



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE OXFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING
REGULAR SESSION
MONDAY, JUNE 5, 2023 – 7:00 PM
CITY HALL**

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

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

APPOINTED/STAFF PRESENT:

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

ELECTED OFFICIALS NOT PRESENT:

Jeff Wearing – Councilmember

OTHERS PRESENT: Art Vinson, Troy Willis

1. The meeting was called to order by the Honorable David S. Eady, Mayor.
2. **Erik Oliver made a motion to approve the agenda for the June 5, 2023 Mayor and Council Regular Meeting. Mike Ready seconded the motion.**

Discussion:

Jim Windham stated that he does not feel that there has been adequate discussion on items 6, 11 and 12 to vote on these issues. He proposes to table these items when they are brought up.

Erik Oliver amended his motion to leave items 6, 11, and 12 on the agenda and not take any votes but allow for discussion. Mike Ready seconded the motion.

The motion was approved unanimously (6/0). (Attachment A)

3. **Erik Oliver made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda for June 5, 2023. Mike Ready seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).** (Attachment B)
4. **Mayor's Report**
None.

5. Citizen Concerns

Art Vinson asked the City Council to address the issue of vehicular noise in Oxford, also augmented by airplane noise. Laura McCanless added that City of Covington officials should be asked to remind their pilots to turn into the less populated area of Newton County.

Jim Windham mentioned his concern about tractor trailer vehicles using Soule Street illegally.

Erik Oliver mentioned that there is a golf cart on the trail almost every day.

Art Vinson questioned the need to crack down on golf cart use. He knows of one elderly person who uses one for helping with mobility issues.

6. Resolution to adopt an Annual Balanced Budget for FY 2024 (Attachment C)

Jim Windham made a motion to table discussion of this item to the next Work Session. Laura McCanless seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Mr. Windham clarified that he is not opposed to discussion of the issue as long as a vote is not taken at this meeting.

Jim Windham amended his motion to table this issue for a vote but discuss it during this meeting. Mike Ready seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).

Jim Windham made a motion to modify the agenda to move Item #6 to the end of the agenda. Laura McCanless seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).

7. Second Amendment to the Power Purchase Contract (Attachment D)

Jim Windham made a motion to approve the amendment. Mike Ready seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).

8. Resolution for the Transfer of Funds in the General Operating Account (Attachment E)

A discussion was held about which funds the City Council had previously discussed moving money to. During the previous Work Session, the City Council had agreed to split the funds between the Electric and Water/Sewer Capital accounts. Although the Georgia Fund 1 account has a much higher interest rate, it requires a resolution from the City Council to access the funds. Bill Andrew stated that the process is electronic, and the funds are actually readily accessible. Marcia Brooks confirmed that the funds are transferred electronically as well.

Laura McCanless made a motion to move the balance in the General Operating Account exceeding \$900,000 to Georgia Fund 1. George Holt seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).

9. Planning Commission Appointment

Jim Windham made a motion to approve the Planning Commission's recommendation to appoint Troy Willis to the Planning Commission. Erik Oliver seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).

10. Indigo Energy proposal for EV Charging Station for MachE at City Hall (Attachment F)

Erik Oliver made a motion to approve the proposal. Mike Ready seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).

11. Budget Adjustment for Electric Lawnmower

George Holt made a motion to table a vote on this issue but allow discussion. Laura McCanless seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).

A discussion was held about the condition of the City's gasoline mowers and the pros and cons of electric mowers. George Holt and Laura McCanless both expressed reservations about spending \$50,000 on a lawnmower. Mayor Eady pointed out that there are less expensive options. There is more upfront cost but expenses over time are reduced with electric mowers.

Jody Reid advised that one of their mowers is six years old and everything on it has been rebuilt. It is in the shop right now.

Jim Windham stated that even though he has an electric lawnmower at home, he is very reluctant to approve purchase of one for the work the City does. He also expressed concern about the cost. He would want to see a demonstration before approving this purchase.

Mayor Eady stated he would work with Bill Andrew and Jody Reid to set up a demonstration of various models and brands. Ms. McCanless asked for some data from users at Georgia Tech where electric lawnmowers have been implemented.

Erik Oliver asked if Jody Reid is down a mower. Mr. Reid stated he is, that the six-year-old mower is in the shop. Mr. Oliver stated the City should go ahead and spend the funds budgeted for a gasoline mower. Mr. Windham agreed.

Mayor Eady asked if Mr. Reid would have sufficient equipment once the mower comes out of the shop. Mr. Reid stated that he would as long as they all are operational. Mayor Eady stated that a new one should not be purchased unless one breaks down. George Holt agreed. Laura McCanless stated that she approves waiting because the \$1,600 just spent would be wasted if the mower was replaced now.

12. Authorization for the City Manager to accept the Improving Neighborhood Outcomes in Disproportionally Impacted Communities Terms and Conditions (Attachment G)

Mayor Eady summarized what has occurred up to this point and that this issue has not been on a Work Session agenda due to the timing of the award and short turnaround time. Amendment of the Capital Budget would also be required since the matching portion was not contemplated in the Capital Budget. However, he did send the information to all City Councilmembers for review.

Since then, he has found out that the City has more time to make a decision on acceptance of the grant. Erik Oliver expressed concern about the total cost of the project compared to previous trails installed in Oxford. Mayor Eady acknowledged that there is no comparison between earlier projects and this one in terms of cost, but the scope is also much larger for the proposed trail.

Laura McCanless stated that although she does want the Turkey Creek culvert on Soule Street to be replaced, she does not believe it will be allowed as part of the project work. She pointed out that the City would be committed to bridging both Turkey Creek and Dried Indian Creek in this project, but that could be accomplished without doing road work.

Jim Windham suggested abandoning the trail section going north to East Richardson Street because the work of this project would accomplish the goal of connecting the planned trail system.

Ms. McCanless feels strongly that the trail cannot run through yards. It must be as close to the road as possible as a courtesy to homeowners, regardless of the width of rights-of-way.

Erik Oliver stated he is pro-trail but opposed to the location of this proposed trail being on the south side of Soule Street and will vote no.

Mr. Windham asked if a rough drawing could be obtained showing the proposed route's proximity to houses, trees impacted, etc. Mayor Eady suggested the City Council could walk the proposed route with an engineer.

13. **Invoices** (Attachment H)

No discussion.

6. **Continuation of Budget Discussion**

Jim Windham suggested a budget work session prior to the next scheduled work session, with a vote on the budget prior to the regular work session.

Mr. Windham has concerns about the 4% COLA increase in pay scale across the board, given the 14.1% increase made for all employees in February of 2022. He is not critical of any specific positions but feels the total is getting scary, especially in light of the high cost of equipment the City is considering and the replacement schedule for police cars. He also feels that more than one consolidated session with all City Councilmembers is needed before the budget is finalized.

George Holt added that he believed the COLA being discussed was in anticipation of the federal government's adjustment in November, to be effective in January 2024. However, the budget documentation distributed appears to indicate the 4% COLA is effective July 1, 2023.

Mayor Eady pointed out that the FY 2023 budget included a 5.1% COLA and a step increase, both to be awarded on anniversary date, effective July 1, 2023. They were not based on the federal increase.

Marcia Brooks recommended not awarding the COLA on anniversary date again because it required staff to keep track of two pay scales and created inequities between employees. She recommended that the pay scale be adjusted for everyone at one time for any COLA awarded.

Mr. Windham stated that the budget resolution does not indicate that the City Council will make a decision based on economic indicators for the COLA. It states that the COLA will be automatic effective July 1, 2023.

George Holt asked how many Flock cameras are in the budget. Mark Anglin advised that the subscription requires a minimum annual expense of \$15,000. Mr. Holt requested more clarity in the future on the changes between versions of the proposed budget.

George Holt and Mike Ready asked why the non-cash lease items for the Verizon lease and the Whatcoat Street lease must be included with revenue, as these items falsely overstate actual revenue the City will be taking in. Marcia Brooks advised these amounts are related to the implementation of GASB 87 but she would follow up with the City's financial advisors to get a further explanation of how the false overstatement would be offset.

14. Executive Session

None.

15. Adjourn

Jim Windham made a motion to schedule a budget work session for June 13, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. Laura McCanless seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).

Jim Windham made a motion to adjourn at 9:20 p.m. Erik Oliver seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).

Respectfully Submitted,



Marcia Brooks
City Clerk/Treasurer