

CITY OF CORNELIA  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
November 1, 2022

The Cornelia City Commission met in a Workshop Session on Tuesday, November 1, 2022, at 5 PM in the Cornelia Municipal Building Conference Room, 181 Larkin Street, Cornelia, GA. Mayor, John Borrow, called the meeting to order and the following Commissioners were present: Tony Cook, Janice Griggs, Mark Reed, and Don Bagwell. Also, present: City Attorney, Steve Campbell, Finance Director, Melanie Chandler, City Manager, Donald Anderson, and City Clerk, Debbie Turner.

Mayor Borrow opened the meeting and ask City Manager, Donald Anderson to go over the items on the agenda. Mr. Anderson went over the 2 Amendments to the Developments Standards stating that they have been posted and no comments have been heard for or against. Mr. Anderson then went over the Millage rate for 2022, he explained that the city's tax digest increased by \$22,906,919 and that the increases are due to re-assessments. \$12,280,816 for new development and \$3,848,152. Increase in real & personal property values, \$4,100,150 and a decrease in exemptions of \$2, 867,323. If we keep the millage rate at 8.5 it will equal an increase of .440 mills based on the inflationary rollback rate. If a house is valued at \$100,000 there will be an increase in your taxes of \$17.60. Keeping the mileage rate at 8.5 the city's revenue will see an increase by \$194,709 which is an increase of 11.33%. The draft budget will require an interfund transfer of \$1 million to the General Fund and prior fund balance of \$377,077. Mr. Anderson said that this is the largest interfund transfer that he has seen since coming to work here. Mr. Anderson said that he doesn't see anyway possible not to keep the millage rate the same unless we want to start cutting services. Commissioner Bagwell said that we really need to let the public know that even with the current inflation rates we are still trying to protect the citizens and the taxes they pay. City manager, Anderson spoke about the request from Norfolk Southern to remove the Hoyt Street Bridge. He said that they have offered to pay \$100,000 to the city if we allow them to remove the bridge. There was a lot of discussion about how it would affect the residents and if it would be better to make it a pedestrian bridge. Commissioner Griggs said there is a lot of people that walk that area. The consensus was more feedback from the public is needed because once it is removed it will be final. City Manager, Anderson went over the proposed budget for 2023, He said there were 2 new departments

created, Public Safety Admin. And Court Services. We also created a Sanitation Enterprise fund, which will move Sanitation out of the General Fund. Even with the change the General Fund increased by \$187,114 to \$5,975,906. The increases can be attributed to increased personnel cost and having to fully fund our bond payment for the Municipal Complex. The Water & Sewer budget is smaller than 2022 by \$199,524. despite a larger interfund transfer. Mr. Anderson said the only capital projects in the Water/Sewer budget are the Hazel Creek Pump station upgrade and the city's portion of the 2021 CDBG Project \$154,395. Another change was made creating a Community House Special facilities budget. Under the uniform of accounts, the C.H. qualifies to have its own fund. Commissioner Bagwell asked if the C.H. makes money, Mr. Anderson said yes, we are on track to receive \$60,000 in revenue this year. City Manager, Anderson also went over the other items on the agenda.

The workshop was adjourned at 6:00

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Debbie Turner, City Clerk

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John Borrow, Mayor

CITY OF CORNELIA  
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November 1, 2022

The Cornelia City Commission met in a Regular Session on Tuesday, November 1, 2022, at 6 PM in the Cornelia Municipal Building Conference Room, 181 Larkin Street, Cornelia, GA. Mayor, John Borrow, called the meeting to order and the following Commissioners were present: Tony Cook, Janice Griggs, Mark Reed, and Don Bagwell. Also, present: City Attorney, Steve Campbell, Finance Director, Melanie Chandler, City Manager, Donald Anderson, and City Clerk, Debbie Turner.

Commissioner Bagwell gave the invocation and Commissioner Cook led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Reed made the motion to Approve the amended Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 4 -0

Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to approve the October 4th minutes with one correction to page 1 of the regular minutes, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

City Manager, Donald Anderson gave his monthly report, he said City Park is now closed in order to set-up for Christmas in the Park. The Lights will begin on Thanksgiving and run until New Year's Day. Habersham Education & Research will have a presentation on their latest project Digitize Habersham on November 9<sup>th</sup>. The event will be held at the Stewart Auditorium at Piedmont University at 5:30 pm. A copy of his report is made an integral part of the minutes.

**Public Forum**

Mr. Ron Hicks came forward to ask about leaves and if they are bagged will they be picked up. He also wanted to know if there is a way to know where the leave vac truck is during the week. City Manager, Anderson said he would try and work something out with Public Works. Finance Director, Melanie Chandler told Mr. Hicks he could call city hall and let them know he has bagged leaves and they would get picked up.

### **Old Business**

Ordinance # 10-22-01, Amendment to the Development Standards - City Manager, Anderson explained that this ordinance will clean up the development standards concerning final plat approval, one section says Final Plats must be approved by the Planning Board while another section only has it being approved by the City Commission. The ordinance has been posted and no comments have been heard for or against. Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to approve the ordinance, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 4 - 0

Ordinance # 10-22-02, Amendment to the Development Standards - City Manager, Anderson said this ordinance will require a developer to post a security bond of 25% on infrastructure improvements, down from 100% which is what our ordinance states now. The ordinance has been posted and no comments for or against has been heard. Commissioner Cook made the motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

### **Public Hearings**

Mayor Borrow opened the Public Hearing on the Proposed Millage Rate for 2022. Mr. Anderson went over the Millage rate for 2022, he explained that the city's tax digest increased by \$22,906,919 and that the increases are due to re-assessments. \$12,280,816 for new development and \$3,848,152. Increase in real & personal property values, \$4,100,150 and a decrease in exemptions of \$2, 867,323. If we keep the millage rate at 8.5 it will equal an increase of .440 mills based on the inflationary rollback rate. If a house is valued at \$100,000 there will be an increase in your taxes of \$17.60. Keeping the mileage rate at 8.5 the city's revenue will increase by \$194,709 which is an increase of 11.33%. Nobody spoke for or against this matter. Mayor Borrow closed the Public Hearing. Commissioner Reed made a motion to set the Millage Rate at 8.5, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 4 - 0.

Mayor Borrow opened the Public Hearing on the Draft Budget for 2023. City Manager, Anderson said that we went over the budget in depth in the workshop so he will go over the highlights of the budget. Noteworthy Projects are Pine St. Drainage Project is \$221,000, street resurfacing is \$638,000, 2021 CDBG Project is \$1,100,000, Markets Corner Drive

replacement is \$649,000, Hazel Creek Raw Water intake upgrade is \$420,000 and the Level Grove Lift Station Upgrade is \$175,000. Mr. Anderson said he is also requesting 7% cost of living increase, he said he know this is a large amount but to keep our good employees we have to stay competitive. Mr. Anderson said the water rates will go up by 3%. Mr. Hicks asked if the sewer rates will increase? Mr. Anderson said yes, they are assessed at 119% of the water rate so they will increase by 3% as well. Mayor Borrow said we are trying to be good stewards of the taxpayer's money and feel even though this is an increase it is a lot less than some other cities are implementing. Mr. Anderson said that this is only a draft, and no vote will be taken tonight. The proposed Budget is available on the city's website. Mayor Borrow closed the Public Hearing.

Mayor Borrow opened the Public Hearing for the request from Norfolk Southern to Remove the Hoyt Street Bridge. Commissioner Bagwell as well as the other Commissioners felt that more time was needed in order to get feedback from the public. Commissioner Bagwell said that once it is closed nothing can be changed. Some people think that maybe a pedestrian bridge would be a good idea. Mr. Ron Hicks asked if the bridge is structural sound? Mr. Anderson said it is a wooden bridge and if you look underneath, it probably is not the best condition. Mayor Borrow closed the Public Hearing. No action was taken on this item.

### **New Business**

Trailwave Fiber Network Services Agreement - City Manager, Anderson explained that the cameras at the Dog Park use a wireless signal from the Community House, the signal becomes weak and goes down frequently in the Spring and Summer when the trees are full. Trailwave will run fiber to the Dog Park for an installation fee of \$3,700 and a monthly fee of \$75.00 per month for 60 months. Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to enter into the agreement with Trailwave to run Fiber to the Dog Park, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

Proposal for Skate Park Project - City Manager, Anderson explained that in April 2021 at the Planning Retreat it was agreed that once all the SPLOST 6 projects were completed that any leftover funds would be

allocated to the Skate Park. All the projects are now complete and there is a balance of \$86,000. Mr. Anderson said we have been working with American Ramp Company on a design that will fit on our existing concrete pad. The cost of the design that they have come up with is \$73,842.16. He said the company is very reputable and has been in business since 1998. Commissioner Bagwell said that the Mayor and Commissioners see this as an asset to the Community and are proud to be able to support this cause. Commissioner Griggs made the motion to approve the skate park design for a cost of \$73,842.16, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 4 - 0

Executive Session for Litigation - Commissioner Reed made the motion to enter executive session for litigation, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 4 - 0

Commissioner Griggs made the motion to close the executive session, seconded by Commissioner Reed. No Action Taken

Commissioner Griggs made the motion to Adjourn the meeting at 6:42, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 4 - 0

STATE OF GEORGIA, COUNTY HABERSHAM

CITY OF CORNELIA, GEORGIA

AFFIDAVIT OF PRESIDING OFFICIAL(S) FOR A CLOSED PUBLIC MEETING

While in Regular Session, the motion was made to enter an Executive Session to discuss certain matters in a closed session.

(x) To discuss with council pending and/or potential litigation, settlement claims, administrative proceedings or other judicial actions, which is exempt from the Open Meetings Act pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-2(1).

( ) A meeting to discuss the purchase, disposal of, or lease of property; authorize the ordering of an appraisal related to the acquisition or disposal of real estate; enter into a contract to purchase, dispose of, or lease property subject to approval in a subsequent public vote; or enter into an option to purchase, dispose of, or lease real estate subject to approval in subsequent public vote, which is excluded from the Open Meetings Act pursuant to Section 50-14-3(b)(1)(C).

( ) A meeting discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or employee, which is excluded pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-3(b)(2).

( ) Discussion in Executive Session of Records that are otherwise protected from disclosure under the Open Records Act as pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-3- (b)(4).

X The subject matter of the Executive Session of the Regular Session was devoted to matters within the exceptions provided by law.

\_\_\_ Because of events occurring during the closed session, I am unable to affirm the subject matter of the Executive Session of the Regular Session was devoted to only matters within the exceptions provided by law.

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John Borrow, Mayor, City of Cornelia

Sworn to and subscribed before me this

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Notary Public