



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE OXFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING
REGULAR SESSION
MONDAY, May 4, 2020 – 7:00 PM
Via Teleconference**

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

David Eady – Mayor
George Holt – Councilmember
Jim Windham – Councilmember
Jeff Wearing – Councilmember
Avis Williams – Councilmember
Lynn Bohanan – Councilmember

APPOINTED/STAFF PRESENT:

Matt Pepper – City Manager
Marcia Brooks – City Clerk/Treasurer
Jody Reid – Utility Superintendent
Dave Harvey – Police Chief
David Strickland – City Attorney

ELECTED OFFICIALS NOT PRESENT:

Laura McCanless – Councilmember

OTHERS PRESENT: Charlie Williams, Mike Ready, Art Vinson

1. The meeting was called to order by the Hon. David Eady, Mayor.
2. The invocation was delivered by Sr. Pastor Charlie Williams (Mount Zion First Baptist Church).
3. **A motion was made by Jeff Wearing to accept the Agenda for May 4, 2020. George Holt seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).** (Attachment A)
4. **A motion was made by Jeff Wearing to accept the Consent Agenda for May 4, 2020. George Holt seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).** (Attachment B)
5. **Mayor's Report**
Mayor Eady stated that the city will continue to operate as it has been through the month of May. City Hall is closed to the public, but customers needing to interact with a staff member can contact City Hall to make an appointment. This information is also posted on the city's website and Facebook page. City Manager Matt Pepper added that the pavilion and playground will remain closed. Mayor Eady advised that these decisions are being made in collaboration with other officials within the county and in accordance with statewide Public Health recommendations.

Mayor Eady shared that he, the City Clerk and City Manager are invited to participate in weekly calls with Kathleen Toomey (Georgia Dept. of Public Health) and Homer Bryson (Georgia Emergency Management Agency) on Tuesdays at 11:00 a.m. If any Councilmembers are interested in listening in, they can contact Marcia Brooks or Matt Pepper for information. These calls are a good opportunity to hear directly from them on where and when testing will be ramped up and other issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

6. **Planning Commission Recommendations/Petitions**

None

7. **Citizen Concerns**

Art Vinson asked the Mayor and Council to consider an intermediate approach to opening the restrooms at Asbury Street Park to the public that would comply with state requirements but give some relief to residents who have been shut in for some time now.

Mayor Eady expressed his appreciation to Mr. Vinson for raising the issue. He spoke about the challenge the city has with keeping surfaces and facilities clean if the restrooms are open. There may be some steps that can be taken like gyms which are open but enforcing strict wipe down policies between uses. Signs advising patrons of the requirements for using the facilities at their own risk might can be posted.

Mr. Vinson requested that he and the mayor continue this discussion.

8. **July 4th Parade**

Matt Pepper stated that it takes staff several months to prepare for the July 4th parade. Staff would like input from the Mayor and Council as to whether the parade can be held this year in compliance with federal guidelines for social distancing. Staff would like a decision made so that preparations can move forward if needed.

Mayor Eady added that the participants can keep adequate distance between each other but there is no way to control the attendees. The question is whether we want to move forward and ask attendees to observe social distancing practices and stay with their cohort of people they have cross-contaminated with and rely on them to practice these safety precautions.

George Holt expressed concern about the city putting on an event and being responsible for social distancing, which is impossible in such a situation. Avis Williams agreed and felt the crowds that usually attend would make it impossible to enforce social distancing. She also feels it would be too soon and there are still too many unknowns about the virus.

Lynn Bohanan's initial thought was to possibly hold the parade without the celebratory events. She understands people will want to gather but feels they should take responsibility for following social distancing standards. She is undecided.

Jeff Wearing asked if there would still be a picnic afterwards. Mayor Eady mentioned that there is usually a picnic on the evening of July 3rd sponsored by the Lions Club and Historical Society. Governor Kemp's requirements for limiting groups to ten people or less will have expired by then. Unless he imposes new restrictions or the city adopts its own restrictions, it will be up to those groups whether they have this event. Mr. Wearing expressed concern about the food that would be served at such an event being sanitary. He knows that a lot of people look forward to it every year, but he has concerns about safety. Like Ms. Bohanan, he is undecided.

Jim Windham discussed the stringent precautions the airlines and the NFL are taking as they move toward opening. He does not believe this event can be controlled, and therefore recommends that the parade and all associated events be canceled this year.

Mayor Eady asked Mr. Pepper and Marcia Brooks if they know whether the City of Covington has canceled their July 4th activities, which they did not.

Ms. Bohanan clarified that she is not in favor of any of the related activities at Old Church because they encourage close gathering, but she believes it may be possible to have the parade.

Jim Windham stated he believes there may be another outbreak, and based on that possibility, made a motion to cancel all July 4th activities for 2020. Mr. Holt seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (6/0).

9. **Bi-Directional Metering Charge** (Attachment C)

At the last City Council work session, the Council agreed to eliminate the monthly bi-directional metering charge of \$2.50 for customers with solar meters. The proposed revised electric service tariff book for the City of Oxford was presented reflecting this change.

Jeff Wearing made a motion to eliminate the monthly bi-directional metering charge of \$2.50 for customers with solar meters. Avis Williams seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (6/0).

10. **Electric System Improvements** (Attachment D)

At the last City Council work session, the Council discussed bids for pole replacements. The recommended bidder for the repair work, Marable-Pirkle, Inc., has updated their bid to indicate all their proposed work is based on drawings provided by Electric Cities of Georgia (ECG). The bid from Marable-Pirkle for repair work is \$69,700, and the bid from Gresco for materials is \$13,340.90. Staff recommends approval of these bids for the completion of the work described.

George Holt made a motion to approve the bid by Marable-Pirkle for pole replacement work. Jeff Wearing seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (6/0).

11. Invoice Approval

George Holt asked if the payment to Arbor Equity, Inc. was for the normal tree-trimming done each year for power lines. Utility Superintendent Jody Reid advised this charge is to prune some of the older trees that have been planted by the Trees, Parks, and Recreation Board, and the cost comes from their budget.

George Holt made a motion to approve the invoices over \$1,000.00. Jeff Wearing seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (6/0).

12. Executive Session

Mayor Eady stated that the Council needs to go to Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. Councilmembers need to leave this teleconference meeting and sign into the other meeting (instructions provided by Matt Pepper to Councilmembers). When Executive Session is completed, Councilmembers will return to this teleconference to complete the meeting.

At 7:36 p.m. Jim Windham made a motion to go to Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. George Holt seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (6/0).

At 8:20 p.m. Jim Windham made a motion to return from Executive Session. George Holt seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (6/0).

George Holt made a motion to adjust the City Clerk's salary by \$5,000. Avis Williams seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (6/0).

13. Jim Windham made a motion to adjourn Regular Session at 8:21 pm. Lynn Bohanan seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcia Brooks
City Clerk/Treasurer