

CITY OF CORNELIA
MINUTES OF MEETING
JANUARY 9, 2024

The Cornelia City Commission met in a Workshop Session on Tuesday, January 9, 2023, at 5:00 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, City Manager, Donald Anderson, City Clerk, Debbie Turner, Finance Director, Melanie Chandler, Public Safety Director, Chad Smith and CIO Director, Jeremy Dundore.

Mayor Borrow opened the meeting and said that the agenda would need to be changed to reflect the swearing in of himself, Ward 1 Commissioner Reed, and Ward 4 Commissioner Cook. The mayor went over the items on the agenda and City Manager Anderson explained the terms of the GEFA loan. The animal control agreement was discussed as well as the quote for the new Vac truck. Mr. Anderson said that the cost of \$470,112 may seem high, but this particular piece of equipment is heavily used by the Utilities Maintenance Department. The vehicle will be purchased with a GMA lease and GMA will be contacted closer to the delivery time in hopes that the interest rates will go down. Mr. Anderson said the quote is from Environmental Products Group through the State of Georgia contract. Mr. Anderson also explained that per the Mayor & Commissioners request he had met with a traffic engineering company about the speeding problems on Grand Ave. The cost for them to conduct a traffic study is \$14,750. and it is not budgeted but there is extra money in the planning department from the Professional Fees line item of \$36,000 that was budgeted to cover the cost of Animal Control Services. Now that we will no longer have to pay the county for this service the money can be moved to cover the cost. Mayor Borrow asked if Chad Smith would like to give his annual report. Mr. Smith said that they were able to implement an Education Incentives Program for the Police and Fire Department. The fire dept. completed their ISO classification and kept a rating of 3. He said that with the feedback of the inspectors we may be able to drop to an ISO rating of 2. In code enforcement and the building department we were able to purchase a smart table that will allow them to virtually go paperless, he said that this table can be used by multiple departments. Mr. Smith reported that the Building Official, Paul Lewallen, has received most of his commercial licenses, which has allowed us to be able to stop using the county for inspections. CIO Director, Jeremy Dundore gave his annual

report, he said that we have converted from Google to Microsoft which is Federally regulated. Matthew Arnold was hired last year, and he will be focusing on Cyber security and Mr. Dundore said he will be focusing on Artificial Intelligence. Commissioner Reed asked about the cameras at the Dog Park, Mr. Dundore said that it used to be a wireless link that ran from the Community House and now it is on fiber. Before when the foliage was thick it got in the way of the signal. They went over the other items on the agenda. The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 PM.

Debbie Turner, City Clerk

John Borrow, Mayor

CITY OF CORNELIA
MINUTES OF MEETING
JANUARY 9, 2024

The Cornelia City Commission met in Regular Session on Tuesday, January 9, 2024, at 6:00 PM in the Cornelia Municipal Courtroom, 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, City Manager, Donald Anderson, and City Clerk, Debbie Turner.

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

State Court Judge, Steve Campbell administered the oath of office to the mayor and commissioners Reed and Cook.

Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 4 - 0

Commissioner Reed made the motion to approve the December 5th minutes as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

Employee Longevity Recognition - Jeremy Dundore, Lindsay Cannon, Ally Sosebee, Paul Lewallen, Pete Bartholomew, Kevin Marsteller, Shane Mealor and Delony Gunnells were all given awards for their years of service. Seth Glaze, Jeremy McEntire and Joe Pontes were not present.

Department Head Annual Reports -

Public Works Director, Clif McEntyre, gave his report and went over the projects that were completed for the year. He said that the gateway signs were completed, and all the backdoor sanitation was picked up on a weekly basis, leaf pick-up, and all grass was maintained. City parks were cleaned, and repairs were made to public restrooms when needed. Potholes were filled as needed and street signs were replaced. Mr. McEntyre also said they are in the process of taking all Christmas Decorations down. Commissioner Reed said that the leaf pick-up was great this year. Mayor Borrow asked what he was most excited about what his department had accomplished. Mr. McEntyre said the gateway signs that were completed. Mayor Borrow commended him and his staff for the

craftsmanship of the signs, saying they did a great job. A copy of his report is made an integral part of the minutes.

Community Development Manager, Jessie Owensby gave her report for the year. Ms. Owensby said that we applied for the 2023 RAISE grant but did not get funded, however she did attend a debrief for the 2024 grant and now knows what is expected. She said that we submitted the GICH application to DCA and was selected for the program, she said they already have a team of 17 people and have held their first meeting. The comp plan was edited and reviewed and was approved through 2029. Ms. Owensby stated that we submitted our renewal application for Plan First and was again selected through 2026. Mayor Borrow asked what was she the most excited about for the year? She said the gateway signs were big but getting the GICH designation was very exciting. A copy of her report is made an integral part of the minutes.

Public Utilities Director, Keith Ethridge, gave his report for the year. Mr. Ethridge started by saying how much he appreciated the Mayor /Commissioners, City Manager as well as all the dept. heads. He said this is a great place to work and that they all work together. Mr. Ethridge explained the cost per department and how it is important in using it for the water audit. He said that since relocating the water/sewer department to the old water plant they have completed the demo of the old filter basin and are continuing to make improvements. He said that Main St/Hodges Street sinkhole project was major, but he said it was very successful. He said all the departments worked great together as well as Cliff's department helping. They removed the TenCate Lift station and installed a new Fieldale water meter. Mr. Ethridge said our landfill fees have consistently gone up since 2020 but we are saving money with higher septic fees. Mr. Ethridge also went over our water loss for the year, he said it is at 6.9% and the water plant and WWTP plant were in 100% compliance. Mayor Borrow commented that compared to some other cities where the water loss was at 40% and we are at 6.9% is stellar numbers. Mayor Borrow thanked him for his report. A copy of her report is made an integral part of the minutes.

City Manager, Donald Anderson, Jr. gave his Annual Report. Mr. Anderson said the beginning of 2023 Norfolk Southern was not going to move forward with the upgraded rail crossing, Despite the agreement already

being signed. They decided to replace the existing crossing, but it never happened. We also saw much-needed improvements to the skate park, the funds to cover the new ramps were paid for with surplus SPLOST V funds. In February we celebrated Arbor Day on the 17th and GMA designated Cornelia as a Certified City of Civility. We became one of the first cities in Georgia to achieve this designation. Fairfield Inn was granted Land Disturbance permits. In March our Public Works Dept. started working on the Hwy. 365 signs, they did a phenomenal job and saved the city thousands of dollars. Mr. Anderson continued the highlights of the year and projects that were completed. He said the projects to look forward to for this year are the completion of improvements to the old reservoir which was originally funded in 2012. the expansion to the Wastewater Plant should go out for bid in March, expanding our capacity from 3 MGD to 4.5 MGD. Fairfield Inn is scheduled to be completed this summer. Mr. Anderson said there are other projects that are in the planning phase that he feels will continue to make Cornelia the economic hub of Habersham County. Mr. Anderson said he feels confident in saying 2024 will be another successful year. A copy of his report is made an integral part of the minutes.

Public Forum:

Old Business:

Ordinance # 12-23-01, Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance- Mr. Anderson stated that if approved the amendment would make an approved variance valid for 12 months. The ordinance has been posted and no comments for or against have been heard. Commissioner Reed made the motion to adopt the amendment to the zoning ordinance, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 4 - 0

Loan Agreement for GEFA Loan # DWLSL2022129- This loan is in the amount of \$74,495 to cover the cost of US Environmental Protection Agency's Lead and Copper rule. It requires all water systems to develop an inventory of all water lines. The inventory is due to EPA on October 24, 2024. The item was tabled at the December Meeting to allow City Attorney, Steve Campbell to meet with our bond attorney, Ken Pollock. Mr. Anderson said that he and Mr. Campbell met with Mr. Pollock and entering into the agreement will not affect our Municipal Complex Bond. Commissioner Cook

made the motion to authorize the mayor to sign the loan agreement, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 4 -0

New Business:

Proclamation for Arbor Day- the city will celebrate Arbor Day on February 16, 2024 at 10:00 AM, by planting trees on city property located on the corner of Moss and Wells Street. It will be funded by grant funds from the Georgia Re-leaf Program. Commissioner Bagwell made the motion for the mayor to sign the proclamation, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

Probation Services Agreement- This agreement is between our Probation Services Department and the Municipal Court Judge. The existing agreement is set to expire on January 31, 2024. Under Georgia Law we are required to enter into this agreement with the Judge of Municipal Court for Probation services. The agreement will expire on January 31, 2029. Commissioner Reed made the motion to enter into the updated agreement, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

Fire Protection Agreement with the Town of Mount Airy- We will provide Fire Protection for 498 buildings at a cost of \$88.43 per unit. Total cost for this service is \$44,038.14 and will be paid monthly at \$3,669.84. It also includes a \$50.00 fee per inspection for our Fire Marshal. Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to enter the agreement with Mount Airy for Fire Protection, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 4 - 0

Animal Control Agreement with Habersham County- Mr. Anderson said that Habersham County has changed the formula they use to calculate fees for Animal Control Services. Under the new formula we will no longer pay for the service because of our contribution to the county tax digest. Commissioner Griggs made the motion for Mayor Borrow to sign the agreement, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 4 - 0

Quotes for New Vac Truck- Mr. Anderson stated that we budgeted for a new vac truck for the Utilities Maintenance Dept. The Vactor truck is from Environmental Products Group through the State of Georgia Contract in the amount of \$470,112. It will be purchased using a GMA lease and before

delivery of the truck in the second quarter of the year we will have an updated lease. Commissioner Reed made the motion to approve the purchase through a GMA lease, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 4 - 0

Agreement for Sale of Real Property with Johnson Railway Service, Inc. – City Manager Anderson explained the agreement is to purchase the property at 107 Grant Place and several other items. The purchase price is \$350,000 and is in the 2024 budget. Commissioner Cook made the motion to purchase the property, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 4 - 0

Proposal for Traffic Engineering Services – City Manager Anderson said that per your instructions he met with a Traffic Engineering Company called LUMIN8 regarding the speeding on Grand Avenue and the intersection of Berry, Grand and Thomas. He said that in the meeting he has asked them to look at back in parking and raised speed bumps for Clarkesville Street, Hodges, and Irvin for safety reasons. The proposed cost for this service is \$14,750.00, he said it is not in the budget. Mr. Anderson explained that with the new animal services agreement there is \$36,000 in the Planning Department Professional Fees Line item that will not be used. Mr. Anderson said that he is proposing that the money be moved to the street department to be used to cover the cost as well as any other costs for the project. Commissioner Reed. made the motion to enter into the agreement with Lumin8, seconded by Commissioner Griggs and Commissioner Reed made the motion to move the money from the Planning Department to the street dept. seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 4 - 0

Executive Session for Real Estate – Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to enter Executive Session for real estate, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 4 - 0

Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to close the executive session, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. No Action was taken Approved 4 - 0

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Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by
Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

Debbie Turner, City Clerk

John Borrow, Mayor

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.

() 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.

John Borrow, Mayor, City of Cornelia

Sworn to and subscribed before me this January
9, 2024

Notary Public