



**CITY OF RIVERDALE, GA
MAYOR & COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
August 10, 2015 | 6:00 PM**

The Honorable Mayor Evelyn Wynn Dixon

The Honorable Cynthia Stamps-Jones
The Honorable Wanda Wallace

The Honorable An'cel Davis
The Honorable Kenneth Ruffin

City Manager:
City Clerk:
City Attorney:

E. Scott Wood
Sylvia Vaughan
L'Erin Barnes

- 1. CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME: Honorable Evelyn Wynn Dixon**
- 2. ROLL CALL- CITY CLERK:** All Members of Council were present which constituted a quorum.

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Attendee Name	Title	Status
Evelyn Wynn Dixon	Mayor, At-Large	Present
Cynthia Stamps Jones	Council Member, Ward 1	Present
An'cel Davis	Council Member, Ward 2	Present
Wanda Wallace	Council Member, Ward 3 Mayor Pro-Tem	Present
Kenneth Ruffin	Council Member, Ward 4 Parliamentarian	Present

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3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Mayor Wynn-Dixon requested several changes to the Agenda. She stated she would like for items No. 9, Decorum Policy and 11; Explanation of the Budget Process to be considered administrative items. She stated that according to the City Charter, these items should be addressed by the City Manager and the Department Heads. Mayor Wynn-Dixon asked the Council for a consensus to approve her request. Council Member Wallace asked if the Decorum Policy could remain on the agenda because it states how City Council Meetings should be ran. Council Member Ruffin stated that there was some important information in the Decorum Policy which should be addressed. Council Member Davis stated he agrees with the Mayors request. Council Member Stamps-Jones stated she would like for item No. 11 to be removed from the agenda at this time. Council Member Stamps-Jones also stated that she was not familiar with the Decorum Policy. Council Member Wallace answered that the Decorum Policy is process of how we should conduct ourselves in a meeting. She also said the Decorum



Policy explains how much time is allowed for a resident and non-resident to speak at a meeting. Council Member Stamps-Jones stated she needs to read the Decorum Policy to get an understanding of what is being put in place. Mayor Wynn-Dixon asked for a consensus to adopt the agenda with the requested changes.

4. CITY MANAGER’S REPORT, E. SCOTT WOOD:

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City Manager’s Report was prepared and presented by E. Scott Wood (A written report was provided to the Executive Board in advance.)

City Manager Scott Wood commended Mr. Bennie Rose on an outstanding job with the paving on Bethsaida Road. He stated that the intersection of Bethsaida Road and Church Street was not included in this project. Mr. Wood explained that Department of Transportation warranted that this area did not meet the standards. Mr. Wood goes on to speak about the City Clerk, Sylvia Vaughan and said she has completed the required training by the Secretary of State as a Qualifying Officer for the 2015 Election. Mr. Wood announced that the qualification for the 2015 Municipal Election will start August 31, 2015 through September 4, 2015. Early voting will start October 12, 2015 through October 30, 2015. The 2015 Election will be held November 3, 2015. Mr. Wood also spoke about the proceeds for the sale of the basketball goals. He stated that the funds will be used for our Recreation Department. He explained that he would like to move forward as agreed, if there were no objections from Board. He said he would bring the budget back before the Mayor and Council at a later date to have it amended. Mr. Wood also spoke about the large number of storage bins in the city. He goes on to speak about the outstanding job the City Clerk and Mr. Turner are doing with the City Contracts. Finally, he asked the Board if the agenda could be amended to add the sale of Orme Street. Mayor Wynn-Dixon asked for a consensus from the board to add Orme Street to the agenda.

Council Questions:

Mayor Wynn-Dixon stated that the sidewalks on Hwy 85 looks really great and by having the sidewalks installed makes it a lot safer.

Council Member Stamps-Jones also inquired about the sidewalk project and asked if the City will be moving forward with the sidewalks in various communities. Mr. Wood stated that the sidewalk listing she was referring to was prior to his employment; however, he would be happy to revisit that information. Additionally, Mr. Wood commended Mr. Still, his Planning and Zoning Department, and Mr. Rose, his General Services Department for doing an outstanding job coordinating with the merchants. He stated he has had zero complaints as it relates to the interruption of the merchants driveways.

5. CITY ATTORNEY’S REPORT, L’ERIN F. BARNES:



Attorney Barnes distributed a copy of her Attorney Report.

Attorney Barnes spoke on various personnel items that were discussed among the staff regarding a Fit for Duty Policy. This item will be included in the Personnel Handbook. She explained the new federal guidelines on classification of exempt and nonexempt employees. She also spoke about the nonprofit storage bins being in compliance in and around the city. Attorney Barnes goes on to speak about Wilson Road Park and the issues with the Project Manager regarding concrete. She stated that the TE Grant work has started with Georgia Development Partners. She said she and the City Clerk will meet regarding the upcoming 2015 Election. She also stated that the Personnel Board will appoint a new member to the board tonight because we had a member to resign. She goes on to speak about the amendment of Section 54 regarding the Civil Service Board and said the board will be limited to terminations only. She stated that the Janitorial and Fountain Contracts are up for renewal and there will be no changes. She also stated that there are multiple code enforcement issues at Villages on the River Apartment complex. She explained that they have had a number of quality of life issues that have transitioned into criminal issues. Attorney Barnes stated that she has spoken with Mr. Still to provide some initiatives to get them in compliance by the end of the year. She explained the code enforcement initiatives and said that the commercial properties are receiving the same code enforcement services as the Police and Fire Department. She announced that the city has received new EEOC claims; however, due to potential litigation this item can only be discussed in an Executive Session. She stated that she would be addressing the Floodplain Ordinance and the Green Code Ordinance from the County with Mr. Still. She said “The Ethics Ordinance revisions are included on the agenda by Council Member Stamps-Jones.” She added, “The Travel Policy is also included on the Business Session Agenda and the Meeting Decorum Ordinance has already been discussed by Council Member Wallace.”

Counsel Questions:

Council Member Wallace asked Attorney Barnes about the Training Policy as it relates to employees after they graduate. Mayor Dixon responded that due to the sake of time we would have to discuss the Training Policy at a later date.

6. DISCUSSION OF THE DEANNEXATION OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1183 KING ROAD

Attorney Barnes stated that Exhibit A is included with the deannexation and that there appears to be more than one parcel. She explained that there are 6.6 acres, included in the two parcels. This item will be considered in the Business Session Meeting and there was a consensus by the board to move forward.

7. DISCUSSION OF THE TRAVEL POLICY



Attorney Barnes stated that she drafted the Travel Policy at the request of Council Member Ruffin. She explained that it does require Mayor and Council to adhere to these terms with regards to travel. Attorney Barnes goes on to say that the policy requires an authorization procedure and time limits as to when the information is submitted to finance. She stated that it requires that any overspending of funds budgeted for the fiscal year must be paid within 30 days after notification from the Finance Department. She explained that she highlighted the 4th bullet point of the Travel Authorization and Procedure because she was not sure what our City Travel Policy looks like. Attorney Barnes stated that the policy requires a monthly report to be done by the Mayor and Council. She stated the report will be placed on the City's website so the citizens will know where travel funds are being spent. Finance Director Don Turner stated that there are two separate Travel Policies for city employees and Mayor and Council.

Council Member Wallace stated that she recommends 3 to 5 business days for notification and proper notice should to be given to the City Manager and the City Clerk. Council Member Stamps She also distributed a handout on various issues in DeKalb County regarding credit cards. Mayor Dixon commented that she thought a 5 to 10 day notification sounds more reasonable. Attorney Barnes responded that there is a Travel Policy for Mayor and Council, so we may want to stay consistent with the one we have. Mr. Turner stated that he would like for the two documents to be the same and the current policy is 30 days.

Council Member Davis stated that he likes the policy that is currently in place. He said the employee cannot get away with not paying back the money. He also asked if someone would explain the training regarding the City Manager. Attorney Barnes answered that this is a draft she was asked to put together and that this Travel Policy is to address overspending. Attorney Barnes explained that Council Members would use private vehicles for travel unless they are traveling with the City Manager or a department head in a city vehicle. Council Member Davis stated that they normally go in a city vehicle to the Martin Luther King Celebration and asked how this policy would affect that. She explained that this policy does not have to be adopted and is at the discretion of the Council.

Council Member Stamps-Jones asked Council Member Ruffin for his reasoning in addressing this item. She explained that the Travel Policy for employees and Council was adopted in 2013. She stated she has never known for this policy to be an issue for misconduct and cause a detriment to the City. She stated that there was a time when there was cohesiveness. She explained that when a Council Member is on another board and needed funds that were allocated, they were able to do so.

Council Member Ruffin asked Mr. Turner if there was anything in the current Travel Policy for overspending. Mr. Turner answered no. Council Member Ruffin stated that overspending needs to be addressed in the policy. Council Member Ruffin goes on to say that there are two Councilmembers who have overspent their budget. Both have a budget of \$7,000 each in which



there has been \$600 transferred from training accounts to their travel account. One person has overspent by \$9,400 and the other at \$9,100. He exclaimed that \$2,000 in a year is ridiculous.

Council Member Stamps-Jones thanked Council Member Ruffin for his opinion and explained that travel is important; however, there are alternatives. Council Member Stamps-Jones stated that the board can attend online or satellite classes; however, this item is for discussion and it is not a debate. She said she does not understand why the board has to give the City manager notice and asked for more clarity. Mayor Dixon suggested that we need to get a handle on the travel budget. Attorney Barnes answered that she added the language because if a board member decides to cancel a trip that is paid for they would then need to notify the City Manager. She explained that this would prevent the City from being charged. Council Member Stamps-Jones stated that there is nothing in this agenda item to compare or contrast and we are putting something in place that already exists. Attorney Barnes said “She believes Council Member Ruffin is requesting additions to the Travel Policy which relates to overspending.” Council Member Ruffin stated that something should be in place to prevent overspending of the budget

Council Member Davis stated that if the funds were moved from another line item that means it was already budgeted and you did not go outside the budget. He spoke about the time he attended a conference in California and explained that some trips are more expensive than others. He goes on to say that when he first came on the Board, he donated \$500 to Council Member Ruffin because he was not very familiar with the training and he was not going anywhere. He said Mr. Turner can go back and research the records of Council Member Ruffin accepting the \$500 to take a group to Colorado. Mayor Dixon responded that sharing travel funds no longer exist. She explained that some of the travel is extremely high and we need to get better control over our travel budget. Attorney Barnes stated she would get with Mr. Turner and provide an amendment to the current policy to address the concerns that have been discussed.

8. ETHICS ORDINANCES REVISION

Attorney Barnes stated that when we had two pending ethic complaints, the board discussed that the existing policy holds a lot of pitfalls. She explained that she has included revisions to determine how to deal with an ethics complaint. She goes on to say that this ordinance revision does not address the entire ordinance and only addresses the procedure that starts at Section 3.18. She stated that nothing was included in the current ordinance that relates to when the complainant learned of the violation.

Council Member Ruffin asked about the 12-months reference on item number 4 on page 2. Attorney Barnes answered that this is a reiteration of what was under A-1 of the ordinance and this item is consistent.



Council Member Wallace stated that anything that occurs after 12-months should be taken to the Attorney General’s Office.

Council Member Stamps-Jones stated that the board has not discussed this item together to make a decision and we do not want to keep making changes. She stated that we should want to make decisions that are long standing and do what the constituents asked us to do. She said “We should create policies that can be used by other individuals who will come after us.”

Council Member Davis stated that he agrees with Council Member Stamps-Jones’s comment. He explained that we are setting policies for ourselves and there is a City out there that is crumbling in which we should be setting policies for. He stated that this is what troubles him more than anything.

Council Member Wallace stated she agrees with some of his comments; however, when you do things you should consider the Domino Effect. She explained that we have a good attorney in place who has done a great job researching this information. She stated that we should put these revisions in place and move on.

Mayor Dixon stated that this ordinance needs to be in place. She asked for a consensus by the board to move forward.

Council Member Stamps-Jones expressed concerns about moving forward with this item and then having to bring it back later. She asked, “Why are we rushing to address this item now?” Mayor Dixon answered that we can always bring an agenda item back but at this time we need to move forward. She stated that the blighted houses are being addressed.

9. MEETING DECORUM POLICY

This item will be discussed in Business Session

10. ORDINANCE TO AMEND HR ACT

This item will be discussed in Business Session

11. EXPLANATION OF BUDGET PROCESS - COUNCIL MEMBER STAMPS – JONES

This item was pulled from the agenda.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION: (IF TIME PERMITTING)



There was no discussion on this item.

13. ADJOURNMENT:

Council Member Wallace made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:15pm with Council Member Ruffin providing the second. **The motion carried.**

Evelyn Wynn Dixon, Mayor

Sylvia Vaughan, City Clerk