



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE OXFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING  
WORK SESSION  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2021 – 6:42 PM  
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

George Holt – Councilmember  
Jim Windham – Councilmember  
Lynn Bohanan – Councilmember  
Laura McCanless – Councilmember  
Avis Williams – Councilmember  
Jeff Wearing – Councilmember

**STAFF PRESENT:**  
Marcia Brooks – City Clerk/Treasurer  
Bill Andrew – City Manager  
Dave Harvey – Chief of Police  
Jody Reid – Utilities/Maintenance  
Supervisor

**ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT:**  
David Eady – Mayor

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mike Ready

**Agenda** (Attachment A)

**1. Mayor’s Announcements**

Mayor Pro Tem Holt did not have any announcements.

**2. Committee Reports**

**a. Trees, Parks, and Recreation Board**

Laura McCanless stated that at the board meeting scheduled for October 19<sup>th</sup>, they will be discussing the bids they have received so far for removal of invasive species of plants and small trees. They also plan to discuss progress on their efforts to provide free trees to residents along Emory Street. The board is also working on the Tree City application that is due.

**b. Planning Commission** – The Planning Commission did not hold its last meeting due to lack of a quorum.

**c. Downtown Development Authority (DDA)** – Laura McCanless stated that the DDA is moving ahead with plans for improving the City’s greenspace. They expect to meet on October 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss the fencing. They are putting the landscaping plans on hold due to the labor market but may get some assistance from the State Botanical Garden in 2022.

- d. Sustainability Committee – Laura McCanless advised that the committee has not met since the last meeting. They are going to have someone from the committee attend the Newton County Parks planning meeting scheduled for October 26, 2021. At some point the committee wants to share its plans for a trail along Dried Indian Creek with the County and possibly seek some funding from them since the trail would tie Oxford to County recreational areas.
- e. Committee on Race – Avis Williams reported that they are awaiting an official announcement from Oxford College regarding scholarships. She expects to have more information at the November work session.

**3. Authorize the City to Submit an Application for the Law Enforcement and First Responder Supplement Program (Attachment B)**

This grant program provides a \$1,000 one-time pay supplement for full-time public safety officers and first responders, including law enforcement officers, emergency medical technicians, and firefighters. Public safety entities can apply on behalf of qualifying employees between October 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021.

Bill Andrew stated that the grant includes money for taxes and FICA to ensure that officers receive \$1,000 each.

**4. Electric Cities of Georgia (ECG) Year End Settlement and Contract Payment Reimbursement Form for FY2021 (Attachment C)**

The City of Oxford is due a payment of \$1,481.72 for its Year End Settlement and Contract Payment Reimbursement. The payment is available as a distribution to the City's education, training, and development fund, as a check, or as a credit to the City's ECG bill. In the past, the City has accepted its payment in the form of a check. Bill Andrew is requesting approval to sign the agreement and guidance on how the City Council wishes to receive the money.

The Councilmembers agreed to accept the money in the form of a check.

**5. Meeting Request with Representatives of the City Council and DDA to Make Recommendations for a Downtown Development Action Plan (Attachment D)**

Bill Andrew explained that Mayor Eady wants to get a group together to start moving forward with an action plan for downtown development. An effort needs to be made to determine which plans that have been developed in the past should be accepted to move forward. One thought Mr. Andrew had was to work on some permanent improvements to the greenspace in the form of a farmer's market and park, which may help to attract developers in the future. Jeff Wearing expressed interest in participating with this group. Laura McCanless advised she will be there representing the DDA.

**6. Review of the Draft Employee Handbook – Human Resources Policies and Procedures (Attachment E)**

The City of Oxford Employee Handbook revision was provided for review by the Councilmembers for their input. Laura McCanless, Jeff Wearing, Avis Williams, and Lynn Bohanan advised they approve of the draft.

Jim Windham provided a list of issues he wants to discuss. He will send the list to Councilmembers and staff for review.

**7. Other Business**

Jim Windham stated he believes the DDA and the City Council need some direction. A substantial commitment was made in buying the property on our East side, and the City has created a sustainability committee. He believes everything the City does needs to be with that direction in mind. He does not believe anyone wants retail in the downtown area. The City needs to decide what its branding should be. He is encouraged by the possibility of DDA developments and discussions with the City Council.

Laura McCanless stated that Mr. Windham should attend the discussions between the City Council and the DDA.

Jeff Wearing stated that he brought up in the past that perhaps Oxford could be a green destination, and Mr. Windham would provide valuable input to the discussion.

Mr. Windham reiterated that everything the Council does should work toward whatever the Council decides is its focus.

Members of the family of Johnny Blackshear appeared to ask about changing the name of Hull Street to Blackshear Street to honor Mr. Blackshear, who is 92 years old. He was on the Oxford City Council for twenty-six years and served as the assistant mayor for two terms. He has had an email exchange with Bill Andrew and understands that the policy is not to name a street after someone while they are alive. He wants to know if there can be an exception to this policy.

Mr. Holt advised him that he would have to do some research into this policy and the procedures necessary and get back to him.

**8. Work Session Meeting Review**

- a. Application for Law Enforcement and First Responder Supplement Program – vote in November regular session
- b. ECG Year End Settlement – authorize Bill Andrew to sign form accepting check
- c. Downtown Development Action Plan – form committee to meet with DDA
- d. Review of Draft Employee Handbook – Jim Windham to provide comments for review

**9. Executive Session**

None

**10. Adjourn**

**Mayor Pro Tem Holt adjourned the meeting at 7:18 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Marcia Brooks  
City Clerk/Treasurer