \$3,000 has be set for the utility trailer. The sleigh is more of prop and is unsafe for use by the city. No reserve has been set for the sleigh. If no bids are received the sleigh will be discarded.**

**Council Member O'Malley put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Benefield to advertise the 14,000 lb. utility trailer and Santa Sleigh on GovDeals with a minimum bid of \$3,000.00 for the utility trailer and no minimum bid for the sleigh. Sleigh to be discarded if no bids received.**

**Motion Unanimously approved.**

- b) Consider Authorization of Actuarial Study of Three (3) Year Buy-back in Defined Benefit Plan**

**Mayor Roberts proposed council members consider approval of an expenditure of \$2,100.00 to conduct an Actuarial Study to determine the cost to purchase three years of service into the City's Defined Benefits Plan.**

**City Manager Wilmarth stated that the Actuarial Study will decide if it's possible and what the actual cost would be to buy in the three (3) additional years of service. The buy in would apply to those employed at the time the plan was implemented in 2017.**

**Council Member Stoner put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Byrd to approve the expenditure of \$2,100.00 for an Actuarial Study related to the City's Defined Benefits Plan.**

**Motion Unanimously approved.**

- c) **Consider Resolution Adopting the Cherokee County 2021 Hazard Mitigation Plan**

**Mayor Roberts stated that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has required that every county and municipality have a pre-disaster mitigation plan in place and requires the adoption of such plans in order to receive funding from the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. This resolution shows that the plan has been adopted by the Mayor and City Council on this date.**

**Council Member Benefield put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Byrd to adopt Resolution No. 2021-R08 stating that Mayor and City Council has adopted the Cherokee County 2021 Hazard Mitigation Plan.**

**Motion Unanimously approved.**

- d) **Consider First Reding of Application for Alcohol License**  
**Applicant: Raul De La Vega/BG Tavern, LLC**  
**Location: 270 Gilmer Ferry Road**

**Mayor Roberts said this application is for a new restaurant in downtown. The restaurant is BG Tavern and located in the building which formally housed Rosario's Italian Restaurant.**

**Council Member Byrd put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member O'Malley to approve the first reading of this application for a new alcohol license submitted by Raul De La Vega.**

**Motion unanimously approved.**

**Item 10: City Manager Comments**

**City Manager Wilmarth provided Council Members with an unaudited report of account balances, and statement of revenue and expenditures for the month ended November 30, 2021. Accounts on deposit totaled \$2,056,210.02.**

**City Manager Wilmarth provided an update on several Capital Improvement Projects that are ongoing.**

**Mayor Roberts and Council Members was asked by City Manager Wilmarth to consider authorizing an expenditure of up to \$20,000.00 for a traffic study of twenty (20) intersections in the downtown area and radar permit studies of Old Dawsonville Road and Valley Street. The study would be paid with monies from the SPLOST account. The study would define what changes need to be made to the different intersections. The company doing the study is A&R Engineering from Marietta, GA**

**Council Member Prettyman put forth a motion, Seconded by Council Member Byrd to authorize the expenditure of up to \$20,000.00 for a traffic study by A&R Engineering from Marietta, GA.**

**City Manager Wilmarth stated that a meeting would be held with Johnson-Laux on Friday, December 10, 2021, to issue a notice to proceed for the construction of the new police station. It is estimated the building will be completed in ten to eleven months.**

**Chief Reeves presented a written report of the Police Department's activities for the month ended November 30, 2021.**

#### **Item 11: Mayor Roberts Comments**

**Mayor Roberts commented on the decline in the number of COVID cases reported in Cherokee County. He said it is good to see the decline and encourage those not vaccinated to get vaccinated.**

**Mayor Roberts stated that normally the annual council planning retreat is held in January or February, however this year he would like to wait until March to schedule it. The newly elected council members will attend training in February and thought best the retreat be held afterwards. He also encouraged the newly elected officials to attend training whenever possible.**

#### **Item 12: Council Comments**

**Council Member O'Malley reported that the annual Christmas Basketball Tournament would be held in City Gym while the county school system is out for the Christmas/New Year Holidays.**

**Council Member O'Malley thanked Mayor Roberts, Council Member and staff for the years of service he has done for the City that he loves. He said to the new members coming on board that he hoped they would continue the same service as he and John tried to do for the City. It has been an adventure that he has enjoyed. He also encouraged the newly elected council members to take advantage of the conventions and meetings.**

**Mayor Roberts thanked Council Member O'Malley for his years of service and the hours he has put forth to achieve his Certificate of Recognition and Achievement from the Carl Vinson Institute of Government.**

**Council Member Byrd said it has been an honor and privilege to serve the people of Ball Ground that has become a family to him. He recounted on the time when he and his family moved to Ball Ground some 30 years ago.**

**Mayor Roberts said it has been an honor and privilege to work with both Council Members O'Malley and Byrd. He also thanked Council Member Byrd for the hours he put forth to achieve his Certificate of Recognition and Achievement from the Carl Vinson Institute of Government**

**Council Member Prettyman said it had been an honor for him to work with Council Members O'Malley and Byrd. He also thanked Eric and his staff for all they did to make the Parade of the Toys for Toys for Tots a success.**

**Item 13: Executive Session If Needed**

**Item 13: Adjourn**

**A motion was duly made and seconded to adjourn the meeting for a reception to honor Council Members Byrd and O'Malley.**

**The minutes of this December 9, 2021 City Council Meeting approved this 13<sup>th</sup> Day of January 2022**