

**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY OF AUSTELL  
CITY HALL BUILDING  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2020**

Present:

Mayor Ollie Clemons  
Valerie Anderson  
Melanie Elder  
Devon Myrick  
Sandra Leverette  
Randy Green

Absent: Marlin Lamar

Also, present: Scott Kimbrough, City Attorney; Denise Lowe, Finance Director; Bo Garrison, Public Works Director; Brandon Merritt, Fire Chief; Bob Starrett, Police Chief; Jim Graham, Community Affairs Director; and Elizabeth Young, City Clerk

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Clemons called the meeting to order, gave the invocation & led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Clemons asked if anyone needed to add items to the agenda. No items were added.

**2. CONSENT AGENDA – INFORMATION AND UPDATE**

(No Action Required by Council – See Specific Department Director before a Meeting.)

**3. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approve Bills
- B. Approve Legal Bills - \$3,240.00
- C. Approve Minutes of Regular Council Meeting September 14, 2020

*Mrs. Anderson moved to follow the recommendation of Mayor Clemons to approve the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Mrs. Leverette. Motion passed. (5-0)*

**4. EXCEPTION TO CONSENT AGENDA**

**5. CITIZENS REPORT**

Mrs. Ann Turner submitted a letter to the City Clerk for Mayor & Council.  
To many I am known as the lady of the orange mailbox, but my name is Ann Turner. The mailbox is 5415 Austell Powder Springs Road, here in Austell. When I was in school (many, many years ago) the word “virtual” meant Actual, something one could see or

touch. It has become something else and I do not like the new definition. As a resident of the City of Austell, and frequently one of very few people to speak before the City Council, I am unhappy with the new protocol. I feel I am being ignored, and that my thoughts and ideas for the city do not matter; they are unimportant to you until election time. A query as to the reason for the destruction of Legion Field led me to understand that the park is to be re-purposed, the bleachers are to be surplussed, and citizen input is going to be requested. With this present means of communication, just HOW is citizen input going to be acquired? One cannot attend council meetings, (nor pre-agenda meetings) to ask questions or to give “requested” input. And what input was requested (and received) as to the surplussing of the bleachers, the destruction of the observers’ stands, and the probable removal of the fencing? Were these decisions made at the level of Parks Committee with little exchange among the entire council? If this equipment is to be surplussed, how, where, and when is it to be advertised? Unless an organization has the knowledge to use the internet to find such sales sites, that organization would be unaware the equipment is available. Back to the subject of citizen input: For at least 3 years I have been trying to get the lights that border the Creekside walking trail at Legion Field fixed. One finally was, and that has made walking safer. With the earlier darkness, there are still 4 lights not functioning. I do not know why: I am no electrician, nor am I an expert on lighting. I just know that the lights on poles #1 (behind the gazebo), #5 (north side of the public restrooms), #6 (south side of the public restrooms) and #8 (middle of the trail) have been out for a long time – at least 3 years – and I have mentioned it repeatedly at council meetings, to no avail. If I, as a taxpayer to the City of Austell, cannot have those simple 4 lights repaired, why should I think that any input I might have for the future of Legion Field would have any bearing on what you, who are elected to do what we, the citizens, decide to do? I miss my Monday evenings in city hall, mostly listening to you vote on matters on which you have already decided. And I miss watching your faces when I (frequently the only citizen) stand up to address you. Hopefully these electronic meetings will end soon.

Mayor Clemons stated we are not ignoring Mrs. Turner, but no one is able to attend our meetings. He stated that we are closing Legion Field Park while it’s under construction. Mr. Graham stated items from the fields will be surplussed. Once the construction is done, we are going to open the park back up until the master plan is completed and we start implementing some of that. Mayor Clemons asked Mr. Graham about the lights in Legion Park. Mr. Graham stated he will follow up with Georgia Power again. He stated each time Mrs. Turner has mentioned it, we contact Georgia Power, but not sure why they are not fixing them.

## **6. GAS SYSTEM REPRESENTATIVE OLLIE CLEMONS, MAYOR**

A. Mr. Kimbrough stated the gas system is in good shape, prices are relatively stable right now.

**7. FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

**VALERIE ANDERSON, CHAIRPERSON**

**Denise Lowe, Finance Director**

A. Financial Report

B. Proposed CARES Expenditures

The City of Austell was awarded \$375,873.00 in federal funds under the CARES Act. This money was to be spent on unbudgeted expenditures that were incurred due to COVID-19. The treasury department and Cobb County have provided guidance on determining eligibility. The accompanying list has been deemed eligible under these guidelines. Funds must be spent by December 30, 2020. The recommendation is to approve the proposed list of expenditures/projects to be spent with CARES funds.

*Mr. Myrick moved to follow the recommendation of Mayor Clemons to approve the proposed list for CARES funds. Seconded by Mrs. Anderson. Motion passed. (5-0)*

**8. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

**MELANIE ELDER, CHAIRPERSON**

**Elizabeth Young, Director**

A. No Report

**9. POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**RANDY GREEN, CHAIRPERSON**

**Bob Starrett, Police Chief**

A. Police Report

**10. FIRE DEPARTMENT**

**MARLIN LAMAR, CHAIRPERSON**

**Brandon Merritt, Fire Chief**

A. Fire Report

**11. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

**SANDRA LEVERETTE, CHAIRPERSON**

**Bo Garrison, Director**

A. No Report

**12. PARKS DEPARTMENT**  
**DEVON MYRICK, CHAIRPERSON**  
**Jim Graham, Director**

A. No Report

**13. COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**  
**VALERIE ANDERSON, CHAIRPERSON**  
**Jim Graham, Director**

A. Code Enforcement Report

**14. ATTORNEY, DUPREE & KIMBROUGH**

A. No Report

**15. MAYOR'S REPORT**

A. Community Affairs Director Position

For the past 26 years, Mr. Jim Graham has been the Director of Community Affairs, wearing many hats and being extremely knowledgeable about the City; he has decided to retire. As of December 31, 2020, his position will be vacant. In order to prepare the city for such a great loss, the Human Resources Department has posted the job internally for the allotted time frame as policy states. Assistant Director Darrell Weaver was the only applicant to apply. After interviewing Mr. Weaver, he is highly recommended by Mr. Graham and he is highly qualified and trained for the position. He has been with the city for almost 5 years and within his short period of time he has surpassed what was expected; he has restored the Austell Business Association, has been a key role in the revitalization of Historic Downtown Austell and not to mention recruited to date the largest Economic Development project in the city's history of \$32.9 million, just to name a few. I firmly believe that Mr. Weaver will do an exceptional job as the new Community Development Director. This position will begin as of January 1, 2021. It is my recommendation to appoint Mr. Darrell Weaver as the Community Development Director.

*Mr. Myrick moved to follow the recommendation of Mayor Clemons to appoint Mr. Weaver as the Community Development Director. Seconded by Mrs. Anderson. Motion passed. (5-0)*

B. CMA Meeting  
City of Marietta Council Chambers  
205 Lawrence Street, Marietta, GA 30060  
October 13, 2020

**16. ADJOURN**

*Mr. Myrick moved to follow the recommendation of Mayor Clemons to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Green. Motion passed. (5-0)*

Ollie Clemons Jr.  
Mayor

Ethelbert Young  
Attest

11.3.2020  
Date