



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE OXFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING  
WORK SESSION  
MONDAY, JUNE 24, 2024 – 6:30 PM  
CITY HALL**

**ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

David Eady - Mayor  
George Holt – Councilmember  
Jim Windham – Councilmember  
Laura McCanless – Councilmember  
Jeff Wearing – Councilmember  
Mike Ready – Councilmember  
Erik Oliver – Councilmember

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Marcia Brooks – City Clerk/Treasurer  
Bill Andrew – City Manager  
Mark Anglin – Police Chief  
Jody Reid – Supervisor of Maintenance and  
Utilities  
David Strickland – City Attorney

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Laura Gafnea (Oxford College); Art Vinson; Mike McQuaide

**Agenda** (Attachment A)

**1. Mayor’s Announcements**

The City Council and staff discussed parking issues during the July 4<sup>th</sup> parade.

**2. Committee Reports**

- a. **Trees, Parks, and Recreation Board** – Mike Ready provided the report.
- b. **Planning Commission** – No report.
- c. **Downtown Development Authority** – No report.
- d. **Sustainability Committee** – No report.

**3. Review of Whatcoat Street bids** (Attachment B)

The bid from Peach State Construction is recommended for approval.

Laura McCanless asked questions:

- 1. Can curb alternatives be requested that are kinder to wildlife?
- 2. Why was the island included?
- 3. Why were the parking slots included?

Bill Andrew stated that the specifications cannot be changed unless the job is rebid. After a bid is accepted, changes can be negotiated in the actual contract. Mayor Eady also stated that he did

not believe leaving out the parking slots and island would make a significant difference in price if Ms. McCanless' concern is cost.

Erik Oliver asked if the bids are good until FY 2026 since the money was not included in the budget for FY 2025. Mayor Eady stated that his assumption is there would be a price adjustment if the work is delayed, or the budget for FY 2025 would need to be amended if the work is started sooner than FY 2026.

Ms. McCanless and Mike Ready were in favor of accepting the recommended bid as stated and negotiating changes during contract negotiations. George Holt stated that he has conceded that the project is going to go forward, and he will not try to block it.

Erik Oliver stated that he is opposed to going forward with the Whatcoat Street project. He asked if the City is required to make a decision now as opposed to waiting until all factors are known. His understanding was the bids were considered information gathering to get accurate cost estimates. He did not expect the bids would result in committing to a contract. He also thought there would be an inquiry about cost sharing with the developer.

Mayor Eady stated that some of the Whatcoat Street work can happen concurrent with building. If the City chooses to rebid, it's a certainty that the bids will be over \$1 million.

Mr. Holt stated that Mr. Oliver's assertions are exactly what were said previously.

Mayor Eady stated that the developer is not in a position to cost share on the cost of the road. They are in a position to make all the improvements in the Town Center area.

Bill Andrew stated that Main Street Developers is negotiating with the U.S. Post office to put them in the new building. They are not willing to move forward with a contract with the DDA unless there is some movement on the Whatcoat Street project.

Mr. Oliver stated he does not feel that he can be fiscally responsible talking to residents about supporting the amount of money contemplated for a bend in Whatcoat Street to accommodate a building.

Jeff Wearing stated that we will not get a better price for the job than what Peach State Construction has bid. However, he currently has mixed emotions about approving a bid for the Whatcoat Street work.

Jim Windham asked that when the work is occurring, that the contractor ensure that the exit from the U.S. Post Office is made safer. His vote is no on the Whatcoat Street project.

Jeff Wearing stated that his vote is to forge ahead.

#### 4. **Review of Paving Bids** (Appendix C)

Mayor Eady and Bill Andrew recommend acceptance of the bid from East Coast Grading. The bid is low enough that some additional roads from next year's schedule can be added with the budgeted funds. The additional roads will be added during contract negotiations.

**5. Rights of Way Encroachment Update** (Attachment D)

David Strickland advised that he is waiting to hear back from Robert Jordan on pricing for the plan. Laura McCanless emphasized the urgency of informing residents of all encroachments on City rights-of-way.

Jim Windham suggested that the rights-of-ways throughout the City need to be clearly marked.

Erik Oliver recommended that the property owner who recently cut down trees in the right-of-way should be fined. Mayor Eady stated that would require further discussion.

**6. Charter Changes** (Attachment E)

The City Council will have a first read of the proposed charter changes to allow alcohol in the City and to change the responsibilities of the City Manager at the July regular session. After discussion, the City Council agreed not to define a Downtown Entertainment District for Outside Consumption at this time.

**7. Parking at Old Church** (Attachment H)

The City Council reviewed the concept design prepared by Erik Oliver to improve the parking along the shoulders of the roads around Old Church. The next step would be to draft a task order requesting that Atkins develop engineering plans to present to the City Council.

**8. 2024 Millage Rate** (Attachment G)

Mayor Eady is recommending that the City continue with its millage rate of 5.444, which is the same as last year. This millage rate will provide adequate revenue for the City's budget due to the increases in property assessment values this year. There was no opposition from the City Council members. The City Council also consented to filling the two new positions that were included in the FY 2025 budget.

**9. Turkey Creek Sewer Moratorium Extension** (Attachment I)

Bill Andrew provided results from the recent sewer study for the Turkey Creek basin. Due to the much higher than anticipated flow numbers revealed by the study from the customers on the Turkey Creek line, he is recommending that the moratorium on new sewer connections west of Emory Street be extended to January 1, 2025. Extending the moratorium for an additional six months will allow for time to determine what types of infrastructure and capacity need to be added to the system. The City will be working with the City of Covington and Newton County Water and Sewer Authority (NCWSA) on these issues.

**10. Carter and Sloope Task Order for Lead and Copper Waterline Inventory** (Attachment J)

A task order for \$32,400 is proposed for Carter and Sloope to work on the assessment for the Lead and Copper Waterline Inventory. The City has received a grant for \$73,900 from GEFA, and this task order can be paid for from these funds. The assessment will determine what work needs to be done.

**11. Trees, Parks and Recreation Board Nomination** (Attachment K)

The Trees, Parks and Recreation Board recommends the appointment of Susan Ballard to the Board. There was no opposition from the City Council members.

**12. Other Business**

**13. Work Session Meeting Review**

**14. Executive Session**

**Mayor Eady convened an Executive Session at 8:50 p.m. to discuss real estate matters. Jim Windham made a motion to exit Executive Session at 8:55 p.m. Jeff Wearing seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7/0).**

**15. Adjourn**

Mayor Eady adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Marcia Brooks  
City Clerk/Treasurer